



Recommendations and Commendations

Middle States Commission
on Higher Education
June 2012

**TWO
RECOMMENDATIONS
WITH MONITORING
REPORT DUE JUNE 2014**

STANDARD 1: MISSION AND GOALS

Mission statements and goals at divisional or unit level appear to be linked to the College mission statement but it is unclear as to the intentionality of this alignment. Mission statements of various units (except academic affairs) are uncoordinated.

Charge a broadly representative task force with reviewing and, as appropriate, recommending strategies to enhance alignment and awareness of the College's core mission documents to ensure that they are current, fully integrated with each other, and sufficiently clear to be directive in planning, decision making, and the allocation of resources.

STANDARD 7: INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

The institution needs to establish an organized and sustained institutional-level assessment plan and reporting process that communicates to the college community its progression on the achievement of goals identified in the Bicentennial Plan. The assessment plan and how the results are used to inform prioritization and resource allocation decisions should be based upon an evaluation of the institutional data available and presently used to inform decisions at the college.

**TWO ADDITIONAL
RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR
REGULAR FIVE-YEAR PERIODIC
REVIEW IN 2017**

STANDARD 2: PLANNING, RESOURCE ALLOCATION, AND INSTITUTIONAL RENEWAL

Assessment data needs to be collected, analyzed, and decisions made in all academic and non-academic units on the campus and tied to the planning and necessary resource allocation.

STANDARD 14: ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Enhance communication efforts to students and administrators to make more transparent the use of the direct evidence of student learning that informs changes to the academic programs.

TWENTY-SIX

COMMENDATIONS!!!!!!

GENERAL COMMENDATION (VERY UNUSUAL)

To reaffirm accreditation and to commend the institution for the quality of its self-study process and self-study report.

STANDARD 1: MISSION AND GOALS

SUNY Potsdam is to be commended to its biennial planning retreats and inclusive participation of key stakeholders in the retreats.

STANDARD 3: RESOURCES

1. The college's success in soliciting capital funding for maintenance is to be commended. The investment shows in the attractive appearance of the campus and the good operational condition of the physical plant.
2. The college is also commended for its success in acquiring capital funding for its new Performing Arts complex, to be LEED certified and scheduled for completion in 2014, especially at this time when the arts are too often undervalued.



STANDARD 3 CONTINUED

3. Potsdam should be commended for producing a Financial Report (FY 2011-2012 Financial Report) along with the new website which includes the Campus Resource Report. This document along with the website allows for a complete transparency of the financial plan and includes the Bicentennial Plan, Biennial Goals and Institutional Priorities.

STANDARD 3 CONTINUED

4. Potsdam should be commended on their Facilities Master Plan completed by an architectural firm based on dialogue with faculty, staff and students. This plan clearly lays out a facility plan including renovation, upgrades, demolition and new construction over the next ten years. The plan also prioritizes projects and includes a detailed timeline. The energy related projects should help the college save money over the next several years. The plan will also help the administration with capital funding requests to the legislature.

STANDARD 6: INTEGRITY

1. The institution has created an excellent set of procedures for non-academic dispute resolution.
2. Despite their naturally divergent advocacy, the faculty holds the administration in high regard. The administration deserves praise for making its decisions transparent.

STANDARD 8: STUDENT ADMISSIONS AND RETENTION

1. The Transfer and articulation program
2. The Student Success Center

STANDARD 9: STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

The leadership programs, especially the emerging leaders program cultivates in students a strong sense of the mission of the college and develops an strong base from which student leaders are drawn

STANDARD 10: FACULTY

1. That the Foundation has made faculty development funds a cornerstone for its campaign. Both professional development funds for faculty and student scholarships/development funds are essential to improve quality of teaching and learning.

2. That a New Faculty Seminar has been established to follow and support first-year faculty as they acclimate to the campus culture, and that feedback from participants is used to implement improvements year after year.

STANDARD 10 CONTINUED

3. Faculty professional activities constitute an impressive list. Especially noteworthy are the many activities that include and encourage students to engage in professional activities or service. The success of individual faculty in securing funding from external sources, both regional and national, is likewise impressive and demonstrates faculty engagement in the community it serves.

STANDARD 10 CONTINUED

4. Faculty engagement with students is pervasive. Students and faculty together are devoted to moving students forward at every step of learning. At the end of their journey, students are both intellectually and vocationally prepared to face their futures. The connection between faculty and students continues far beyond graduation, as evidenced by the extent of alumni giving back to the institution.

STANDARD 10 CONTINUED

5. Special commendation goes to the Crane School of Music for its extraordinary success story. The Crane School faculty, through diligent effort and collective wisdom, has advanced a broad curriculum to meet the current and future needs of a wide variety of students with diverse abilities and musical ambitions. The School sets rigorous standards, but it also provides the means by which students can meet those standards, accomplish lofty goals, and take pride in their achievements. Harnessing as well the good will of its active alumnae – who give back monetarily and who assist with career opportunities – the School takes on the added responsibility of creating the portals through which graduates can take their first steps into the musical world at large.

STANDARD 11: EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS

Standard 11 favors SUNY/Potsdam more than any other MSCHE standard. The faculty is to be commended for “soldiering on” in their constrained financial circumstances. The ongoing discussions about General Education and graduate programs are appropriate and conducted with a great deal of respect between constituencies with opposing viewpoints. In all matters, the faculty has shown a deep commitment to the content and the quality of education that defines Potsdam alumni.



STANDARD 12: GENERAL EDUCATION

1. Inclusion of a foreign language as a requirement among the general education categories.
2. Preparing teachers, via workshops, for those courses scheduled for outcomes assessment.
3. Full participation by full-time, tenured/tenure track faculty in general education courses.
4. A comprehensive general education assessment procedure, inclusive of all designators simultaneously.

STANDARD 12 CONTINUED

5. Buy-in by both faculty and students.
6. A procedure in place for re-evaluation and renewal of existing/pre-existing general education courses.
7. The creativity, enthusiasm, and ingenuity that the extensive structure of the General Education component inspires. The rich diversity of experiential and intellectual challenges that it offers for both students and faculty is a model for other institutions to emulate.

STANDARD 14: ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

Given the increase in the number of online and hybrid courses offered and taken by students in the last six years, the College is to be commended for its rigorous assessment practice of this enhanced delivery and pedagogy methods.

NEXT STEPS

- Task Force to respond to recommendations for 2014 Report.
- Review of recommendations and suggestions as part of annual planning retreat to review biennial goals.
- Division heads to review recommendations and suggestions for issues to be addressed at the divisional or departmental level.
- Faculty Senate Goals and Planning Committee to review recommendations and suggestions for their recommendations regarding 2012-2014 goals.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS?