



**Roger Williams University  
Bristol, RI**

**NEASC 5<sup>th</sup> Year Interim  
Report**

**January 2012**

**Report to the  
Commission on Higher Education  
New England Association of Schools and Colleges**

# Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Institutional Overview	1
Responses to Areas Identified for Special Emphasis	2
Governance Activities and the Board of Trustees	2
College Unbound	5
Standards Narrative	11
Standard 1: Mission and Purpose	11
Standard 2: Planning and Evaluation	13
Standard 3: Organization and Governance	17
Standard 4: The Academic Program	20
Standard 5: Faculty	23
Standard 6: Students	25
Standard 7: Library and Other Information Resources	27
Standard 8: Physical and Technological Resources	31
Standard 9: Financial Resources	35
Standard 10: Public Disclosure	39
Standard 11: Integrity	41
Plans	43
Appendices	
Tab A: Affirmation of Compliance with Federal Regulations Relating to Title IV	
Tab B: Most Recent Audited Financial Statement	
Tab C: The Auditor’s Management Letter	

Tab D: CIHE Data Forms

Tab E: Student Achievement and Success (E&S) Forms

Tab E1: S Series Forms

Tab E2: E Series Forms

Tab F: Distance Education Forms

## **Introduction**

The Roger Williams University 5<sup>th</sup> Year Interim Report presents an overview of the key activities, initiatives and changes that have occurred since the last comprehensive review as well as projected areas of focus over the next five years. The report is organized in accordance with the traditional format as prescribed in the NEASC *Procedures for Interim (Fifth-Year) Reports*. The report was prepared under the direction of the Interim Provost, Dr. Robert Potter, and was a collaborative effort that included all of the senior administration to include every vice-president and dean. (Names and positions of these individuals are contained in Standard Three, Governance.) Materials specific to programs were collected and reviewed by faculty department chairs and program coordinators. The Office of Institutional Research, under the direction of Mr. Eric Sponseller, was responsible for compiling the majority of the statistical data contained in the appendices. Finally, the report was reviewed by the President, Dr. Donald Farish.

## **Institutional Overview**

The previous six years have included the development of a new strategic plan, unprecedented growth of physical facilities and the enhancement and expansion of curricula, especially graduate programs. These areas are discussed in detail within the report. This period was also marked by key changes in the leadership and the organization of the institution. These changes include the transformation of the operation of the Board of Trustees, the selection of a new president and the appointment of an interim provost.

Dr. Donald J. Farish, joined the university in June 2011 as President and Chief Executive Officer after a year-long national search. The search committee, chaired by the Vice-Chair of the Board of Trustees, represented all university constituencies.

Dr. Farish's professional career spans more than 40 years in higher education, including serving as president with distinction for 13 years at Rowan University. Dr. Farish has also held academic and administrative positions at Sonoma State University, the University of Missouri and the University of Rhode Island. A sought-after voice in higher education, Dr. Farish served as one of 20 presidents and chancellors at a 2010 Presidential Roundtable hosted by the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education to discuss the future of colleges and universities in the U.S.

Dr. Robert Potter was appointed the Interim Provost in September 2011. A national search has begun to fill the position and a selection is expected by the end of this academic year. Prior to his interim appointment, Dr. Potter served as Dean of the School of Engineering, Computing and Construction Management since 2001 and, concurrently, as the Associate Provost from 2009.

## **Response to Areas Identified for Special Emphasis**

---

The reports contained in this section were prepared to respond to concerns raised since the last Comprehensive Self-Study and for which a focused visit was conducted in November 2010. While the concerns presented in this section were both raised as a result of that visit and subsequent correspondence/discussion, updates on both areas are included in this 5<sup>th</sup> Year Interim Report under the heading above. The two areas of special emphasis included in this section include: “Organization and Governance” of and by Roger Williams University’s Board of Trustees and the pilot academic program known as “College Unbound.”

### **Governance and the Board of Trustees (Relating to Standard Three)**

In response to a number of different factors, the organization and operation of the Board of Trustees (BOT) has changed significantly over the past three years, and this change, while marked fairly with NEASC’s “Notice of Concern” involving organization and governance, has both enabled a maturing governance structure and has demonstrated strong, dedicated and continually improving governance, marked by fiduciary undertakings devoid of personal interests. The Board recently demonstrated its new operational paradigm in the process and selection of a new president. The presidential search was inclusive, fostered open and candid discussion, and was an example of shared governance that was both normative in style and exemplary in execution.

During the initial reaccreditation visit, NEASC had identified six areas of concern relative to meeting the Commission’s standard on “Organization and Governance.” As previously mentioned, while the concern has been raised, a summary of the current status with regards to these six areas is presented.

***1. The Board has regularly scheduled and well-attended meetings allowing it to fulfill its responsibilities:***

The meetings of the Board continue to be regularly scheduled and well-attended. These meetings are comprised of regular, annually scheduled meetings and “Special Meetings” authorized by the University Board of Trustees’ governing bylaws to ensure both planned and unscheduled events of significance, relative to the governing board’s fiduciary responsibility and covenant to the University, are fully met. Consistent with the revitalized meeting schedule illustrated in the most recent report to NEASC on Board Governance, the Board has continued to meet regularly and attendance has remained excellent, with every board meeting held easily constituting a quorum, and active participation evidenced, not only by the now regular practice of multiple board committee reports but by robust agendas on regular meetings and excellent, probing participation during “Special Meetings” of the Board.

**2. *The new by-laws of the Board have been implemented including the election of a full slate of Board Officers and regular meetings of the Executive and Membership Committees:***

The revised by-laws of 2007 were, at last report, under revision by a Special Board Committee, specifically to improve upon Board governance and clarity of direction. That extensive effort produced the new and current governing by-laws of both the University and its separately incorporated law school with significant improvement relative to clarity of purpose and governing edicts as well as the strengthening of the Committee structure and purpose including the now robust “Governance Committee”.

There are Board-appointed Officers, Board-appointed Committee Chairs, a necessary, re-legislated agenda of powers and duties and a welcome adoption of a contemporary Board of Trustees.

**3. *The Board has implemented structures and policies to develop Board leadership, including succession planning and diversification of committee leadership:***

As incorporated in the new BOT By-Laws, there is a distinct leadership structure now with Board-selected committee chairs, who along with the President and the Board Officers constitute the Executive Committee of the Board. This Committee, by explicit designation, is the leadership team and while open floor election is allowed upon proper motion, it is from this group of purposefully diverse leaders (Committee Chairs) that succession is expected to occur with a résumé of governance clearly attached to each leader.

**4. *The Board demonstrates the implementation of its conflict of interest policy, ensuring clarity of understanding of the policy among the Board members:***

This matter is now fully engrained in the process and culture of Board governance. The Governance Committee reviewed all reported potential conflicts of interest and called an “Executive Session” of the Board in December 2011 to discuss those disclosures and the Board then discussed all relevant matters and determined a course of action as the full Board.

**5. *The Board has developed and implemented a regular system of board development, drawing on external expertise as appropriate:***

This matter has held particular attention over the past year, with revitalization of the “Committee” structure, addition of sought-after Trustee candidates and the Board’s ultimate decision, upon the recommendation of the President to organize, develop and hold a retreat in June 2012 without external help at this time. The Board structure is new. The Committee structure and Chairs are new and the President is new. External expertise was felt to be premature, as the Board and newly-appointed President specifically evaluated the best course of effective action on behalf of the University at this time. Of important note, there is considerable, external Board of Trustee and

governance experience, and expertise among the new Trustees and the newly appointed President. Additionally, and since the October 2010 report to NEASC, the Board through its Governance Committee is evaluating self-reported responses from the trustees in an effort to measure board expertise, strengths and weaknesses to assess characteristics preferred in prospective trustees.

**6. *The Board has developed and implemented a regular system of board self-evaluation, coordinated by the Membership and Governance Committee as specified in the by-laws:***

As referenced above, the 2007 By-laws have been succeeded by the 2011 By-laws, and the jointly determined June retreat will further explore the work in progress concerning Board self-evaluation. Additionally, since the October 2010 report to NEASC, the “Statement of Commitment and Responsibilities of a Trustee of Roger Williams University”, referenced herein, has been adopted and currently all Trustees have signed this pledge.

**Board Meeting and Attendance from September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2010 to Date**

Date	Type of Meeting	# in Attendance	
		Board Members	Others
November 1, 2010	Special	18/22	2
November 10, 2010	Special	17/22	2
December 10, 2010	Regular	20/22	7
February 25, 2011	Regular	20/22	7
March 23, 2011	Special	20/24	2
May 20, 2011	Regular	15/22	8
September 19, 2011	Special	17/23	4
October 14, 2011	Regular	19/23	7
December 9, 2011	Regular	15/23	7

In summary, the RWU Board of Trustees have adopted all of the revisions outlined in the earlier report and is organized and functioning in a normative and constructive fashion to assist the university in moving forward.

## **College Unbound Program (Relating to Standard Four)**

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the continuing development and evolution of the College Unbound program initiated by Roger Williams University and Big Picture Learning academic partnership since the last report prepared for the November 2010 focused visit.

Since the last report, the focus of the College Unbound program has evolved with respect to the targeted student audience. Specifically, the targeted student population is now inner-city adult learners. This student audience represents a shift from the predominantly inner-city recent high school graduates targeted and admitted into the program during its first two years. The partners -- Roger Williams University (RWU) and Big Picture Learning (BPL) -- agreed to this shift in a contract signed in August 2011.

The RWU catalogue contains the following description of the program:

*Initiated through a collaboration between Roger Williams University and Big Picture Learning, the College Unbound program at Roger Williams University is focused on providing first-generation college students with an accelerated three-year program that is student-centered and outcomes based, and that integrates a variety of learning experiences. As a new experientially-based program, it uses individualized study plans and draws upon the variety of course options available in the School of Continuing Studies. It offers students a choice of academic concentrations leading to the Bachelor of General Studies; classroom, external, online, directed seminar, independent study, and travel and off-campus courses augment the live-learning internships which serve as the program's anchor. Students are expected to demonstrate their ability to solve complex problems, work in teams, communicate effectively, and apply concepts across disciplines. In addition to the traditional forms of learning assessment, College Unbound students demonstrate learning through presentations, exhibitions, productions, e-portfolios, etc. (Roger Williams University Catalogue, 2011)*

As previously reported, the program started in the fall of 2009 with eight (8) students working as a residential based cohort. In January 2010, two (2) additional students enrolled in College Unbound (CU) as working adult learners who did not live in the residence. Five of the original eight students completed the first full year. In the second year, six (6) new students were admitted and, in the third year, twenty-five (25) new students enrolled. The first two cohorts were primarily residential-based, recent high school graduates. The third cohort is non-residential, adult learners.

The program was envisaged to start as a small pilot with growth based on the performance of the initiative. Student recruitment was coordinated by BPL staff with assistance, input and participation by RWU faculty and administration. Essentially, the recruitment included "open houses" with students being "invited" by posters, social media, word of mouth and, more recently, newspaper advertisements. The open houses held to recruit the third cohort of students were attended by up to fifty (50) potential candidates at each event. Information on



the university program and financial details were presented at these events. Interested applicants were encouraged to develop a package of application materials including a resume, statement of interest, list of academic credits to be considered for transfer, and an RWU undergraduate admissions application. Candidates were interviewed and successful candidates were encouraged to formally apply through the normal university systems. For cohorts one and two, all students received RWU and BPL scholarships. In its third year, the program moved to a more sustainable financial model, which is tuition (including loans) based.

