Chapter 2
Standards 2, 3 and 7: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal, Resources and Assessment

Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal

“An institution conducts ongoing planning and resource allocation based on its mission and goals, develops objectives to achieve them, and utilizes the results of its assessment activities for institutional renewal. Implementation and subsequent evaluation of the success of the strategic plan and resource allocation support the development and change necessary to improve and to maintain institutional quality.” (Characteristics of Excellence 4)

Standard 3: Institutional Resources

“The human, financial, technical, physical facilities, and other resources necessary to achieve an institution’s mission and goals are available and accessible. In the context of the institution’s mission, the effective and efficient uses of the institution’s resources are analyzed as part of ongoing outcomes assessment.” (Characteristics of Excellence 9)

Standard 7: Institutional Assessment

“The institution has developed and implemented an assessment process that evaluates its overall effectiveness in achieving its mission and goals and its compliance with accreditation standards.” (Characteristics of Excellence 25)

Introductory Overview of Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal

As part of CUNY, LaGuardia must address priorities set forth in the University’s Master Plan 2008-12 (02.3.05 CUNY COMPACT – Master Plan 2008-12), and must meet performance goals set by the Chancellor for all colleges in the CUNY system (01.2.04 Final University PMP Goals and Targets for 2010-11). Within these constraints, it must then develop a specific set of goals and initiatives in consultation with the broader college community. These goals are established through a strategic planning process embedded in CUNY’s Performance Management Process (PMP) initiated in 2000-01 to clarify university-wide priorities and establish clear and measurable standards of accountability throughout the University. Annual PMP reports provide comparative performance data among CUNY colleges on dozens of University targets. The latest year-end report is (01.2.16 2010-11 Final PMP Report).

Founded on a philosophy of innovation and change, LaGuardia’s strategic planning process was the first college-wide activity to enumerate organizational-change efforts and to hold the College’s many entrepreneurs accountable. Nevertheless, within the strategic planning structure of authorized innovation and marginal resource allocation, many variations in organization, identifying funding sources, and inspiration are allowed to flourish. Assessment can take many forms in each division with specialized formats for academic programs, strategic plan targets, grant and contract supported activity, CUNY-funded initiatives, student advising departments, student success areas, and administrative service departments.

Each year from 2001 to 2009 the President and the Executive Council began the planning process by reviewing CUNY-generated goals and objectives (01.2.04 Final University PMP Goals and Targets for 2010-11). Next, each division Vice President solicited “targets” for the
coming year from the units they supervised and then submitted these to the President. The Strategic Planning Committee (SPC), composed of one member from each division of the College, then integrated these unit targets into an institutional response to the University (02.1.06 Notes, Interview with Paul Arcario). At the end of the academic year, each division Vice President submitted a list of achievements to the President to incorporate into a year-end report to the Chancellor. Finally, the President and the division Vice Presidents compared the report of achievements with the targets to assess institutional effectiveness as well as to determine the goals and targets for the coming year.

The College’s strategic planning process has evolved over the past five years. Feeling that they had to respond to all CUNY goals, faculty and staff found it difficult to connect their individual projects to the College’s vision of progress. As a result, pursuing too many targets strained division and department resources and diffused efforts. After reviewing the process in early 2010, the Executive Council transferred administration of the strategic planning process to the Division of Academic Affairs under the direction of a reformulated SPC, now the PMP Committee (The 2010-11 members are listed in Appendix 2.1). Beginning each February, the PMP Committee reviews CUNY targets, drafts a schedule, and discusses mid-year reviews. The Executive Council then reviews these targets and approves the schedule. The schedule and targets are then distributed to Deans, Chairs, the College Senate, the President’s Cabinet, and the Student Government Association (SGA). Strategic initiatives are then developed by Directors and Chairs to respond to each target and submitted to the appropriate Division Vice President who submits them to the PMP Committee. The PMP Committee compiles the initiatives into a draft college-wide strategic plan and the Executive Council then approves the draft plan to be presented to the President’s Cabinet, the College Senate, and the SGA for discussion and suggestions. A final version of the strategic plan is then submitted to the Chancellor (02.1.06 Notes, Interview with Paul Arcario, 02.1.07 Calendar for 2011-12 Plan).

Consistent with the Fundamental Elements for Standard 2, LaGuardia has a well-defined decision-making process and authority that facilitates planning and renewal with clear assignment of responsibility for improvement and assurance of accountability. The process is clearly communicated and provides for constituent participation (FE 2.2-2.4). (Sentences and phrases that have been bolded have been taken directly from Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education.) The full cycle is shown below in Figure 2.2.

Since 2010 the results of the periodic College Visioning experience have also been included as strategic themes to be pursued within strategic planning target initiatives (Visioning Summit Strategies are given in Appendix 2.2). Their inclusion assures that the substance of the College’s mission is broadly understood by the College community and updated in a way that determines strategic direction for the College (02.1.08 Strategic Plan Presentation to President's Cabinet March 26, 2010).

In early March the Executive Council begins the parallel resource allocation process when the Vice President of Administration submits a preliminary budget based on mandatory changes while assessing the amount of unallocated discretionary funding. The Executive Council decides the overall allocation of resources among the divisions and the Business Office subsequently prepares a “start-up” operating budget for each department and office.
While the Executive Council is prioritizing strategic plan initiatives in May, the Business Office examines the budgets submitted with each strategic initiative. The Executive Council then allocates available discretionary funds to strategic plan initiatives according to their priority. Areas with initiatives that cannot be funded are encouraged to pursue grant funding.

Division strategic plan coordinators assist each initiative leader in entering individual work plans into the online strategic plan. The coordinators then update work plans in January and in late spring for the end of the year. These become the basis of the report to the Chancellor.

After the Chancellor receives the year-end report, documenting the extent to which the College has met its performance objectives and targets (01.2.05 PMP Liaison memo 09-10), he and the CUNY PMP Review Team assess the results and provide guidance to the College President. In July, the CUNY PMP Review Team reviews the OIRA PMP data, the Colleges' own PMP reports and additional campus performance information reported by CUNY staff (02.1.02 What does the PMP Review Process Entail?, 02.1.03 PMP Frequently Asked Questions). When funds are available, the Chancellor allocates discretionary “PMP incentive funds” to each CUNY college president.

Under Standard 2 we investigated how planning has changed at the College in the last five years, how it has driven changes in resource allocation, how it considers the longer-term future of the College, and how the process effectively involves the college community in improving college performance.
Findings for Standard 2

Our research shows that objectives at all levels are clearly stated and drawn from assessment results (FE 2.1, 7.3), as expected by Middle States. Two of the goals of the University’s PMP are to ensure clarity about University and College priorities and to introduce more accountability into the system (02.1.03 PMP Frequently Asked Questions). In 2010-11, CUNY published three overarching goals in its Performance Goals and Targets: (1) Raise Academic Quality; (2) Improve Student Success; and (3) Enhance Financial and Management Effectiveness (01.2.04 Final University PMP Goals and Targets for 2010-11). The University broke these down into nine more specific objectives. As an example, the second under the topic of raising academic quality is to “Attract and nurture a strong faculty that is recognized for excellent teaching, scholarship and creative activity.” These were further broken down into thirty-five specific University Targets such as, “Instruction by full-time faculty will increase incrementally.” Each target also employs a specific metric to assess performance, such as the “percentage of instructional FTEs delivered by full-time faculty.”

Assessment is thus the basis for strategic plan development. For example, in the 2008-09 Strategic Plan based on PMP results, the College targeted a 2% increase in the pass rate in basic skills math, from 68.7 to 70.7%. In the 2009-10 Strategic Plan, the College had to adjust the target based on actual results to increase the pass rate in basic skills math by 1%, from 68.4 to 69.4%. In the 2010-11 Strategic Plan, the goal is to increase the pass rate in basic skills math by two percentage points from 79.1 to 81.1% (02.1.01 Strategic Plan-Workplans). Although this example shows target continuity through several years, our review found that not all targets remained on the strategic plan until they were met, especially in the years before the transition in format in 2010. Many projects require more than a single year, but the process as originally designed did not explicitly accommodate these multi-phased activities. Participants registered some confusion over whether longer projects had been stopped or just renamed in a new phase and, if stopped, by whom.

Our inquiries into whether goals and assessment results are used for planning and resource allocation at the institutional and unit levels (FE 2.1) reveal that the College has a record of institutional and unit improvement efforts and their results (FE 2.5). The annual letter to the Chancellor outlines each year’s accomplishments against goals. The President and the division Vice Presidents then compare the report of achievements with the annual targets and use the comparison as an assessment of effectiveness as well as to determine the goals and targets for the upcoming year. For example, to improve the College’s PMP ratings under the University goal of strengthening academic quality, while enrollments were increasing, the College sought to maintain the ratio of full-time faculty teaching hours to part-time hours in University Target 2.3. In fiscal years 2008-11, over $1.3 million in Compact funds were allocated for hiring new full time faculty (02.3.18 Compact and SI Fiscal Year 2007 – 2011). This is only one example of how the College implements targets and allocates marginal resources based on assessment. As another example showing how the College has pursued a longer-term objective, Appendix 2.3 contains highlights of the College’s accomplishments in improving physical space from 2007-10. Appendix 2.4 gives further examples of assessment of College-implemented targets, while Appendix 2.5 provides examples of strategic plan initiatives based on vision strategies.
We also confirmed that **the College periodically assesses the effectiveness of planning, resource allocation, and institutional renewal processes** (FE 2.6). After a review of the strategic planning process commissioned by the Executive Council ([02.1.08 Strategic Plan Presentation to President's Cabinet March 26, 2010](http://example.com)), a new Strategic Planning Template ([02.1.09 Template for Strat Plan 11-12](http://example.com)) was incorporated into the revised process for the 2010-11 cycle and updated for 2011-12. Each unit was instructed to select three areas or activities to focus on: two University Objectives/Targets ([01.2.04 Final University PMP Goals and Targets for 2010-11](http://example.com)) and one Strategic Visioning Direction (Global Citizenry, Sustainability, Community College Leadership, or Web 2.0).