Incoming students were individually reviewed, following normal RWU procedures, with respect to their prior academic credit and experience. This review developed a detailed documented accepted college credit report for each student. This review yielded a credit count ranging from 0 to 90 credits. Based on these transfer credits and the interest and capabilities of the student, individual learning plans were developed. One of the key areas of the University's oversight of the College Unbound program was the determination of the curriculum to be implemented during the first year. It had been decided that the Bachelor of General Studies degree program (BGS) would be the most appropriate program for CU students, since it allows students to utilize experiential credits while focusing on an area of study that meets their specific professional and personal interests and goals. It also allows students to increase the number of electives incorporated into their degree plans. It was decided that the general components of the program during the year round three-year period leading to the BGS degree would consist of general education courses, an internship experience throughout the period of a student's enrollment, the completion of an eight-course concentration required of all BGS students, and sufficient electives to total the number of credits required for graduation. It was apparent from the very beginning that the academic model for the CU program would draw upon many of the components already in place and fully employed in the School of Graduate and Continuing Studies (SGCS) for many years.

The program faculty includes both full time and adjunct RWU faculty members. Adjuncts are proposed by both BPL and RWU. RWU retains the sole right to appoint faculty. All faculty members meet RWU faculty requirements.

During the program's first several months, the previous provost met personally with RWU and Big Picture staff to formulate a curricular approach for several of its courses. Preliminary approval was granted for several courses designed to equate to college skills and general education courses, to be "bundled" in 9-credit and 6-credit packages. Along with the provost's personal involvement and approval, Dean John Stout and Professor Louis Swiczewicz (both from the School of Graduate and Continuing Studies) selected and approved courses to be offered. This process also included key staff from BPL, who assisted with the selection of courses and in the design of courses required to meet the needs and specifications of students' educational programs. Since Professor Swiczewicz assisted in the development of degree plans for each of his student advisees, curricular decisions followed the progress and needs of the students. An SGCS course prefix was established by the Registrar's Office, and this prefix has been used for those courses not already part of the RWU curriculum. In some cases, courses were offered as "special topics" courses.

The College Unbound program ensures that students cover general education, core, and general elective requirements. These requirements provide a clear framework for students' learning, which is individualized to include an internship and related projects each semester. Students are provided with feedback on their academic progress early and frequently throughout the program to ensure that they maintain good connectivity to the program learning outcomes at all times.

In terms of internships, students propose internship sites, projects to be undertaken, and professional advisors to be their professional mentors at their sites. Dean Stout and Professor Swiczewicz approve each internship site and review students' internship narratives to assess whether students will receive academic credit for the completed internship. The faculty member working directly with the student advises the student throughout the semester on his or her project, assists the student in identifying learning outcomes, and assesses the extent to which project work demonstrates that the student has achieved the learning outcomes. Because of the program's individualized and interdisciplinary nature, each student is encouraged to consider his or her project when given the opportunity to select readings and other assignments he or she completes across other course work. For instance, a student may select certain readings for Urban Sociology because these readings offer an important lens for his or her internship project being completed. Other readings and assignments are shared across all students enrolled in that same course.

As part of their coursework, CU students attend at least one large seminar for two to three hours each week, a one-to-two-hour small-group seminar that is aligned to a focus of their work, at least one individual learning-meeting of a half-hour to an hour with their faculty member, and complete ten to fifteen hours at an internship. Many weeks, they also have an additional learning-meeting with their faculty member and their professional advisor. Special-topics seminars have included more traditional instructor-led class settings, while other seminars focus on small-group discussion and are, at times, led by students with faculty guidance.

In addition to accruing credits, College Unbound students and faculty also keep track of their learning by means of established "outcomes," including broad knowledge, concentration-based knowledge, core knowledge for the BGS degree, and various critical methods of inquiry. As available in the student's degree plan, each student includes a short summary of his or her learning that demonstrates competency in each outcome and also offers evidence for this competency through an artifact included in his or her electronic portfolio. Electronic portfolios are currently housed through a system of "Dropbox" folders with access granted to faculty. In the coming semester, students will transition to using both Dropbox and the Roger Williams University e-portfolio system. The intention is to document academic progress and tie this progress to the learning outcomes at all stages of the program.

College Unbound students receive formative assessment and feedback on weekly assignments and work through their seminars and learning meetings. Types of formative assessments used are listed below under the "value added" section of "Program Outcomes." The general rubrics for College Unbound Learning Goals are used to guide assignment

creation and feedback given to students. In the event a student is deemed unsatisfactory at any stage, remedial work must be completed prior to moving forward in the program.

In addition to this formative assessment, College Unbound students also exhibit their work at mid-semester and at the end of each semester to a panel that includes faculty, other students, and professional advisors. These sessions are videotaped and this forms a component of the learning experience. Feedback is solicited from panelists to be included in a faculty “narrative,” which is a summary assessment. Students also write their own “narratives” to self-assess their work. A focus of each exhibition is the learning goals undertaken during that semester for the courses in which the student is enrolled. Students must demonstrate for each learning goal a product or project that shows competency and this is included in the e-portfolio.

In their final year with College Unbound, students undertake a senior-level internship project for six credits. As outlined in the attached sample degree plan, these senior projects incorporate interdisciplinary theoretical principles as well as issues, concerns and objectives in the student’s own community. Senior projects are assessed through exhibitions, faculty analysis, and student self-analysis and are included in students’ electronic portfolios.

As part of the ongoing assessment of the program, RWU and Big Picture Learning recently developed the following measurable metrics as part of the overall assessment of the program efficacy:

1. Student retention rates (program level):
  - a. Over the first two years since launching College Unbound @ Roger Williams University, 81% of students who have enrolled in the program are still actively enrolled and registered at College Unbound.
  - b. The two-year retention rate is 87.5% when students currently on leave are not included.
  - c. The retention rate between the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 academic years is 100%. In other words, every College Unbound student involved in the 2010-2011 academic year is still enrolled in the 2011-2012 academic year.
2. Graduation rates (program level):
  - a. College Unbound anticipates a 70% graduation rate for the very first cohort of students (graduation date of spring 2012).
  - b. College Unbound is on track for a 100% graduation rate for the second cohort of students (graduation dates of Spring 2012 and Spring 2013).
3. Value added (tracked at the individual-student level).
  - a. In assessing students, College Unbound faculty review: thinking and performance skills; knowledge, conceptual understanding, or skill in application and analysis;

attitudes, values, disposition, and habits of mind; and, overall learning outcomes to help offer an overall picture of each student's learning.

- b. Portfolios and exhibitions to show student project work are the most significant assessment strategies used to give an overall picture of student learning. However, faculty also use writing prompts, journals, reflective essays, self-evaluations, professional advisor evaluations, peer evaluations, and student interviews.
- c. Additional assessments that have been used for specific coursework include field notes, grant proposal drafts, case studies, presentations, videos, mapping assignments, and literature reviews.

In April 2010, College Unbound received approval from Roger Williams University's executive director for corporate/foundations/government relations at that time to apply for a Spencer Foundation grant to fund a research study on the program. This grant was not awarded and funding has not been found to allow for an external evaluation.

However, during the first academic year of College Unbound, a director of research and evaluation used the following guiding questions to inform interviews and survey questions of students and faculty:

1. What is the unique combination of educational variables (e.g., internships, seminars, extensive projects, community involvement, etc.) that must be in place to create personal, intellectual, and professional growth that results in an 'engaged citizen' and how do these variables function and inter/intra-relate to create change that leads to outcomes and impact?
2. What do we mean by "growth"? For example, we are identifying and examining what is the value added for our different constituents (students, faculty, institution, etc.) and how do we take into account the other experiences that the students, faculty, and others (outside of higher education) may have, prior to or during their matriculation through College Unbound? How do these experiences conflict with and/or add to the overall College Unbound experience?
3. What are the changing perceptions of higher education, including those of the students, faculty, and the administration at the partner university, Roger Williams University?

Beginning in Summer 2010, the project sought to create a more sustainable funding model for operations, and therefore began using available resources such as doctoral students to assist in research and evaluation instead of continuing to house an in-house director of research. A doctoral student from Boston College (Josh Jensen) who is working with Dr. Karen Arnold has interviewed students and other stakeholders over the last 15 months to assist in answering the questions listed above. His reports are qualitative and not quantitative. His preliminary, informal reports have kept faculty informed about student perceptions of learning and their College Unbound experience. A preliminary report has been completed and is available for review.

The CU program has continually evolved as a pilot project. It has changed to meet the needs of the students and the partners. One area of importance is the need for financial sustainability of the program. At the outset both partners provided financial aid to all students. After the first semester students were required to obtain financial aid to provide for their tuition. In addition to student tuition as the primary source of funding, alternative corporate funding sources are being solicited.

One of the objectives of the College Unbound program is to gradually scale the project up. This will allow more students to take part in a program that better suits their individual needs as well as adding more financial resources into the project. To that end, a cohort of eleven students from the New Orleans Cultural Arts Center began taking a traditional (online) course in the fall semester 2011. These students are now enrolled in the CU program for spring 2012. The dean of the School of Graduate and Continuing Studies has traveled to New Orleans to effect the necessary coordination and to ensure that RWU standards and interests are maintained.

The College Unbound program will be presented to the RWU Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee (FSCC) this spring (2012) for approval and for the purpose of transitioning the program for its pilot status to an approved program. This process includes a thorough review of the program's curriculum, delivery techniques, assessment paradigms and courses. Once approved by the FSCC, it will be submitted to the provost for review and recommendation to the provost and for review and approval to the president.

The College Unbound program has received wide recognition including a silver Edison Award for Innovation in New York City in April 2011 with information about College Unbound announced to other award recipients from companies and organizations that included Apple Computers and Starbucks Coffee. Co-director and co-founder Dennis Littky has given numerous speeches on College Unbound at professional events, including PopTech, TEDxEDNY, a Yale University social entrepreneurial conference, World Innovation Summit for Education in Qatar, South by Southwest Interactive and the annual New England UPCEA Conference. College Unbound faculty member Adam Bush has also spoken about College Unbound at numerous national higher education conferences across the United States--Imagining America's national conference in October 2009; American Studies Association's national conference in November 2009; Columbia University's Oral Research Office in February 2010; Tufts University's Civic Studies, Civic Practices conference in July 2010; International Association for Service Learning and Civic Engagement Annual Conference in October 2010; New England Campus Compact's meeting in October 2010; Association of American College and Universities' conference in January 2011; American Education Research Association's national conference in March 2011; and the Free Minds Free People conference in July 2011. As a College Unbound staff member, Bush also received the K. Patricia Cross Future Leaders Award from the Association of American Colleges and Universities in 2011.

The College Unbound program continues to grow, evolve and serve the needs of a diverse adult learning community.

## **Standard One**

### **Mission and Purposes**

The Mission and Purposes of Roger Williams University have remained intact since the 2006 NEASC Report, providing guidance and direction to all areas of university activity. The University's four-part Mission and Purposes Statement consists of:

- Mission Statement of the University
- Core Values
- The Roger Williams University Education
- Legacy of Roger Williams (1604-1684).

These documents provide coherent and interrelated statements that define the institution, address our relationship to society and the students we seek to serve, reflect our traditions and the university's vision. (See also the "Plans" section of this document.)

The current Mission and Purposes statements were initially developed through a university-wide collaborative effort lead by a committee of the Faculty Senate in 2003-2004. Adopted by the Roger Williams University Board of Trustees in 2004, they are publicized in the University catalog, website, all admissions-related public information, and Convocation and Commencement programs.