The requirement of a detailed plan of assessment is a significant change in the College’s strategic planning process. Individual departments and/or units now develop an assessment schedule and a plan to analyze relevant data to determine if stated objectives have been achieved. More significantly, the department or unit must make changes, as appropriate, based on their findings and assess the impact of such changes.

Also, with the new process the College now has explicitly integrated its “visioning process” into the strategic planning process. For each College unit, at least one initiative developed during the 2010-11 and 2011-12 strategic planning processes pursued a strategic direction derived from the 2009 college-wide Visioning Summit. For example, the Business & Technology (B&T) Department identified the following four initiatives for the 2010-11 academic year ([02.1.01 Strategic Plan-Workplans](http://example.com)):

- Complete Paralegal Studies PPR, including ABA self-evaluation report and exhibits;
- Develop and implement an electronic version of the accounting practice set;
- Increase the number of hybrid courses offered by the B&T Department; and
- Increase the use of Web 2.0 technology in all B&T programs.

The fourth initiative focused on the Web 2.0 technology strategic direction from the Visioning Summit. Other departments and divisions have created goals that similarly invoke a Visioning Summit strategy ([02.1.01 Strategic Plan-Workplans](http://example.com)). These examples are listed in Appendix 2.5.

In the past the strategic plan was all-inclusive and glutted with routine operational responsibilities. In the last several years, Academic Affairs has streamlined the plan to accentuate the strategic over the everyday with a concomitant effort to oversee the progress of larger objectives. For example, the Dean for Academic Affairs notes that the 2007-08 Strategic Plan listed a target to increase the percentage of FTEs offered partially or totally on-line. PMP assessment revealed an unsatisfactory increase in the number of hybrid/online courses. Lacking a larger scope of responsibility, the implication had been overlooked that further professional development was required, particularly with respect to the newer digital technologies that could stimulate greater faculty interest. This revelation led to an item in the 2008-09 plan in which an existing faculty development seminar was enhanced to incorporate new Web 2.0 applications. Progressive assessments of this initiative showed that growth in hybrid/online courses was still insufficient, and this resulted in a new initiative in the 2009-10 Strategic Plan to appoint a College-wide coordinator to accelerate the project and in the 2010-11 plan to offer a professional development seminar focused exclusively on developing hybrid/online courses. The effort to limit strategic plan targets has led to a greater focus on strategic, as opposed to departmental, change.
Despite the thoughtful 2010 revisions in the strategic planning process and the strengths built into the annual review of performance data within the cycle, we found that the performance report is still essentially pro forma, almost a yes-no response, item by item to the accomplishment of strategic initiatives. More in-depth analytic feedback would improve the College’s ability to reshape and refine targets.

**Introductory Overview of Standard 3: Institutional Resources**

As a CUNY college, LaGuardia receives direct allocations from New York City and State for a major portion of its operating budget, with tuition and fees, grants, and endowments supporting the rest. College support can be broken into three parts: the tax-levy supported portion under the College’s control, the non-tax-levy supported portion under the College’s control, and the tax-levy support portion controlled by CUNY. The tax-levy portion under the College’s control for fiscal year 2010 was $86.3 million. This support was reduced 3.4% or $3.6 million for fiscal year 2011, to about $83 million dollars ([02.3.29 Budget Process Presentation to Cabinet 102910](#)).

The sum of all three sources of support is around $200 million. About 31% comes from city and state appropriations, 15% from tuition, 31% from government grants and contracts, less than 1% from auxiliary enterprises, and 14% from other sources, including private and capital funding ([11.1.03 Profile 2011](#), page 59). Appendix 2.6 shows actual funding through FY 2010.

While New York State appropriations are based on the number of FTEs, the table below shows that the 2012 state appropriation per FTE is 21% lower than 2008 without considering inflation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>State Aid per FTE (calculated)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>$2,350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>$2,525</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>$2,675</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>$2,675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>$2,545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>$2,260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012 proposed</td>
<td>$2,122</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.2

Tuition rates and tax levy contributions are set by governmental bodies, and negotiated labor contracts determine the salaries and benefits of faculty and staff. These constraints fix, to a large degree, how resources are allocated. Nevertheless, activities that support student success make up 45% of expenditures.

The College’s annual tax levy budget is established using CUNY’s Community College Allocation Model which uses weighted average enrollment, class sizes, and size and complexity of facilities to calculate LaGuardia’s budget allocation. Final decisions on staffing levels are made by the College and may deviate from the model. Appendix 2.7 explains the funding model in somewhat more detail.

Under Standard 3 we investigated how the College ensures that it has adequate resources—financial, human, infrastructure, space, and technological—to carry out its mission, how long-term financial planning helps the College anticipate the future, and how the College audits its use of resources.
Findings for Standard 3
Our research demonstrates that the College has rational and consistent policies and procedures to determine asset allocation consistent with the institution’s mission, goals, and plan (FE 3.2), as expected by Middle States. The process of developing the College’s operating budget and multi-year projections is complex because of the timing of funding mechanisms and the participation of the stakeholders. After the Executive Council reviews the PMP and the Strategic Plan, the budget allocation process, managed by the Vice President of Administration and his Division, guides resources to areas identified for needed investment (see Figure 2.4).

Figure 2.4 ([02.3.29 Budget Process Presentation to Cabinet 102910](#))

The process begins with a spring Executive Council review of the All Funds Budgeted Revenues and Expenses report ([03.02.53 All Funds Report Online](#)). In early May, the Business Office provides each College division with “near-final” budgeted versus actual spending reports. At that time, the Business Office also provides each division with its potential tax-levy base budgets for the coming year to be reallocated to fit estimated future spending. (See Appendix 2.8 for a description of the preparation of the base budget.) The base budget includes mandatory salary increases and continuing or rolling allocations and adjustments approved by the Executive Council ([02.3.09 01 - a - Budget Process Summary](#)).

The revised “Strategic Planning Template” includes a “Resources Needed” column for each strategic initiative proposal. During early stages of the budget development process, the Executive Council determines the cost of implementing the strategic plan and for each item requiring funding, divisions prepare detailed written budget requests explaining the nature and need for such funds and presents these to the Executive Council for review. Needs are then prioritized, leading to approval and funding. Appendix 2.9 provides an overview of the factors used by the Executive Council in setting priorities.

LaGuardia has undertaken many initiatives as part of its strategic planning process that require new resources. Appendix 2.10 provides an overview of funding for strategic initiatives over the last five years. In addition, supplemental resources from the College Foundation provided $249,000 in 2009 and $269,000 in 2010 in scholarships to students ([05.1.52 Final LaGCC PMP](#)).
Appendix 2.11 provides an overview of progress in grant funding and private fund-raising at the College.

Since its founding in 2003, the Foundation has raised $4.5 million and has funded over $1.3 million in scholarships to over 2,000 students. In 2010, the Foundation raised over $1.1 million and funded over $334,000 in scholarships to 304 students. The Foundation has also supported several special programs, including $100,000 to build a nursing lab in 2006, $25,000 for the library laptop loaner program in 2010, and $80,000 to the Academic Peer Instruction tutoring program since 2009. The Foundation has recently begun work on the $3 million Campaign for LaGuardia (2012-15), coinciding with LaGuardia’s 40th anniversary and CUNY’s University-wide $3 billion capital campaign.

Each semester, funds are released or taken back as enrollment meets, exceeds, or falls short of established targets. During this period, the Executive Council considers using projected changes in tuition revenues to fund additional adjunct costs. Unforeseen circumstances (such as budget cuts or hiring freezes) may affect strategic items and cause them to be placed on hold. For example, the College was asked to cut expenses for 2010-11. As a result, each department cut 4.2% from its budget.

Decisions on using student technology fees and student activities fees are made by committees whose members represent relevant campus stakeholders. All decisions for spending these funds require alignment with the College’s mission and the guidelines governing these funds. Appendix 2.12 discusses the management of student fee and Education Fund monies, used to supplement tax-levy resources.

Further allocations of discretionary funds responsive to the College’s mission made through the College’s budgeting process are documented in Appendix 2.13.

We also confirmed that the College has strategies to assess periodically the level of, and effective and efficient utilization of, institutional resources (FE 3.1, 3.10). The College carefully tracks the success of its resource allocation efforts through the PMP report and other assessments. For example, the College’s strategic plan initiative to increase the percentage of instruction taught by full-time faculty has had mixed success. In 2006-07 the percentage increased from 43.7 to 45.1 (02.1.01 Strategic Plan-Workplans) but in 2007-08 the percentage decreased. Over $1.56 million have been spent from 2007 to 2011 to hire 49 new full-time faculty members (02.3.18 Compact and SI Fiscal Year 2007-11) towards this goal. However, significant increases in enrollment as well as retirements have kept the percentage below the target (02.1.01 Strategic Plan-Workplans).

Nevertheless, we found that the College does not regularly circulate the PMP in a way that might help the campus community understand the development of funding priorities. We also found that the budget process itself is not regularly assessed along a set of criteria.

Financial
The Business Office provides periodic and timely financial reports to Divisions and Departments. Managers use the reports to identify excesses and shortages and to assess the efficient and effective utilization of resources provided. As expected by Middle States, the College has a multi-year budget projection process that uses planning and assessment
documents (FE 3.4). Long term financial planning has improved in the University in recent years with the advent of the Multi-Year Financial Outlook, the creation of a reserve fund, and the CUNY Compact. Each year, the College submits a three-year operating budget projection to CUNY called the Multi-Year Financial Outlook (03.02.37 FY2010 Year Financial Outlook and 03.02.39 FY2011 Year Financial Outlook). In addition to contractual increases for both labor and services, the projection plan takes into account anticipated enrollment levels, introduction of new programs, and reorganization of existing programs from the strategic plan.