The stability of the University's Mission and Purposes since 2006 has allowed them to resonate in depth and over a significant period of time, fostering institutional development and commitment among the board, administration, faculty, staff and students. The Mission Statement, Core Values, Roger Williams University Education and Legacy of Roger Williams guided the institution in one of the key evolutions of the 2006-2011 period, the development of the Roger Williams University Strategic Plan 2020 addressed in Standard Two. Collectively, they have also influenced specific evolutions in unit plans across the university, including increased attention to institutional effectiveness and assessment and the development of learning outcomes for all Roger Williams University academic programs.

These documents also provided a guiding role in the two areas of improvement that were looked for in NEASC's responses to our 2005 NEASC Report: the evolution of the University's Organization and Governance; and, the development and continuing refinement of the College Unbound program. The Mission and Purposes statements have also guided the many developments in university curricula and student programming. These include development of both liberal arts and professional programs at the graduate level from 2007-2011, faculty and staff hiring which has enhanced the breadth and depth of programming and increased diversity, extension of study abroad programs and exchanges to Asia, Africa and South America, on-going development of faculty/student research, and new developments in academic and co-curricular service learning through the introduction of a Community Partnerships Center (CPC). The CPC, established in 2011, is designed to search for, develop and implement partnerships with key organizations in the Rhode Island community for the purpose of broadening the university's impact beyond the boundaries of the campus.

Based on its Mission and Purposes statements, Roger Williams University increasingly positions itself as a private institution uniquely able to promote the public good.

## Standard Two Planning and Evaluation

Roger Williams University has maintained and furthered its Planning and Evaluation activities and measures since the 2006 NEASC Report, culminating in the development of the Roger Williams University Strategic Plan 2020, developed between 2007-2009. University planning and evaluation activities are now coalescing under the leadership of President Donald Farish since his arrival in June 2011.

The most far-reaching activity related to this Standard since 2006 involves the development of a broad-based, systematic, integrated planning effort, the Roger Williams University Strategic Plan 2020, based on the Mission and Purposes in Standard One. This plan furthered efforts begun at the University through the 2001 Report of the Presidential Task Forces which was featured in Roger Williams University's 2006 NEASC Comprehensive Report. The Strategic Plan 2020 was developed through a structure of 24 Task Forces composed of a mix of administrators, faculty, student and board representatives addressing the following areas:

<u>Taskforce #</u>	<u>Item</u>
	<u>Research + Analysis Tasks</u>
1	Research in Demographic Mega-trends and External Factors Competitive Analysis of RWU and Aspirant Institutions
	<u>Academic Programs</u>
2	Evaluation of Core Curriculum and Recommendations to Improve
3	Strategic Plan for RWU Schools and Programs
4	Strategic Plan for Global and International Programs
5	Strategic Plan for Graduate Programs
6	Strategic Plan for Continuing Education, Professional and Certificate Programs and Distance Learning
7	Strategic Plan for Interdisciplinary Programs and Macro Center
8	Strategic Plan for Library/Information Commons
	<u>Student Life</u>
9	Strategies for Enhancement of Student Life
10	Strategies for Improvement in Student Retention and Outcomes
	<u>Organizational Development</u>
11	Recommendations for Improvement to Academic Organization
12	Recommendations for Improvements to Administrative Organization: Other RWU Human Resources Initiatives
	<u>Campus of the Future</u>
13	Development of Campus Master Plan
14	Recommendations for Academic Facilities



15	Recommendations for International Campuses and Affiliates
16	Recommendations for Residential Housing Facilities
17	Recommendations for Social and Cultural Facilities
18	Recommendations for Recreation and Athletic Facilities
19	Recommendations for Waterfront Development
20	Recommendations for Administration and Operations Facilities

Along with four other strategic groups addressing the following tasks:

21	Strategy for Institutional Advancement and Fundraising
22	Strategy for Entrepreneurial Business Activities
23	Recommendations for Enhancement of Institutional Governance
24	Financial Projections and Long-Term Financial Plan

The Roger Williams University Strategic Plan 2020 effort arrived at the following Strategic Objectives:

1. *Position Roger Williams University as a top-tier regional liberal arts university by maintaining and strengthening our core values as the foundation for institutional priorities and decisions.*
2. *Earn recognition as a global and international university, providing a rich array of language, study abroad, service and career opportunities at home and around the world.*
3. *Provide students with a wide-ranging selection of opportunities for civil discourse and civic engagement in both curricular and co-curricular settings, enhancing the traditional academic experience.*
4. *Inculcate inclusive excellence as an institutional imperative that is both qualitative and quantifiable, establishing its central role in our future success*
5. *Recruit and retain a student body that is increasingly diverse, international and prepared for success in a rigorous and challenging academic environment.*
6. *Create more effective synergies between the academic schools, colleges and departments, resulting in greater efficiencies and a more integrative and interdisciplinary education.*
7. *Review and revise the general education curriculum to ensure common experiences, content and competencies that are relevant for success in an increasingly diverse world.*
8. *Evaluate, reward and strengthen undergraduate teaching excellence, recognizing its central role in achieving our educational mission.*
9. *Create a strong continuing studies and adult education program that is mission and market driven, innovative and creative, enhances our reputation and contributes to the University's revenue stream.*
10. *Review the role of graduate education, its delivery systems and resource requirements in relationship to the undergraduate liberal arts University mission.*
11. *Strengthen the Faculty Senate and its committees, further establishing their role as the elected voice of the faculty on academic and other important institutional issues.*

12. *Continue to build a strong Board of Trustees and school/college advisory councils that include individuals with subject expertise and regional influence who are committed to our core values and academic disciplines.*
13. *Earn recognition as a best-practice institution in adherence to all accreditation standards, ensuring transparency in operations, finance and governance.*
14. *Review the administrative structure of the University, refining it to reflect greater synergy, efficiency and effectiveness and to incorporate best practices.*
15. *Build a sustainable and technologically sophisticated campus of the future that provides a living/learning experience reflective of 21st century needs and is responsive to the demands of a competitive enrollment environment.*
16. *Identify and pursue opportunities for diversified forms of income such as grants, contracts, conferences and summer programs in order to supplement tuition revenues.*
17. *Develop institutional outcomes-based metrics to evaluate excellence in areas such as employment, graduate education, student satisfaction and alumni giving.*
18. *Serve as a leader in addressing important social, economic and environmental issues consistent with our mission and values, building strategic partnerships with others in the higher education, business and public service sectors.*
19. *Continue our path toward becoming a national model in campus health and wellness through the expansion of existing programs and the incorporation of new methodologies in the field.*
20. *Identify and reinforce the academic centers of excellence and targets of opportunity that link to our mission and markets, with the goal of improving our regional rankings in these areas.*

The strategic objectives listed above were published in the 2007-2008 President's Annual Report, located at <http://www2.rwu.edu/depository/university/presidentsreport/2007-2008PresReport.pdf>. The planning process was informed throughout by internally-generated as well as externally collected data. Indeed, during the time period since the 2006 NEASC Comprehensive Report, the University's Office of Institutional Research has been expanded to support the collection and assessment of data. Efforts associated with the development of the 2020 Strategic Plan have resulted in several significant developments that include:

- General education reform
- Construction of significant new facilities including the University Commons, Global Heritage Hall and North Campus dormitories
- Creation of the Learning Commons, unifying Library, Academic Support, Media Services, and Instructional Design
- Hiring of a Dean of Graduate and Continuing Studies, with responsibilities inclusive of online education
- Extension of local and global partnerships with community, governmental, academic and corporate partners
- Convening of annual planning sessions involving the Provost, Executive Vice-President for Finance and Administration, Director of Institutional Research, and School Deans
- Refinements in the budgeting and endowment/treasury management processes.

While the process associated with the development of the Strategic Plan 2020 was comprehensive, it did not result in a clear strategic vision for the university nor did it identify the action steps required to implement the strategic objectives. Implementation, accordingly, has lacked a clear plan. Current efforts are underway to correct this situation by defining a strategic vision for the university as well as identifying actions steps to facilitate implementation of the strategic objectives. This topic is discussed in detail in the Plans section of this report.

With respect to program evaluation, the university has established a system of periodic academic program review university-wide, instituted notably in the Feinstein College of Arts and Sciences since 2006, which complement the external program reviews in Architecture (NAAB), Business (AACSB), Chemistry (ACS), Construction Management (ACCE), Education (RIDE), Engineering (ABET), and Law (ABA), on the multi-year review cycles managed by these organizations. The University is currently considering NASAD Accreditation for its Arts programs. Through these organizations as well, evidence of student success on license and other outcomes-based exams, in particular, provides a useful reference for planning and evaluation in the university.

The University's program of student assessment of all courses, each semester, has been extended through further development of the Student Course Survey evaluation via online processes. The university's creation of the Department of Instructional Design (ID) in 2009 provides faculty development and support for instructional technologies to enhance teaching and learning. In particular its development of an e-portfolio capability for use in outcomes-based curriculum review, piloted in the School of Architecture, Art and Historic Preservation, is planned for use in the general education program. These internal processes as well as the update of the University website in 2011, further transparent planning and evaluation processes open to students, faculty, staff, board members and the public.

## **Standard Three Organization and Governance**

Since the Comprehensive Self-Study, the organizational structure of Roger Williams University has undergone numerous minor changes. The current organizational chart for the university is located in the appendices. The academic structure of the university has remained relatively unchanged. Minor changes to academic affairs include name changes of two of the units. The law school is now known simply as the Roger Williams University School of Law. The former School of Continuing Studies (SCS) has been renamed as the School of Graduate and Continuing Studies (SGCS.)

The administrative organization of the university has recently been modified. This modification was partially in response to an audit of the management structure of RWU conducted by an outside consulting firm with the goal of enhancing the operational functionality and efficiency of the university. Completed in the summer of 2011, the audit was reviewed throughout the fall by the President's Cabinet before the organizational changes were made. These changes include:

1. Recombining Media Relations and Public Affairs with Marketing and Communications, and transferring the entire unit out of Enrollment Management to report directly to the President. This unit will be headed by an Associate Vice President for Marketing and Communications. The intention underlying this change is to emphasize that marketing, communications, and media relations are central to the entire university, not just agents in the recruitment of students.
2. Creating a new unit called Community and Government Relations, reporting directly to the President, and headed by an Associate Vice President for Community and Governmental Relations. This unit will supervise the newly organized Community Partnerships Center. The Director of Public Affairs will also have a dotted line reporting relationship to Community and Government Relations ensuring that the university's primary media spokesperson is more directly linked to the President and the President's Cabinet.
3. A new position of Senior Advisor to the President has been established. This position will report directly to the President and is charged with developing written policies for the University (subject to review by appropriate bodies), coordinating administrative actions that cross Division boundaries, working as intake coordinator for discrimination/hostile climate complaints, taking on special projects, and serving as the *de facto* chief of staff.

The current membership of the President's Cabinet includes the following positions and current incumbents (an asterisk indicates a change since the last self-study) and is displayed in the table below:

**Table 3-1 Presidential Cabinet**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Incumbent</b>
President	Donald J. Farish*
Executive Vice President for Finance and Administration	Jerome Williams*
Senior Vice President for Enrollment Management	Lynn Fawthrop
General Counsel and Senior Vice President for Legal Affairs	Robert Avery
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs	Robert Potter* (Interim)
Vice President for Student Affairs	John King
Vice President for University Advancement	Robert West*
Dean of the School of Law	David Logan
Senior Advisor to the President	Richard Hale*
Associate Vice President for Community and Governmental Relations	Peter Wilbur*
Associate Vice President for Marketing and Communications	Judi Connery*

The Academic Affairs leadership team has also seen several changes. The current membership of the Deans Council includes the following positions and current incumbents (an asterisk indicates a change since the last self-study) and is displayed in the table below:

**Table 3-2 Deans Council**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Incumbent</b>
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs	Robert Potter* (Interim)
Associate Provost	Robert Cole* (Interim)
Assistant Provost for Global Affairs	Guilan Wang
Dean, Feinstein College of the Arts and Sciences	Lonnie Guralnick* (Interim)
Dean, School of Architecture, Art and Historic Preservation (SAAHP)	Steve White
Dean, Gabelli School of Business	Jerry Dauterive *
Dean, School of Graduate and Continuing Studies	Robert Robertson*
Dean, School of Education	Robert Cole*
Dean, School of Engineering, Computing and Construction Management	Gilbert Brunnhoeffter (Interim)*
Dean, School Of Justice Studies	Stephanie Manzi
Dean, University Library	Peter Deekle
Dean of Continuing Education	John Stout
Dean of On-Line Education	Kenneth Osborne

The current organizational leadership team enjoys a collegial and collaborative working relationship. The leadership of the university includes individuals with the requisite experience and expertise to guide the organization in the fashion necessary to move the university forward in an increasingly competitive environment.