Revisions to the Multi-Year Financial Outlooks are made when changes in revenues and expenditures are anticipated. For example, in FY2010, the College submitted a mid-year financial plan revision to reflect $1.67 million increase in anticipated expenses (funded directly under the allocation formula) resulting from the startup cost related to occupying the first and second floors of the B Building, as well as expenditures related to new hires (03.02.37 FY2010 Year Financial Outlook and 03.02.38 FY2010 MidYear Financial Outlook).

In the last three years CUNY has allowed the College to build a modest reserve (03.02.07 CUNY Memo on FY11 Financial Plans) using funds collected in excess of tuition revenue targets totaling $1.9 million. If future budget cuts are severe, the College plans to use these reserve funds to offset these losses and fill mission-critical budget gaps. As of June 2011 the College does not expect to use the reserve significantly.

Another improvement to financial planning is the implementation of the CUNY Compact in FY 2006-07 as explained in Appendix 2.14.

Increased enrollment, current and future budget reductions, new construction, a hiring freeze and tuition increases are all factors that will impact both the Strategic Planning process and Budget Development process. The campus experienced a record increase in enrollment over the past six years from approximately 13,800 in the fall of 2005 to approximately 18,000 in fall 2010 (11.1.03 Profile 2011), creating a shortage of classroom space on campus. These classroom shortages are being addressed through aggressive expansion into the B Building.

State and City budget deficits have also led to a $3.6 million reduction in LaGuardia’s FY 2010-11 budget with further cuts projected for the next fiscal cycle, despite enrollment increases. CUNY applied a hiring freeze along with the budget reduction (02.2.01 CITY HIRING FREEZE.pdf), as well as an increase in spring 2011 tuition (02.7.01 Revised Tuition Rates FY11.pdf).

The College brings each event with financial implications to the attention of the college community. The Business Office web site posts the Tax Levy College Wide Summary Report (02.3.28), the Tax Levy College Wide Detail Report (02.3.27 College Wide Budget to Actual Detail YTD current) and a budgeting process PowerPoint presentation (02.3.29 Budget Process Presentation to Cabinet 102910). This PowerPoint has been used in several venues, including the College Senate and various Middle States work groups, to identify and explain budget processes and Budget and Strategic Plan linkages. Also, the SGA has worked with the administration to provide forums on tuition increases.
Although these efforts have increased budget transparency, we found that currently the college community does not have an opportunity to provide input on which strategic plan initiatives will receive funding before the Executive Council makes long-range and marginal resource allocation decisions. It might therefore be advisable to introduce an additional step in the budget allocation process (see Figure 2.4 above) in which the Executive Council would share its proposed prioritization of strategic plan initiatives with the college community for comments before finalizing its decisions.

**Human Resources**

As of fall 2010 the Human Resources Department (HR) served 2,038 employees, of whom 806 are employed full-time and 1,232 part-time. HR adheres to principles of CUNY’s centralized system and complies with applicable labor and employment laws. HR programs include staff development and training, recruitment, employee orientation, performance management, and separation. HR actively assists employees in the pursuit of professional effectiveness from recruitment to separation ([03.03.32 HR Presentation](#)).

Since 2007, Staff Development and Training has been aligned with the College Strategic Plan to enhance institutional effectiveness and foster a supportive environment for faculty and staff. Human Resources’ leadership, managerial, and customer service staff development and training have been recognized throughout CUNY, receiving the CUNY Senior Vice Chancellor’s Productivity Award in 2005([10.05.28 Productivity Award Application](#)). Monthly training sessions also provide information on topics such as sexual harassment, workplace violence, and health and safety.

HR’s policies and processes are closely aligned with those set out in the Strategic Plan, CUNY Rules and Regulations, and Labor Contracts. HR has developed an assessment tool in the staff evaluation process that pinpoints training areas for employees and assists senior and middle managers in measuring the success of employees in the Higher Education Officers series core competencies. Similar measurement is being developed for classified employees ([03.03.32 HR Presentation](#), Slides #27, 28 & 29). An exit survey ([07.4.30](#)) gains relevant feedback from departing employees to help fine-tune College services.

Our research confirmed that LaGuardia has an allocation approach that ensures adequate faculty, staff, and administration to support the institution’s mission and outcomes expectations (FE 3.3). LaGuardia staffing reallocations are determined by strategic plan initiatives and available resources. College staffing levels remain above CUNY’s allocation model guidelines.

LaGuardia funding mechanisms put employees into three categories: tax-levy, non-tax-levy, and Research Foundation. The major part of HR’s work is done for City-payroll tax-levy employees. However, HR also offers hiring, employee relations, benefits, and training support to non-tax-levy employees assigned to the College Association, Early Childhood Learning Center, Education Fund, and Auxiliaries. Employees of the Research Foundation, a private entity with its own board of directors, receive benefit support through the Office of Grant Development with referrals to the foundation’s Human Resources department as necessary.

A large number of “baby-boomers” born between 1945 and 1964 are candidates for retirement over the next decade. Currently, the College’s faculty and executive staff have the highest
proportion of individuals over the age of 56 (39% and 42% respectively for each job category) (11.1.03 2011 Institutional Profile). Since 2009, the issue of succession planning has been discussed at several Executive Council meetings (05.01.29 EC Agenda). The College has not, however, completed implementing succession plans across the campus.