The organization and operation of the Board of Trustees (BOT) has undergone considerable revision since the last self-study. A subject of a special focus visit, the changes to the BOT and the impact of these changes on compliance with Standard Three have been presented in the earlier section of this report in the section entitled “Response to Areas Identified for Special Emphasis.

## **Standard Four**

### **The Academic Program**

As stated in its *2006 Institutional Self Study*, Roger Williams University offers academic degree programs to full and part-time students at the undergraduate and graduate levels through the Feinstein College of Arts & Sciences (FCAS), the School of Architecture, Art, and Historic Preservation (SAAHP), the Gabelli School of Business (GSB), the School of Education (SED), the School of Engineering, Computing and Construction Management (SECCM), the School of Justice Studies (SJS), the School of Graduate and Continuing Studies (SGCS), and the School of Law (SOL).

With respect to this standard, RWU continues to meet and exceed the Commission's *Standards for Accreditation*. In the period since the last comprehensive review, discipline-specific reaccreditation/recertification of many of its academic programs has been attained. The SAAHP piloted and subsequently implemented an e-portfolio process that was presented to the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA) nationally in October 2010, and which forms a basis for its National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) Accreditation Visit in April 2012. In the School of Education the transition to e-portfolios for all students was implemented in time for the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) to re-approve the offered degrees for four years out of a maximum possible five. The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) has extended the accreditation of the degree programs in business offered by RWU for an additional six years from the original review year of 2010. And, the Construction Management program underwent its American Council for Construction Education (ACCE) reaccreditation visit in March 2011, receiving a six-year reaccreditation—the best possible. The Engineering program hosted its ABET (Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology) reaccreditation visit in October 2011 and, while the formal report has not yet been received, the program received a perfect bill of health, with no deficiencies, weaknesses, or concerns. For the fourth year, the School of Graduate and Continuing Studies was listed as a “military friendly school” in three different publications. RWU continues to serve military students who comprise almost 50% of the student body in SGCS.

RWU has developed many new programs of study, with particular emphasis on interdisciplinary perspectives. For example, there are new undergraduate majors in Forensics, Networking and Security, Music, Health Care Administration, and Security Assurance Studies. New undergraduate minors include Sustainability Studies, East Asian Studies, Networking and Security, Film Studies, and Chemical Engineering, while certificates now exist in Biotechnology, Community Development and Digital Forensics, in addition to expanded language instruction in Chinese, Japanese, and Arabic.

RWU has also focused on developing additional graduate programs that reflect main currents in higher education needs and demand. New graduate programs implemented in the last five years include a Master of Science in Historic Preservation, a Master of Arts in Special Education as well as a Teacher Residency Master of Arts in Elementary Education, a Master of Science in Leadership, a Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology, a 4+1 option for the

existing Master of Arts in Forensic Psychology, a 4 + 1 for the Criminal Justice program, and a Master of Science in Construction Management.

The General Education/CORE curriculum at RWU has undergone intense review and widespread discussion. A cohort of faculty and administrators were competitively selected to attend an AAC&U Summer Institute on General Education. This spawned a two-year series of Town Hall meetings, committee work, and gathering of faculty input in an effort to determine essential learning outcomes with which to potentially revise the existing CORE program. This work is ongoing as permutations of those outcomes are reviewed for possible adoption.

The procedural flow for revising RWU's curriculum has been more clearly defined and put into practice, thereby ensuring opportunity for full participation by faculty. Newly proposed programs or those undergoing significant change require the submission of a business plan and projection of anticipated revenues. Proposals begin at the program level for general review and endorsement, move to School-based curriculum committees for consideration, and then are discussed before the Faculty Senate prior to arriving at the office of the provost.

RWU has made significant progress in student global learning through study abroad. In the 2006-07 academic year, 287 students participated in programs abroad while five years later 460 students studied abroad. This 60% increase is in large part due to the development of many new and retooled short-term faculty-led programs abroad. More attention has been paid to student global learning outcomes and their assessment. RWU promotes the outcomes through Guidelines for Faculty-led Programs Abroad which are regularly reviewed and updated. The Guidelines specify faculty contact hours, length of time abroad, and the number of credits awarded to students. The Global Learning Value Rubric for faculty-led programs abroad, which was developed by a faculty/administration committee, has also been implemented. This rubric has become a syllabus design template for developing faculty-led study abroad program proposals, linking site visits, guest lectures and other activities with their global learning outcomes and assessments. In addition, the university-funded Faculty International Development Grant (FIDG) is designed to support faculty site visits for new, non-traditional, and especially for interdisciplinary faculty-led programs abroad.

With regard to assessment, the professional schools continue their formal efforts, while the programs in the College of Arts and Sciences have more fully implemented on-going assessment of student learning outcomes as part of their 5-year self-study cycles, including in some cases the implementation of the Major Field Tests. Concurrently, the CORE Curriculum Committee has been actively gathering syllabi and looking at learning outcomes by which to assess the existing general education program. Study abroad experiences are being assessed in terms of global learning via student papers, presentations, journals, essay tests, surveys, and student grades.

A subset of this year's freshmen class took the College Learning Assessment (CLA) to determine their critical thinking and writing abilities at entrance. They will take the test again at the end of their sophomore and senior years to measure curricular impacts on their proficiency in critical thinking and writing.



In the area of co-curricular initiatives, RWU has engaged Woodrow Wilson Scholars for week long residencies, and expanded the number of program-based lectures and workshops being mounted. In addition, Global and International Program Series have been developed to promote area studies of East Asia and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. And, the RWU Community Partnerships Center (CPC) delivers project-based design and preservation services to organizations and municipalities in local and regional communities. This is done through student-based service-learning type coursework, team projects, internships and externships. While CPC projects initially have focused on architectural, urban design and historic preservation projects, a recent initiative has been undertaken to broaden this outreach across the curriculum. Accordingly, the Center is now under the direction of the Associate Vice President for Community and Governmental Relations.

As to the impact of facilities on the academic program, the new 50,000 square foot, four-story Global Heritage Hall provides a technology rich learning environment with state-of-the-art classrooms, a multimedia studio, language labs and multiple computer labs. In addition, the Performing Arts Annex has been created from a rehabilitated building to establish a new teaching/learning space with dance and movement studios. Off site, but readily accessible via campus shuttle, the SEECM and the SAAHP have acquired space for artist studios and for support of the Construction Management program.

Roger Williams University has several areas of focus for the upcoming five years leading to the next comprehensive review. Principal among these is the identification and pursuit of strategic areas for programmatic growth. Connected with this is the effort to crystallize the distinctive nature of the educational experience at Roger Williams University and to define what it is about RWU's mission and values that sets it apart.

Anticipated curricular improvements include enhancing elements of the general education program, revising and strengthening articulation agreements with community colleges, broadening co-curricular and community connections, completing efforts to implement standards-based assessment in all major programs, preparing for new rounds of review by discipline-specific accreditors, and increasing student participation in both service and global learning while improving global learning outcome assessment tools.

## **Standard Five Faculty**

During fall 2005 the RWU faculty consisted of 178 full-time members whose primary duty was the delivery of instruction. As of fall 2011, the number of full-time teaching faculty has grown to 200, representing an increase of approximately 12%. At the last comprehensive review the percentage of non-white full-time faculty was 12.7%. As of fall 2011 the percentage of non-white full-time faculty stood at 15%.

The annual teaching load for all full-time faculty has been reduced from a normative 24 credit/24 contact hours to a 21 credit/21 contact hour basis. This reapportionment of time is designed to allow more focus on honing the craft of teaching and to sustain a deeper program of scholarly and creative activities. For those teaching in graduate programs, the normative annual load has been set at 18 credit/18 contact hours to allow adequate opportunity to meet the higher level of scholarship attendant with effective graduate instruction.

The negotiated faculty contract provides ample opportunities to secure money and/or course releases, on a competitive basis, to support general scholarship as well as scholarly activities generally recognized as the “Scholarship of Teaching” in order to promote excellence in the classroom. During the current academic year, \$130,000 in award money and 50 course releases are available. Additional course releases or funds have been available through the General Education/CORE Curriculum Committee and the Provost’s Teaching Colloquium.

Faculty interest in seeking grants and sponsored research by outside agencies has been aided by the strengthening of a support infrastructure that includes an Executive Director of Grants and Contracts and assistants who are dedicated to Academic Affairs. In the most recent fiscal year, the yield of this administrative partnership with faculty led to the receipt of local, state, and federal grants totaling over \$2 million, with an additional \$1 million pending and \$2 million not funded. Funding agencies from the last few years have included the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health, the Narragansett Bay Commission, the RI Coastal Resource Management Council, the Environmental Protection Agency, the RI Council for Humanities, NASA, the RI Department of Education and RI Public Health Institute, the Shellfish Restoration Foundation of Narragansett Bay, the US Department of Agriculture, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and Merck/American Association for Advancement of Science.

Faculty and administrators were also awarded significant capacity building grants from the US Department of State, Fulbright-Hays, and the US Department of Education’s Title VI programs. These awards resulted in foreign travel to Turkey, China, Japan, and Egypt, along with subsequent curriculum and programming development efforts.

Scholarship and creative activities have continued to be a focus of faculty, and an important consideration from which decisions regarding merit increases, reappointment, tenure and promotion are made. The credentials of full-time faculty hired in the last five years all indicate terminal degrees and there is a clear expectation for substantive engagement in scholarship consistent with a comprehensive university’s role.

With respect to attracting new faculty, the Human Resources office has moved to an online application submission system that allows a wider advertisement net to be cast, including expanded efforts to attract a diverse pool of applicants. Faculty are hired at competitive salaries with highly attractive benefit packages, and during the last five years had guaranteed wage increases each year, supplemented by a guaranteed merit pool for which they could be considered on a competitive basis.

With regard to retaining and developing faculty, untenured faculty members are required to meet annually with their respective deans in order to discuss their development and to review expectations. In addition, faculty who are preparing for Post-Tenure Comprehensive Review are also required to meet three years prior to ensure that performance expectations are clearly delineated. The most recent faculty contract contains over 20 pages dedicated to detailing the faculty review process and the criteria by which faculty are evaluated.

Faculty development efforts have included summer institutes in each of the last three years to improve their instructional capacities. Faculty received stipends to attend week-long training sessions in online instruction, e-portfolio systems, and general education reform. In addition, faculty have been provided with annual professional development funds to allow them to present work at conferences, acquire research materials, and so forth. The amount for the most recent academic year was \$3,100 for each full-time member.

The creation of the University Advising Center has enhanced the development of faculty advising abilities by introducing workshops and other sessions based in NACADA best practices. The Center partners with faculty in the advisement of students, and has also presented a new faculty orientation in the last few years.

The addition to the Learning Commons of the Department of Instructional Design (2009) has provided faculty support for technology-enhanced course development and transformation.

The development of the adjunct faculty is overseen by department chairpersons, program coordinators, and deans. In areas with a heavy reliance on adjuncts to deliver “service courses,” efforts have been made to standardize syllabi, and to hold adjunct faculty workshops. These initiatives have been especially effective in the areas of Math, Public Speaking and Writing.

Looking to the future, RWU intends to widen its efforts to attract and retain a diverse faculty body. It also plans to explore the possibility of creating Teaching and Research Assistantships as its graduate programs grow. A study of ways in which the full-time to part-time faculty ratio might be reduced is also under consideration and could lead to more full-time faculty.

## **Standard Six Students**

The Enrollment Management and Student Affairs divisions provide the majority of student non-academic services at the University. Enrollment Management is responsible for the recruitment of students and aspects of student retention and graduation. Student Affairs is responsible for providing the support services and co-curricular opportunities that enable current students to maximize their learning opportunities at the University. In 2010, the Board of Trustees appointed a board committee to oversee and evaluate “Recruitment, Retention and Student Life”. The Chair of the committee is a board member and the staff liaisons include the Senior Vice President for Enrollment Management and the Vice President for Student Affairs. This committee has met five times since December 2010.

The School of Law has separate admissions and student affairs procedures, goals, and staff. The School of Law also has a separate accrediting body and accreditation process. It is accredited by the America Bar Association (ABA) and the American Association of Law Schools (AALS). The Associate Dean of Admissions attends and reports at each Recruitment, Retention and Student Life Committee meeting.

The university has enjoyed continued success since the last comprehensive self-study in meeting enrollment goals. For the academic year beginning in the fall 2011, the university enrolled the second largest freshman class with highest GPA and SAT scores ever admitted to Roger Williams University. In addition, student retention has increased by 1.5% over the previous year.

The university remains committed to attracting students who possess a demonstrated capacity for academic achievement, diverse backgrounds and those who provide civic contributions. Prospective candidates apply under the Early Action program or through rolling admission. The Admission cycle is reviewed annually and adjusted as needed. Admission policies are written to promote diversity of ethnicity, gender, socio-economic factors, and geographic representation (regional, national, and international). Applications are reviewed based on the academic major or school to which the student is applying.

Merit scholarships are awarded based on academic accomplishments and civic contributions. NASFAA (National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators) best practices, guide both need and merit-based aid decisions. Merit-based aid has increased from 30% of the student aid budget in 1996 to 75% in 2011. The reduced financial burden and improved academic profile of incoming students have been reflected in improved student retention and overall academic success. The tuition discount rate has increased by 3% over the past five years.

The Student Advocacy Office (SAO) develops and oversees retention programs and serves as the nucleus for campus-wide retention collaboration working with the Center for Academic Development (CAD) in Academic Affairs as well as various offices in Student Affairs. The office’s principal achievements have been in assisting and supporting students’ persistence and success. This office has increased its student mentor staff from 25 to over 50 student

advocates and each incoming freshman is assigned a trained peer mentor for guidance through first year uncertainties. Each SAO staff member works to enhance freshman mentoring programs, provides guidance and resources to students, and collaborates with faculty to facilitate students' success.

Further opportunities to assist students in achieving their goals include the University Honors Program and other discipline-specific academic activities. The interdisciplinary Honors Program remains an essential component of the University's improved academic quality of its student body. Students are considered for the highly competitive Honors Program as part of the admissions process.

The Student Accessibility Services area (formally known as the Disability Support Services) of the Center for Academic Development assists students with documented disabilities. Individual consultations have increased and the highly regarded program is essential to continued student development. The available services provide academic accommodations and auxiliary aids for qualified students. Student Accessibility Services policies and procedures are in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

In concert with the increased sophistication of the enrollment and retention mechanisms, the University has set its goal on service to our students. In doing so, the Enrollment Management division has prioritized an open atmosphere where students feel safe asking questions, exploring opportunities and seeking the support they need on campus; both emotional and educational aspects are addressed in order to provide a well-rounded college experience.

The success obtained over the past few years in growing student enrollment and entering student GPA and SAT scores has been accomplished as a result of a focused strategic effort. In addition to new admissions initiatives the university recently unveiled a newly designed website designed to better communicate the value of a RWU education to prospective students. These efforts, coupled with continuous improvement in the academic and student affairs domains, have resulted in an application increase of over 23% in the last six years.

The chart below provides a summary of new student applications, quality, and enrollment since the last self-study.

**Table 6-1 Statistics as of October 1<sup>st</sup> Census Data**

	<b>Fall 2005</b>	<b>Fall 2006</b>	<b>Fall 2007</b>	<b>Fall 2008</b>	<b>Fall 2009</b>	<b>Fall 2010</b>	<b>Fall 2011</b>
Applied	7002	7495	7653	8921	8220	9144	9202
New Enrolled	1285	1095	1145	1056	1114	1112	1253
Acceptance Rate	78%	67.3%	66.4%	61.4%	77.7%	78.3%	76.9%
Average SAT	1087	1089	1095	1104	1095	1090	1100
Cohort Retention Rate: freshman to sophomore	76.8%	82.1%	81.7%	78%	78.6%	80.1%	N/A

The Divisions of Student and Academic Affairs continue to collaborate with Enrollment Management on retention initiatives. A *Students of Concern Committee* was formed in 2008 to strengthen communication across divisions regarding student's facing academic, personal, behavioral, health and emotional challenges. The committee, co-chaired by the Dean of Students and the Director of Counseling, meets bi-weekly and includes representatives from all three divisions resulting in targeted outreach and intervention efforts.

In 2006, Student Affairs implanted a four-year operational plan with five focus areas designed to address demonstrated student and campus needs. The focus areas included; Emphasizing Civic Engagement; Improving and Assessing Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Prevention and Education; Supporting Inclusive Excellence; Preparing Students for the Future; and Improving University Health & Wellness Efforts.

*Student Programs and Leadership* has fully implemented the three level SOAR leadership development program serving over 150 students each year. The department has involved stakeholders in all divisions in the assessment and redesign of New Student Orientation, diversified the Orientation Advisor staff, and developed a plan to repair and reestablish an outdoor experiential challenge course as a resource for training student leaders in clubs and organizations.

*Counseling and Student Development* increased professional staffing by one FTE and added additional office space in 2008 to more adequately meet increasing student client utilization levels. In order to meet the increased demand for Psychiatric Consulting Services resources funding a PEER Counseling program were reallocated in order to double the number of Psychiatric hours available from four to eight. *Health Services* has initiated a new assessment dialogue with student clients designed to identify potential psychological, AOD, and academic issues for appropriate referral.

*Athletics, Intramurals and Recreation* remains in full compliance with Title IX gender equity guidelines for Varsity Athletics. Men's Ice Hockey (2009) and Women's Field Hockey (2011) have been recognized and funded by Student Senate as new club sports. A new Synthetic Turf Field Stadium with lights, press-box, scoreboard and seating for over 500 opened in Fall 2011 providing a new competition venue for Men's and Women's Lacrosse and Soccer teams as well as intramural programs. A boathouse is being considered to support a Sailing program that has excelled on the national level winning one individual National Championship (2009, Men's) and one team racing National Championship (2011, Co-Ed).

*Residence Life and Dining* continues to shape initiatives around assessment information provided by the national Educational Benchmarking Incorporated (EBI) and the internal Residential Student Satisfaction Survey. Students rate the University in the top quartile for nine of 17 EBI factors including a first place overall ranking in Dining Services. Seven Living Learning Communities are now sponsored by Residential Life and an additional six student self-proposed LLC units were approved for 2011.

*International and Multicultural Student Affairs* added a half-time University Multi-Faith Chaplain to better support spiritual life for students, the Interfaith Council, and supervise

part-time Chaplains. The Associate Dean of Students overseeing IMSA has collaborated with the Vice President of Student Affairs and the Dean of Students on Inclusive Excellence initiatives. Recent examples include establishing campus chapters for organizations including Sustained Dialogue and the National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI) offering education, training, and intellectual examination of diversity issues on college campuses. The Intercultural Leadership Awards program was launched through Enrollment Management in 2007 (insert current numbers and funding from Don and Tracy). The University has increased international student enrollment from 107 students in 2007-08 to 222 students from 64 countries in 2010-11 through targeted global recruitment and admissions strategies. The Intercultural Center (IC) has responded to the increase in this population by strengthening international student orientation, offering additional co-curricular cultural experience programs, increasing the hours of operation of the IC and identifying local host families.

*Student Conduct and Community Standards* continues to refine policies and intervention approaches including utilizing campus service and educational projects in sanctions and assigning faculty/staff mentors to work individually with students at risk. Collaborative planning with *Wellness*, Residence Life, Counseling, and Student Senate resulted in a new AMNESTY program encouraging increased peer reporting of intoxicated students for prompt medical assessment. Continued strengthening of alcohol policies in 2006 and 2008 has resulted in decreases in alcohol violations in 2009 and 2010. The University recently completed one full four year cycle of a required online computer based alcohol prevention program (Alcohol Edu) for incoming students and has noted two consecutive years of reduced binge and problem drinking rates.

The *Career Center* completed a restructuring of professional staff assignments and service delivery and collaborated with an external consultant in spring 2011 to develop new marketing, messaging, and outreach approaches. In an effort to introduce students of all class years and majors to potential internship opportunities a 3-5 day Winter Externship program was introduced in January 2010 resulting in 108 students participating in 126 externships with 58 employers.

## **Standard Seven**

### **Library and Other Information Resources**

#### **University Libraries**

The Roger Williams University Libraries have made significant progress since 2005 in the development of a Learning Commons, “to meet the changing needs of a dynamic campus community by integrating academic services, enabling scholarly production and communication, and providing collaborative learning spaces”. The Learning Commons prompted a reconfiguration of public space and service points in the Main Library, integrating a newly-created Instructional Design Department, Media Services, and the Center for Academic Development. The Libraries have subsequently experienced dramatic increases in the number of library users (both on-site and remote), service desk usage, and the use of print and electronic resources.

The Libraries have had an expanding role in teaching and learning by imbedding information literacy in the evolving general education program, more fully engaging with the university community, and creating an exceptional library user experience. Some challenges include increasing support needs for both graduate and distance education, curtailing library services for the Providence campus following personnel reductions, and continuing space constraints in both the Main and Architecture Libraries. With a static number of staff and increasing demand for end-user support, strategic revisions of current positions and changing staff roles and responsibilities are under way. The Library’s website is under full revision, reflecting user needs, and accommodating more directly the support of distance learners and users of digital content resources. Assessing the impact and effectiveness of academic library services has become an on-going necessity.

A changing paradigm in academic libraries toward stronger engagement with the community has created the need to realign and retrain the staff. Greater collaboration with the library at the School of Law has already produced substantive collection management and staff development initiatives; more interaction is anticipated. The closer ties between Information Technology and the newly created Instructional Design Department will reflect shared budgets and coordinated user support. The next five years will also likely see a comprehensive plan to redesign library space – better accommodating group use of services and resources, enhanced technology support for both faculty and students, and improved cultural and public meeting facilities. Acquisitions budgets will increasingly support digital resources and the costs of patron access to electronic content. Storage of print materials will be consolidated to maximize space for the increased on-site use of resources and services. The Libraries’ website will continue to be refined as a robust portal for all users of resources and services.

#### **Media Services Department**

The Media Services Department has experienced dramatic changes in operations and services. Equipment deliveries have been significantly reduced through fixed classroom



installations. Classroom presentation equipment is now in 98% of general classrooms and in many other presentation and collaborative spaces. As a result, staff is providing more multimedia production services, using high-end production and editing equipment. Media Services also has established a student production equipment loan program, and has taken over the university's annual commencement video production, providing live streaming and a copy of the final commencement DVD to each student.