A more complete description of the role of the College’s Human Resources department in strategic planning and assessment can be found in Appendix 2.15.

Physical Resources
The Capital Budget provides for the purchase and construction of expensive, long-lived assets, such as buildings, major pieces of equipment, and software. The largest source of funding comes from the issue of tax free bonds by the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York.

The University’s overall five-year capital priorities are intended to provide sufficient space for long-term academic initiatives. Each year, college presidents prepare a five-year capital budget request for CUNY that provides an overview of the capital planning process. LaGuardia then works with CUNY to develop a prioritized list of projects. The University incorporates these priorities into a rolling 5-year cycle master plan which guides the capital project budget process. As programmatic changes occur, or real estate opportunities arise, CUNY’s Office of Facilities Planning and Capital Management reviews and revises the facilities master plan of each campus. These master plan amendments are the road maps for requesting and delivering capital projects to support College programs. (03.02.10 2008-12 CUNY Master Plan).

As expected by Middle States, the College has a facilities master plan that aligns with its mission and goals (FE 3.5) and focuses on the adequate support and staffing of facilities, such as learning resources fundamental to all educational and research programs and libraries to accomplish the institution’s objectives for student learning (FE 3.6). The College’s Master Plan provides a long-range vision for the campus, reflecting the needs and goals of the entire college community (02.04.02a1-3 LaGuardia 2007 Master Plan Part 1, Part 2, Part 3). In order to respond appropriately to the needs of students, faculty, staff, and the community, the master planning process requires input from stakeholders. The report identifies a number of opportunities for the College and recent projects, thus helping the College grow in a logical and organized manner. Appendix 2.16 contains further description of the master planning process and how the Master Plan relates to the College Mission.

Prioritization of projects in the CUNY-wide Capital Improvement Plan is based on the CUNY Board of Trustees’ Criteria for the Priority Ordering of Capital Improvement Plan. Projects with the highest priorities—especially health, safety, security, and code compliance—are approved. (03.02.33 FY2009-10 Capital Budget Request Memo from CUNY, 03.02.34 FY2011-12 Capital Budget Request Memo from CUNY, and 03.02.32 Multi-year Financial Outlook). Actual funding of the capital projects depends on New York State and City financial resources. Since 2008, the state has constrained CUNY’s disbursement through a cap on bond sales. As a result, some capital projects have been delayed. There are three particular funding sources for capital projects, determined by size and type of project as discussed in Appendix 2.17.

Guided by the master plan, the College has acquired and improved a large amount of space, increasing the number and type of classrooms, administrative offices, and student spaces. The
expansion has also allowed several academic departments to consolidate and improve faculty and student interaction.

Full- and Part-time faculty rated LaGuardia’s facilities Good/Excellent in the spring 2009 Faculty Experience Survey conducted by the University Faculty Senate. LaGuardia was rated third among the 19 CUNY campuses on "Office Space," with a satisfaction rate of 72% (05.03.05 UFS Survey Website).

Space assignment decisions are reviewed and approved by the College’s Space Committee, comprised of representatives from all divisions and the College Senate, and finalized by the Executive Council. The criteria for considerations are alignment with the College mission, strategic plans, facilities master plan, efficiency, and health and safety (03.04.21 Space Committee Meeting minutes Apr 07 and Oct 07). Facilities, Planning and Management staff attend the Space Committee meetings as technical advisors. However, our research determined that the effectiveness of the space allocation process has never been formally assessed. Moreover, with increasing enrollments and a change in occupancy rules, the allocation of classroom space became a challenge in 2009. The resolution of this challenge is described in Appendix 2.18. Although the classroom allocation process is currently functioning more smoothly, our findings suggest that it would be beneficial to assess the process and explore ways to ensure its transparency.

Technology Resources
By design, the College’s technology infrastructure is flexible and scalable with the ability to manage, retrieve, and disseminate vital information to meet the planning and operational needs of the College. The infrastructure is capable of accommodating future growth needs and can be upgraded with minimal downtime. (See Appendix 2.19 for a complete description.)

Since 2007 the College has added many new wired and wireless access points. Additions of state-of-the-art hardware and software have greatly improved the reliability of the service. The College now has over 135 smart classrooms equipped with computers, projectors, and Internet connections (03.06.24 Smart Classroom Build-out B-bldg and 03.02.52 Smart Classroom). These improvements have been made with the input of the college community through the Student Technology Fee Committee and under strategic plan initiatives.

The University is in the process of implementing new enterprise software called CUNYfirst, based on the Oracle PeopleSoft suite of applications. CUNYfirst will provide a single platform to facilitate the student administration, human resources, and business needs of all CUNY Colleges, enabling CUNY colleges to streamline student information processes, standardize administrative processes, and improve decision-making. Critical facts on the CUNYfirst transition are given in Appendix 2.20.