In the near future, the department will further develop multimedia production services in support of both online and on-site academic programs, including promotional video, streaming and digitization services. The enhancement of classroom technology will continue based on technology changes and faculty/student feedback. The equipment loan service will be expanded to include student production equipment to the general student population, in support of student work and assessment. "Analog sunset" issues will continue to be addressed, ensuring that all classrooms are digital-ready.

### **Department of Instructional Design**

In January 2009 the Department of Instructional Design (ID) unit was incorporated into the Learning Commons. Instructional Design supports all instructional technologies for teaching and learning at the University. The intent of this reallocation of duties from IT to the Learning Commons ID group was to strengthen the support of instructional technologies for both faculty and students and to provide both pedagogical as well as technical expertise. A director was hired in January 2009, and two additional members were added to the team, formerly from IT.

The Instructional Design team manages the Instructional Technology Development Center housed in the Learning Commons and provides ongoing support and consultation for all instructional applications and technologies at the University, including the Sakai course management system. Support functions include e-mail, phone, text, walk-in, website and social media access to accommodate both on-campus and online students and faculty. ID also coordinates the software, toner, and paper requirements for all academic labs and classrooms.

The team hosts an annual *Innovations in Teaching* Showcase for faculty as well as extended summer institutes on specific topics of academic interest such as transitioning from teaching onsite to online and integrating e-portfolios into the curricula. Since the team's inception, faculty adoption and utilization of instructional technologies has significantly increased. E-portfolio adoption for fall 2011 has resulted in the creation of over 400 student e-portfolios. The involvement of all Learning Commons partners in this endeavor highlights the need for a student multimedia design center (e-Studio) to support this growth as an important capital project moving forward.

### **Office of Information Technology**

Roger Williams University Office of Information Technology (RWU IT) has created a robust technology infrastructure to support the University's advanced academic applications and instructional needs.

As a member of OSHEAN, (a consortium of higher-education institutions and non-profit organizations formed to foster the development of a communications infrastructure for Rhode Island's research, educational, and public service community), RWU has access to advanced networking, including connections to the Internet and an advanced network reserved for the purposes of research and education. It is configured to burst data should the bandwidth demand increase for short durations.

Residential Network (ResNet) users must authenticate to gain access to the network. This verification and authentication process is repeated every semester (120 days) through a Campus Manager System, thereby helping ensure a stable and secure network in the residence halls. PCs are verified for OS Patch Level, Anti-Virus, Anti-Spyware, and Anti-Adware applications at the DAT file level.

The academic network consists of several segregated virtual local area networks (VLANs). These VLANs have been created to segregate the traffic for security and stability, and currently spread across the academic administration, architecture lab, wireless segment, student academic computing labs and publicly accessible server networks. Other networks on campus include a research network used by faculty for advanced research applications. The installation of a Storage Area Network (SAN), Clustered Network Attached Storage (NAS) front end to the SAN, LTO2 Tape Library, and Blade Server Centers brings the network fully up-to-date. The institution has implemented a consistent upgrade plan for its network infrastructure, replacing aging equipment and infrastructure to maintain up-to-date technology. The University is also prepared for the convergence of voice, video and data as it moves forward in the 21st century, and has deployed wireless in all areas of the university used for research, academics, and study.

RWU has recognized the need for our students to have readily accessible resources for technology equipment, support, and repair service. To this end RWU has entered into an agreement with a local computer retailer to establish a presence on campus. RWU IT has complete oversight authority of repairs and store operations and negotiates low hardware and software retail pricing that is passed on to students. In the fall of 2011, both Mac and PC support was offered. IT now also provides professional development opportunities in technology for faculty and staff. This includes the Microsoft Suite of products, Cognos training in the creation of reports and statistical data interpretation, various online technical courses and Datatel ERP module training, specific to area needs. There is also a complete, staffed help desk for faculty, staff and students. Expanded support is now from 8:00am to midnight, seven days a week. From midnight to 8:00am voice mail may be left and is monitored for critical issues.

The official means of campus communication is through the University e-mail system. Addresses containing @rwu.edu represent all Faculty and Staff, and students are issued @g.rwu.edu addresses. E-mail can be accessed through Outlook or through the web for faculty and staff. Special purpose e-mail accounts with increased disk space (for research and class delivery of projects) can be created upon request.

The Office of Information Technology is committed to the support of academic endeavors and well positioned to support the University into the future. Working together with the faculty and administration of the University, it delivers the best in instructional content and research opportunities through the use and integration of technology into the curriculum. IT is currently developing an off-site Disaster Recovery implementation, to be completed in 2012. IT will also continue to keep technology up-to-date via our replacement cycle, and is investigating ways to further automate software delivery to classrooms and labs. IT will add portal and mobile application access, Business Intelligence metrics to monitor efficiencies and provide feedback, and will support the University's efforts to launch an expanded Continuing Education Program.

## **Standard Eight**

### **Physical and Technological Resources**

When the Comprehensive Self-Study was prepared in 2006, Roger Williams University, located on a 140-acre main campus overlooking Mount Hope Bay in Bristol, Rhode Island, consisted of 27 major buildings containing nearly 1.3 million gross square feet. Since that report, the university has added four major facilities to mitigate concerns associated with growth of the student body and to enhance the academic and student life experience.

The University recognized that student enrollment growth from 2000-2005 had strained classroom utilization rates. This concern was confirmed in a spring 2005 report by Rickes Associates that found an unusually high (84%) classroom utilization rate and an insufficient number of small seminar classrooms. In response, the university added approximately 40,000 square feet of classroom and faculty office space to our facilities with the construction of the Global Heritage Hall (GHH) and a 3,900 square foot addition to our Marine and Natural Science building.

In addition to academic space, a 350-bed north campus residence complex (North Residence Hall) was constructed to relieve overcrowding in the student dormitories. Additional staff office space was provided with the addition of a new Admissions/Alumni facility and the conversion of the old admissions facility into the Center for Career Services.

The University also operates an approximately 45,000-square-foot Metropolitan Campus building in Providence, which is utilized as office and academic space for Continuing Education, the offices of the Office of General Counsel, and a legal clinic operated by the School of Law. The Metropolitan Campus facility, originally owned by RWU, was sold and a portion of that facility is now leased. The university currently leases the first three floors of the building and the fourth floor is rented to another tenant. The first floor is used primarily as office space while the second and third floors house the School of Graduate and Continuing Studies.

Management of RWU facilities is accomplished primarily by the Facilities Management office and Student Affairs. The Facility Management Office is responsible for the operation of all non-residential University facilities and shares responsibility for residential facilities with the Student Office. Facility Management oversees the maintenance, repairs and regulatory compliance of existing buildings and shares responsibility with the Capital Projects Office for the design, construction and project management of new facilities. Both offices report to the Executive Vice President for Finance and Administration. In 2006 the university ended its facilities management agreement with Sodexo Corporation which provided supervisory functions for Facilities Management. The Facilities Management director is now an RWU employee. Facility Management is comprised of 86 union employees and nine supervisory personnel who report to the Director.

An Associate Director of Public Safety previously oversaw environmental health and safety programs on campus. These functions are now under the supervision of the Associate General Counsel and Executive Director of Risk Management.

Seven adult professionals live in and supervise residential areas under the direction of the Department of Housing and Residence Life. Policies and procedures related to student conduct and safety at leased off-campus housing locations are consistent with on-campus expectations as stated in the Student Handbook and the housing contract. RWU annually administers the ACUHO-I/EBI survey to our students. A five-year longitudinal comparison shows that students on campus feel safe in their residence halls and rooms, are satisfied with RA performance and dining services, and register an increasing satisfaction rating of their overall academic experience at RWU. Continuing areas of concern include vending services, residence hall internet band-width connectivity, and cable TV services.

RWU facilities are constructed and maintained to ensure compliance with all federal, state and local building codes and regulations. The Facilities Management office coordinates with the towns of Bristol and Portsmouth, the State of Rhode Island and the Coastal Resource Management program on the utilization of public services, zoning, licenses, utilities and all safety and environmental management issues. RWU has worked with the Bristol community to ameliorate infrastructure concerns about campus expansion, the most noticeable example being the construction of the south campus 300,000 gallon water tower, paid for by RWU and given to the Town of Bristol. And this past year, the President's Residence underwent a renovation to facilitate handicap accessibility.

In the Comprehensive Self-Study it was stated that, "In the past, the University has lacked a coordinated approach to recycling in the dining halls, residence halls, academic buildings and offices." Since that report, extensive efforts have been taken to encourage recycling and to lower the campuses environmental impact. Efforts included:

- Converting university buildings from oil to natural gas
- Replacing incandescent light bulbs with CFL or LED lighting
- Strategically placing recycling containers throughout the campus
- Conducting programs on conservation
- Ensuring new construction meets LEED Silver standards.

Academically, a new interdisciplinary minor in Sustainability, reinforces these efforts and encourages serious curricular and scholarly innovations.

The Capital Expenditure (CAPEX) process has experienced considerable refinement since the Comprehensive report. Physical resource planning is an increasingly important part of the annual CAPEX budget process. This process identifies and prioritizes new physical resource needs as well as deferred and planned maintenance needs. All departments are eligible to submit CAPEX requests through their respective administrative officers for preliminary review and recommendations by vice presidents and final approval by the president. During the past five years, the university has dedicated approximately \$14 million of CAPEX funding for deferred maintenance.

The Information Technology (IT) office is committed to the protection and integrity of student and employee confidential data. The University has in place systems to ensure that all data are redundantly backed-up. Employees are trained in password protection as well as all

regulatory requirements, including FERPA. All production system data are replicated to a standby system in another building. These data files are also backed up to SAN disk storage. The production and replicated systems are then backed up to tape files. The University will have a “warm”, off-site, Disaster Recovery location in place by the end of 2012.

Information Technology has employed SSL certificates and SSH technology to ensure that all data to and from the University’s ERP solution are encrypted during transport. In addition, the data are transported over a logically separate network from other academic traffic on campus. Clear telnet traffic is no longer allowed to and from the ERP system and all movement of data to and from campus are accomplished through Secure FTP, SSL or PGP encrypted files. IT is implementing the latest Intrusion Protection System technology in January 2012.

Roger Williams University has developed and posted to its website several policies. These include:

- Copyright Infringement
- Appropriate Use
- Electronic Communications
- Wireless Airspace
- Password.

While the number of classrooms equipped with instructional technology (computer projection, internet, DVD/VCR player and cable TV) had grown considerably from 2000-2005, at the time of the last Comprehensive Self-Study, there continued to be a shortage of such classrooms to meet the increasing demand. This shortfall was satisfied through the delivery and set-up of portable equipment from the Media Services department. Beginning in FY 2005-2006, \$100,000 was funded for the purchase and installation of new in-place classroom technology to ameliorate this situation. This budget amount has continued every year since and, as of this report, all classrooms are now equipped with the latest instructional technology. Overall, the Media Services department has installed or upgraded 82 additional instructional areas and classrooms with Multimedia/Fixed Classrooms equipment installations for a total of 102 fixed multimedia sites on the Bristol Campus. Additionally, RWU now has wireless coverage in all areas of the Bristol campus used for research, academics, and study. The Metropolitan Campus in Providence has, at present, a total of eight classrooms. Four classrooms are equipped as fixed multimedia classrooms, two others are full computer labs and the remaining two rooms are supported by portable multimedia equipment. The Metro campus is also equipped with wireless internet and, as of fall 2011, a part-time technology specialist was hired to provide service to faculty and students during peak evening operating hours.

In summary, the growth of the university has intensified on-going evaluation of physical and technical resources. The university is committed to maintaining and improving current facilities and technology and constructing new facilities as required. The university has demonstrated a commitment to utilizing appropriate assessment tools offering external benchmarking data such as the ACHUO – I/EBI resident study, the Classroom Utilization

study, and regular student dining surveys. These assessment tools have proven instrumental in shaping our priorities and decision making on qualitative issues through quantifiable data.

## **Standard Nine Financial Resources**

During the period since the 2006 Comprehensive Self-Study was prepared, Roger Williams University's financial resources can be characterized as follows:

- Growth in revenue from tuition, grants and gifts
- High levels of debt (with reductions made in FY 2011 and FY2012 as noted below)
- Formal written budget and investment policies
- Low tuition discount rates
- Improved documentation of university fiscal policies
- Property tax risk.

The financial information presented includes Roger Williams University and the Roger Williams University School of Law.

### **Sources of Funds**

During the recent national economic recession, revenue growth has been strong as have been the operating results. Over the past three years the level of tuition increases has been the lowest in the history of the University. These increases have averaged 3.7%, acknowledging our commitment to provide value to our students. Over the previous five year period, tuition and fees averaged 4.7% for the University and 5.6% for the Law School. Operating revenues have increased at an average annual rate of 3.4% between fiscal years 2007 through 2011. It should be noted that in FY 2010, due to strong operating results, the revenue contribution from the endowment was eliminated for this one fiscal year which reduced the average annual growth rate. Using a prudent leveling methodology, the average annual contribution from the endowment fund to the operating expenses during this same five year period has equaled \$4,077,000. The university has reached beyond New England to capture students from the other 44 states and 48 foreign countries. The percentage of non- New England residents enrolled as undergraduates at Roger Williams University is now 26.8%.

With a new president on board, it is expected that the University will launch a major capital campaign within the next eighteen months.

### **Uses of Funds**

The budget process initiated at the time of the last report has been refined significantly and steps have been taken to reduce operating expenses without impacting the student academic or campus experience. Over the last three years the operating budget has been reduced by over \$10,000,000 through a combination of strategic initiatives and competitively bidding contract services. For example the University bid out its electricity, natural gas and health insurance contracts, which provided significant savings. Electricity savings alone totaled over \$1.8 million over five years and health care savings totaled \$1.3 million in FY 2011. In



addition, the competitive bidding of our utilities enabled the University to lock in historically lower electricity rates over a five year period and natural gas rates over a three year period, providing stability to the operating budget.

Over the past five years the University has had strong operating results. This has provided the ability to take on our annual capital needs and to fund a new initiative to address deferred maintenance items without resorting to additional debt issuance. Capital equipment requests and deferred maintenance are being carefully monitored and reviewed to ensure that the university is delivering first rate instruction to the students and avoiding large, unplanned expenditures demanded by the physical plant. For the first time in recent history a comprehensive facilities assessment was conducted to identify by priority the deferred maintenance projects to ensure the long term viability of our physical plant. The Board of Trustees approved the recommended five year \$20 million internally funded deferred maintenance program. The first phase of this program is being completed in FY 2012 with all projects at or under budget.

The hiring of faculty and staff is proceeding to accommodate the slight expansion in the student body (undergraduate and graduate). This includes permanent, tenure track faculty as well as adjuncts. The university has recently completed a study to determine the ideal part-time to full-time faculty ratio.

### **Outstanding Bonded Debt**

As of December 1, 2011 the total bonded debt load of the University is \$134,450,000 compared to a bonded debt load of \$142,293,000 at the same time in FY 2010. The current annual operating budget is \$148,816,000 and our endowment is currently \$73,090,000. The University has taken significant steps to reduce our debt burden over the past year while also reducing the annual interest cost by taking advantage of lower interest rates. In May of 2011, a bond refunding was completed that reduced the overall principal amount outstanding by \$2,695,000 and resulted in total interest savings over the next 17 years of \$3,185,000. In November of 2011, a second bond refunding was completed that also reduced the amount of debt outstanding by \$1,018,000 and provided total interest savings of \$1,919,000 over the next 18 years. The combined result of the bond refinancing reduced our outstanding debt by \$3,713,000 and will save the University a total of \$5,104,000 in interest costs.

### **Financial Management**

Roger Williams University maintains a high level of fiscal management for both its capital and operating budgets. Monthly reporting is provided to senior management for all functional units as well as the Executive Vice President for Finance and Administration, the President and the Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees. This monthly reporting provides both detailed and summary formats to identify any areas of variance to the budget. This comprehensive reporting along with good fiscal management by senior management has provided extremely strong operating results during this prior five year period. These results were mentioned by our rating service in their last report. In addition, the strong annual

operating results were a major factor in the ability to refinance the 1998 and 2000 bond issues which resulted in the substantial savings noted above.

### **Audited Financial Statements**

During the past five years the University has received unqualified audit opinions for its financial statements and A-133 programs. In addition, over the past two years the University implanted an audit of the 403 b retirement plans with an unqualified opinion as well. Copies of these audits are included with this report. .

### **Investment Management**

The investment strategy described in the last report remains in place. The rate of inflation, as measured by the CPI change from 2006 has been modest 2.2% annually (Oct 2011 = 226.4, Oct 2006 = 201.8). The investment performance over this past five year period has been an average of 5.81% annually, which includes the disastrous years of 2008-2009. It should also be noted that in 2008 a complete review was completed on the University's long term asset allocation. Recommendations for additional diversification by asset class and within asset class were implemented during FY 2009 and FY 2010. Due to this expanded diversification and strong asset management, for these fiscal years the rate of return on the long term investments have exceeded the benchmarks as noted below:

	<u>Benchmark</u>	<u>RWU Rate of Return</u>
FY 2010	10.7%	11.5%
FY 2011	19.9%	22.0%

### **Financial Aid**

Increases in tuition and fees have averaged 4.7% from the class entering in August 2007 to the class entering in August 2011. For academic year 2011-12, 81% of the students receive financial aid for a total of \$ 42.3 million. The new president is exploring ways to provide the RWU education to students whose financial circumstances would normally disqualify them from matriculation.

### **Risk Management**

The university is continuing to manage and reduce liability connected with the people working for the university, the students attending the university, and the visitors to the university. Rational, written and enforced safety policies are being issued to insure that all occupants of the university have a high expectation of safety on campus and in any off campus program sanctioned by the university.

The second element of risk management is the maintenance and repair of the physical plant. An aggressive program of identifying and prioritizing the maintenance requirements of the

buildings and infrastructure is being developed and included in the budgeting plans every year.

The third element of risk is tax exposure. The university has continued to cooperate with the Town of Bristol to contribute to the welfare of the town as a good corporate citizen. The water tower at the south end of campus is an example of this initiative. The larger issue of property taxes controlled by the Rhode Island legislature continues to be an issue.

### **Appraisal**

The university needs to bolster its endowment fund to enable it to explore and take advantage of opportunities in education as it enhances its reputation in and outside of New England. The capital campaign being developed by President Farish is aimed to accomplish this key step in the development of the university.

In addition, the University is strategically reviewing opportunities to expand its revenue base. There is significant opportunity within the School of Continuing Studies and partnerships for certificate programs. This expansion can be done through leveraging resources and expanding on the expertise of the current faculty.

### **Summary**

As the university becomes more successful, its property will continue to be more valuable and the issue of property taxes will loom large in its future. Roger Williams University has a very strong relationship with the Town of Bristol and continues to operate within a fair memorandum of understanding with the Town. This covers payments to the Town along with joint programs that are mutually beneficial. The State of Rhode Island continues to suffer with annual budget deficits and there is some concern that more revenue is needed by cities and towns as the State reduces aid. Given the strong relationship with Bristol, and the consistent positive fiscal management by Town officials, this concern is not as great as in some of the larger urban communities.

## Standard Ten Public Disclosure

Roger Williams University (RWU) continues to employ a variety of electronic and print media to communicate with current and prospective students, parents, alumni, faculty, staff, and the general public. Social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and YouTube have also been added to the University's electronic means of communication.

The RWU website is the primary means through which the institution informs the public about the institution. Since the last report, RWU's website has been upgraded twice. The newest iteration of [rwu.edu](http://rwu.edu) was the result of a comprehensive strategic initiative that involved faculty, staff and students and was based on research that also included prospects, parents, alumni, guidance counselors and other key constituencies. The result was a completely new site, with a new architecture, built on the Drupal platform. This industry-standard, open-source Content Management System (CMS) allows for a more interactive and robust online experience that can be easily updated as new technologies emerge. It also allows for individual university departments and schools to update their own content easily and quickly, ensuring the provision of current and accurate information.

Phase I of the new site was launched in September 2011. This phase was geared primarily to the external needs of the University with links back to the old website for all content not yet migrated to the new. Phase 2, which will include all remaining content, is scheduled for a mid-January 2012 launch, at which time the old, outdated and unsupported CMS will be permanently retired.

The new site navigation is much more user friendly and intuitive. It allows for numerous entry points for various constituencies to find information relevant to their needs. A search tool, powered by Google, also allows users to quickly find the information they need. In an effort to be responsive to requests for information, the "e-mail us" button on the front page of the University Web site is now called "Contact Us" and breaks out key areas where concerns may lie, allowing for direct access, and eliminating the red tape of web services having to direct all inquiries. University Fast Facts are accessible from the new website under the "About" section.

Regularly produced publications are still being published to further inform the University community about noteworthy and significant developments. *The Bridge* is now *RWU* magazine. It is published twice each year, as is the Law School magazine – formerly *Amicus*, now *RWU Law*. The *President's Report* is printed annually. The university's new online news and events site and media room, PDQ, is updated weekly (and often more frequently) with new information, news stories, event announcements and coverage, and includes the RWU events calendar. This online resource has replaced the "University Update" as the most up-to-date news source for the campus community. The Daily Dose continues to be disseminated via email, although plans are underway for a more user-friendly update that will be more responsive to the needs of the University community. In addition, an email compilation of stories published about the University – "RWU In the News" – is disseminated monthly during the academic year.

The “Web and Electronic Identity Construction Initiative” and the Administrative Electronic Communication and Marketing committee discussed in the previous report are no longer active. However, existing web staff in Marketing Communications address issues such as accuracy, consistency, and thoroughness of its public communication on a daily basis, working with advisory committees on key initiatives (such as the new website) when practical and appropriate.

### **Activities In-Progress**

In the last NEASC Comprehensive Self-Study, RWU recognized the need for a new and improved Website, that information regarding retention rates and student debt needed to be made available on the website or via a suitable alternate venue, that a Graduate Handbook with centralized information about the various programs be incorporated in the University Catalog, and that part-time faculty be recognized in University publications.

As stated above, the newly designed website is currently in use. In addition to the revamped website, a strategically-staffed department of Marketing Communications, which includes experienced professionals in marketing, design, writing, interactive communication and production – working closely with the department of Public Affairs – is now responsible for all visual branding and messaging for RWU. Working collaboratively, this team has evolved the brand beyond the previous model. Academics has a higher profile in publications and on the new website, the University’s seal is being used strategically in addition to its logo, and messaging is responsive to student and parent concerns about outcomes and return on investment in private higher education. RWU is using social media and interactive digital marketing in new and creative ways, allowing us to reach the student audience in the places where they are looking for information and communicating with their peers.

Information regarding retention rates from freshman to sophomore year, along with the average student loan indebtedness, is now available on the Website.

Beginning with the 2008-2009 academic year, the graduate program policies and procedures are included in a separate and distinct section of the University Catalog thereby providing a centralized location for information about the various programs offered.