We determined that the College has an infrastructure life-cycle management plan appropriate to its mission (FE 3.5). Moreover, all educational programs and instructional support programs are supported with a plan for equipment acquisition and replacement and for future technology (FE 3.7). Grants and Student Technology Fees fund periodic replacement of student lab computers. These computers are replaced on a three-year cycle to insure low cost maintenance and software compatibility (03.06.09 Stu Tech Fee Allocations 09-10). The Student Technology Fee Committee also funds smart classroom upgrade and installation (03.06.24 Smart...
Since 2007, the College has added three large, open computer facilities with a total of 328 desktop computers for students. With funding from the capital budget and Student Tech Fee, students may now borrow one of 84 new laptops for up to three days (03.06.09 Stu Tech Fee Allocations 09-10).

Purchases of commonly used software are handled centrally through the IT Division, but replacement of computers and purchase of specialized software for faculty and staff are funded by each College Division. The College replaces departmental hardware and software through an ad hoc process, providing individual departments and programs with greater responsiveness and the opportunity to select the most suitable equipment and software (03.06.23 IT Core Component). Faculty and staff may influence college-wide technology priorities through their department chairpersons or directors. Recommendations for purchases are forwarded to division leadership, where they are either fulfilled immediately or added to strategic plan initiatives (03.01.06 Hoffacker Interview 11-17-10). Divisions also provide temporary computers to faculty and staff as needed. For example, the Division of Academic Affairs works with IT to provide faculty members with laptops while their computers are being repaired or replaced. Currently, however, there is no campus-wide replacement cycle for departmental hardware and software.

IT makes network upgrades to meet technological needs identified by the faculty, staff, and student end-users and approved by the College’s senior leadership. The College does not have a formal plan that assesses current and future technological needs outside the planning work of the IT Division.

Our research confirms that the College has adequate institutional controls to deal with financial, administrative and auxiliary operations and has an annual independent audit of all financial entities. The College follows up on all concerns cited in audit management letters (FE 3.8-3.9). The Business Office routinely provides managers with year-to-date and comprehensive budget reports enabling managers to evaluate spending patterns and make reallocations of the available budget (02.3.30 Business Office Web Site, 02.5.06 OverUnderAnalTaxLevy12-31-09). The overall status of the College’s budget during each fiscal year is also shared with the College Senate and the President’s Cabinet. See Appendix 2.21 for a description of the budget oversight process.

The College follows state, city, and CUNY guidelines for procuring goods and services to ensure competitive prices and transparency. Board members of each of the College corporations are responsible for monitoring and allocating funds. The College adheres to Department of Education policies and procedures as described in The Blue Book for managing, documenting, accounting, and reporting of financial transactions (03.07.22 Blue Book). All purchases using the tax levy budget are subject to state and city procurement guidelines and contracts are awarded according to established procedures. (3.07.24 FAQs on CUNY Purchasing).

All tax and non-tax levy entities are subject to annual audits by independent accounting firms. The findings are shared with the University, the Executive Council, respective departments, and corporation boards. The College takes audit findings seriously and addresses them expeditiously (03.07.25 CUNY Financial Statement FY2010, 3.07.06 through 17: AuxEnt07, AuxEnt08, AuxEnt09, ColAsso07, ColAsso08, ColAsso09, ECLC07, ECLC08, ECLC09, EdFnd07, EdFnd08, and EdFnd09). CUNY-administered audit findings and progress reports are shared with the
Board of Trustee Audit Committee. A list of annual audits using outside auditors along with the management letter findings for the College’s audit can be found in Appendix 2.22.

Management letters (03.07.03 Mgmt Letter 09, 03.07.04 Mgmt Letter 08, and 03.07.05 Mgmt Letter 10) show that the number of open findings has greatly decreased as the College has followed auditors’ recommendations for processes that are directly controlled by the College. However, findings on university processes outside of LaGuardia’s control, for example, on tuition refund methodology, can only be completely addressed by the University, in this case when CUNYfirst software is fully implemented.

CUNY’s internal auditors monitor, assess, and analyze organizational risks and controls; review compliance with policies, procedures, and law; and review the reliability and integrity of information so as to safeguard assets and use resources effectively and efficiently. Internal audit recommendations are reported to University management, campus executives, and managers (03.07.23 CUNY Budget and Finance).

Audits of programs, processes, and procedures are also conducted on occasion to ensure compliance with funding requirements. The NYC Office of the Comptroller in 2008 conducted an audit of the College Discovery (CD) Program (03.07.01 CD Audit 08). The CD Program serves economically and academically disadvantaged students at CUNY Community Colleges, including LaGuardia. The report was critical of the advising and tutoring support provided to the CD students, especially those who were considered “at risk.” The University and the College disagreed with the methodology and argued that the auditors went beyond the scope of their audit and area of expertise. Nevertheless, the College responded to the audit and sought to improve advisement and tutoring.