At this time, part-time faculty are not recognized in University publications. However, the functionality of the new website will allow for adjunct faculty listings to be implemented. Once added, this information will need to be monitored and updated by the individual schools/college.

## Standard Eleven Integrity

Roger Williams University continues to expand its efforts to integrate its core values with honesty and integrity in all aspects of its operations. The University takes seriously the standard of integrity that it sets for the entire community. RWU continues to promote high ethical standards in the management of its dealings with students, faculty, staff, the Board, external organizations and the public. Codes of conduct for faculty (*RWU Faculty Association NEARI/NEA Contract with the Board of Trustees*), for staff (Human Resources “Employment Related Policies”; *RWU Professional Support Staff Association Contract*) and students (*RWU Student Handbook*) are freely available to the university and public through the university website. Open communication exists through the interaction of formal committees and bodies which represent the interests of various constituencies of the university.

To ensure integrity, policies governing institutional integrity are reviewed regularly. These include academic honesty, intellectual property, conflict of interest, privacy rights, academic freedom, non-discriminatory policies and practices, and fair grievance procedures. The university continues to monitor and enhance policies that raise the standard of integrity that it sets for the faculty, staff and students. For example, over the past five years, the following policies have been developed or significantly revised:

- **Conflict of Interest Policy:** This policy ensures that conflicts are avoided and monitored in areas involving contracted employees, administration, staff and faculty, including those involved in grant-based research contracts that affect federal and state funds. The policy was revised in February 2008. The policy’s annual disclosure form provides evidence that the University is engaging in good ethical practices, established by proper procedures and mandated by the policy.
- **Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures:** University policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender. The policy, which applies to students, faculty, staff, and university officers equally, was revised in February 2010. The University has also provided online training programs to raise awareness of the seriousness of the issue.
- **Volunteer Policy:** The university adopted a policy in 2010 establishing guidelines that permit individuals to volunteer their services to the University. The RWU Office of General Counsel reviews required volunteer applications to determine whether assignment is permissible.
- **Intellectual Property:** Committees established by the Faculty Contract, have upgraded and enhanced policies addressing matters of intellectual property ownership and privacy, in response to new challenges presented by online courses and expanding faculty research responsibilities.

- **Legal and Privacy Rights:** The university's privacy rights are contained in the Legal and Privacy Policy which is published on the RWU Web site. At student orientation sessions, FERPA information addressing the privacy of educational records is provided to students and parents.
- **Academic Honesty:** Academic integrity standards have been established and published by the Office of Academic Affairs. These are reflected in a pledge administered to all freshmen at Student Convocation (and published in the *University Catalog* and *Student Handbook*). Policies and processes regarding academic integrity are currently under review by the Deans' Council and Faculty Senate.
- **Legal Observance:** The Office of General Counsel, established in 2003 to improve the efficacy of prudent and required legal affairs on behalf of the institution, has been expanded recently and is now staffed with four in-house attorneys. The services provided include representation, advice, research, opinions, policy writing, and training on behalf of the university, to the Board of Trustees, university administration, faculty, staff (and occasionally others acting on behalf) of the university.
- **Non-discriminatory Policies and Practices:** The university website, the *University Catalog* and the *Student Handbook* state that RWU adheres to principles of lawful affirmative action and equal employment opportunity. The Intercultural Center (IC) provides the RWU community with opportunities and an environment that encourage relationship and community building. It provides forums that enhance the personal exploration and development of its community members regarding personal identity, academic excellence and exemplary citizenship. The IC challenges community members to be life-long learners and active members of our global society. The Office of Admissions encourages the search for diversity, targeting publications and forums that reach a diverse range of potential students.
- **Grievance Procedures:** Appropriate grievance policies and procedures exist for students, employees and faculty in the Student Handbook, the collective bargaining agreements for faculty, clerical-technical staff, Public Safety officers, Dining and Facilities staff, and for non-bargaining unit staff, including professional staff. Roger Williams University in 2009 adopted a disability discrimination grievance procedure to assist in facilitating resolution of complaints alleging disability discrimination in violation of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

The university's institutional integrity is continually being reexamined, reevaluated and reassessed to ensure fairness in all of its procedures and policies. RWU's inclusion in the Chronicle of Higher Education's list of 2011 "Great Colleges to Work For" is one indication that RWU has fostered a greater openness and transparency in policy-making processes, as well as engaging many members of the community in a joint effort to ensure that the university maintains institutional integrity in the management of its affairs. The university also recognizes areas of concern which require attention in order to further our goal of continuous improvement.

## Plans

Strategic planning involves several steps. It begins with a strategic vision: where is the campus wishing to go? The vision links to the mission: what is the campus's reason for existence? The vision and mission are informed by a values statement: what does the campus see as informing and guiding the actions it will take? Then there are strategic objectives: what are the particular goals of the campus? Finally, each strategic objective has a series of action steps, with objectively articulated outcomes such that the success of each action step can be measured and evaluated.

Trying to undertake each of these elements simultaneously in order to create a single strategic plan is very difficult on a university campus because a commitment to shared governance requires a constant and on-going dialogue. It is not uncommon for a campus to spend two years developing such a plan and, unfortunately, aspects of the plan are often out-of-date (because of unanticipated changes in the internal or external environment) even as the plan is published.

Three strategic plans have been developed at RWU over the past ten years. Most recently, a major effort at strategic planning, entitled "Strategic Plan 2020," was initiated in the fall of 2008 and finalized a year later. The planning process included some 24 taskforces, involving more than 200 members of the campus community, and resulted in a major compilation and analysis of data, along with various recommendations. From all this were distilled 20 "strategic objectives." At that point, however, much of the forward momentum stalled and the implementation of the objectives has, for the most part, been unrealized. To a large degree, the failure to effectively act on the recommendations is due to the lack of a clearly defined and widely-accepted vision for the university moving forward.

Given the presence at RWU of a mission statement and a set of core values, it is necessary to clarify the strategic vision that will inform everything that is subsequently done. It is also necessary to relate proposed action steps to a strategic vision to ensure that the action steps do not violate the values or mission statement.

A vision statement describes the goals and objectives of an organization in a straightforward and easily understood manner. It is, by its very nature, future directed. Currently discussion is under way to produce a new vision statement that will better capture the realities of the RWU curricular offerings and the advantages of the RWU educational experience. Once agreed upon by the university community, it will assist in defining the strategic vision necessary for the development and implementation of future changes.

The results obtained from the 2020 Strategic study, coupled with extensive discussion among university constituencies, were used to identify the major strategic issues facing Roger Williams University. These issues include the need to reinforce the identity of the university, to effectively respond to increasing public concerns about the affordability of and access to higher education, and to reach out to demographic groups that have not typically sought a private university education.



To effectively address these issues, the following question must be answered: **Where should Roger Williams University be in 10 years, and what steps must we undertake to get us there?** There is a clear need for a dramatic and comprehensive set of changes or action steps that will preserve the university's core values while positioning RWU for future growth and advancement.

A number of action steps are currently *under discussion*. These are wide-ranging and include virtually every sector of the university community. They are offered as part of this report to provide insight as to future direction of the institution. The discussion is on-going and it would be premature to suggest that the ideas below will all be adopted or, in the event that they are adopted, precisely what direction they will take.

### **Academic Affairs**

- Adopt a university-wide protocol to standardize the periodic assessment of all academic programs, as well as the general education program, in order to facilitate the continuous improvement of the academic offerings and to inform decisions regarding the future configuration of the curricula.
- Develop mechanisms for encouraging the consideration of new interdisciplinary programs or of programs not now offered but for which there is a demand.
- Establish an on-going analysis process of academic performance using metrics that compare RWU performance to peer and aspirant campuses.
- Enhance the Honors Program to ensure a robust academic experience for highly competent students to encourage them to complete their studies at RWU.
- Expand the programs and offerings of the SGCS to better address the issues of rising educational costs and create a more inclusive campus.

### **Administration and Finance**

- Compare employee salaries with peer and aspirant institutions to ensure that RWU employees are compensated in a manner that is fair and equitable.
- Establish budget paradigms to ensure sustainable annual budgets that permit necessary allocations for deferred maintenance, capital expenditures, and financial aid.
- Develop new revenue sources for the university.
- Explore new opportunities to increase purchasing power with respect to such high cost vendor services as health care and insurance, among others.
- Collaborate with Student Affairs to establish an implementation plan for student-centered technology.
- Establish a project plan for the implementation of modules within the current administrative software system to enhance efficiency and provide greater customer satisfaction.
- Enhance back-up capabilities for the IT systems.

## **Advancement**

- Examine the feasibility of initiating a capital campaign.
- Expand current fundraising efforts.
- Expand alumni outreach activities.
- Facilitate communication with alumni using the latest technology.
- Increase the number of sponsored alumni events.
- Revitalize the Board of Overseers, a group of prominent individuals with great potential to participate with the university.
- Reach out to the greater Rhode Island community in an effort to more fully collaborate in areas of common interest.

## **Community and Government Relations**

- Expand community-based, project-based, team-based experiential learning.
- Identify potential outreach projects in which students and faculty can collaborate with the local community.
- Examine grant opportunities to help underwrite the costs of particular projects.
- Publicize the commitment RWU is making toward the betterment of RI, even as it creates more value-added education for the students.

## **Enrollment Management**

- Determine the optimal enrollment for both the campus and the individual majors and recruit to those targets.
- Explore new paradigms for optimizing available financial aid in order to attract and retain a highly competitive class that is both achievement-oriented and reflects the growing diversity of the nation.
- Consider high profile actions such as offering full tuition scholarship to high school valedictorians.
- Explore creative methods for increasing the demographic diversity of the university by partnering with local organizations such as the Minister's Alliance of Rhode Island.
- Develop new and stronger ties with regional community colleges to attract a larger number of successful transfer students.
- Increase the use of portfolio and audition assessments not only in admission decisions but also financial aid decisions.
- Examine the feasibility of reducing reliance on standardized test scores as an admission tool and identify alternative methods of predicting applicant collegiate success.

## **Marketing and Communications**

- Determine what level of internal workload is sustainable and cost-effective and the appropriate level of outsourcing.

- Shift in thinking from marketing for Admissions to marketing the entire campus.
- Maintain a university website that meets or exceeds the expectations of all departments of the university.
- Respond to expectations regarding media coverage of noteworthy activities involving campus personnel.
- Explore opportunities to create and publicize a Speakers' Bureau as a vehicle for promoting the expertise of the faculty.
- Improve internal communications.

### **Office of the President**

- Develop standardized processes for the development, review and publication of university policies.
- Initiate a review of all non-teaching positions, including a comparison of position counts with our peer and aspirant campuses, to ascertain if every currently occupied position is necessary and essential for the efficient operation of the campus.
- Consider creating a President's blog, in order to improve communication with various groups of stakeholders.

### **School of Law**

- Examine opportunities for rebranding.
- Embrace project-based learning that expands the clinics and externships in Providence.

### **Student Affairs**

- In cooperation with Enrollment Management, attract students whose values match the university's values, reducing the incidence of alcohol abuse and increasing student involvement, civility, retention and satisfaction.
- In cooperation with Academic Affairs and Community and Government Relations, expand the commitment to volunteerism as an important way of initiating the proposed focus on project-based, team-based learning.
- Expand student participation in community service projects during semester and spring breaks.
- Enhance diversification of the student body by ensuring an inclusive, supportive campus environment with respectful dialogue and intercultural learning.
- Investigate the benefits and feasibility of constructing a Student Center.
- Expand the First Year and upperclassmen activities that focus on transition issues and practical skills building in order to bolster career planning, internship opportunities, and graduate studies.