**Introductory Overview of Standard 7: Institutional Assessment**

Deeply integrated into the strategic planning process is a documented, organized, and sustained assessment process to evaluate and improve the total range of programs and services and to achieve institutional mission, goals, and plans (FE 7.1). Assessment is not viewed as a process separate from organizational management. Each year PMP assessments, supplemented by College Key Performance Indicators (KPIs, 05.1.25 Performance Indicators for Executive Council), encourage the College to examine its programs and services, fueling the development of strategic plan targets and initiatives, each of which must indicate how its achievement will be assessed (02.1.09 Template for Strat Plan 11-12). Academic program assessment through Periodic Program Reviews (PPR) (14.1.001 PPR Schedule 8-12-11) is an important element of the annual strategic plan with student learning assessment serving as a primary PPR component.

The College appears strongest in assessing its individual programs and initiatives. Assessment of broad, more amorphous systems, like strategic planning and governance, is not yet as advanced. Nevertheless, the College is applying what it has learned from project assessment to the assessment of larger systems.

LaGuardia has a strongly integrated change management system which helps to maintain our core values of innovation, experimentation, and national leadership. Strategic planning integrates the visioning process, CUNY priorities, target initiatives built on assessment, resource allocation, and the assessment of progress.
Under Standard 7 we investigated how effectively the College supports assessment, how assessment gets integrated into strategic planning, and how the College uses assessment to guide performance improvements.

**Findings for Standard 7**

We found that the **College strongly supports a documented, organized, and sustained assessment process to evaluate and improve the total range of programs and services and achieve its mission, goals, and plans** (FE 7.1). Working from several IR&A assessment templates (**07.4.05 Template v1-3 and 07.4.10 Draft Assessment Plan**), we used an eight-point assessment outline to evaluate the depth to which assessment work has occurred at the College.

1. Mission-related goals: Has outcome success been defined?
2. Functional goals: Has operational success been defined?
3. Outcomes assessment: Has an assessment of outcomes been undertaken?
4. Operations assessment: Has an assessment of operations been undertaken?
5. Recommendations: Have any recommendations come out of the assessments?
6. Recommendation implementation: Have any recommendations been implemented?
7. Implementations assessment: Have the recommendation implementations been assessed?
8. Assessment audit: Has the assessment cycle been audited?

Against this outline we rated the assessment performance in each of the College systems (specified in the Middle States accreditation standards), departments, grant-driven areas, and programs and in each. We have grouped together areas where all subsystems were operating at the same level. The complete Assessment Grid of College Activities is in Appendix 2.23.

In reviewing the Assessment Grid, we found that most areas are far along in the assessment cycle, using **systematic, sustained, and thorough qualitative and/or quantitative measures** (FE 7.1b). Only 15% of the areas have not begun stating mission-related goals and only 11% have not begun stating functional goals. Only 12% have not done some sort of outcomes assessment (including a few who have not yet stated mission-related goals). Only 14% have not done any operations assessments. The great majority have also developed recommendations and begun implementation of these recommendations. Only 18% have no recommendations and only 20% have not carried out implementations of the recommendations. The results are less impressive for the final arc of the loop. Of all areas, 60% have not begun to assess the effectiveness of the implemented recommendations, and 69% have not begun to assess the quality of their assessment designs after having used them.

Data and assessment design support for all divisions is provided by the College’s Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (IR&A) and by the University’s OIRA, which allows the College to compare its performance against the other two and four-year CUNY campuses. In addition, college leaders regularly use national data, such as the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CSSE, **08.1.02 CCSSE Exec Summary 2010**), to assess the College’s performance against comparable institutions. Campus-wide involvement in the creation, assessment, reporting and communicating of the PMP is promoted through meetings of the Executive Council, President’s Cabinet, the College Senate, Divisions and Departments and the Student Government Association. Key effectiveness indicators and enrollment data (**05.3.02 Fall 09 Enrollment 2-25-10**) are reviewed at bi-weekly meetings of the Executive Council and actions taken as needed.
The Achieving the Dream (AtD) project is evidence based and serves as only one example of support and collaboration of faculty and administration in assessment (FE 7.1c). Through events such as the “Achievement Café” and its website (07.4.14 AtD Website), AtD has pushed hard for the use of evidence to effect change necessary to reach college-wide goals for improved retention. Regular data presentations (07.4.15 AtD Presentation of Findings) have convinced the College that no single solution to the retention challenge is available, but that it must re-focus its efforts to keep students from “falling through the cracks” (07.4.06 AtD Interim Report May 2010).

Many of the innovations in instruction and community service are grant supported. One of the broadest efforts is supported by the Perkins program. Each year, an extensive assessment of each of these initiatives, tied to the strategic plan effort, is pulled together into the final grant report (07.1.03 Perkins Grant Final Report 08-09 and 07.1.04 Perkins Grant Final Report 09-10). Funds received by the College in 2009-10 were used to: 1) strengthen career and technical programs using technology; 2) enhance vocation education through curricular revision and technology; and 3) provide occupational training and support services for Career and Technical Students.

Using national surveys like the Association of College and Research Libraries annual survey and the Academic Libraries Survey biennial survey, the Library is able to make operating comparisons with peer institutions around the country and within CUNY. “Statistics Week” data-gathering takes place every fall and spring. The College has supported the Library’s experiments in assessing information literacy across the College, including the iSkills exam, and the Project for Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills (SAILS) exam. The results of many of these assessments are discussed in the Library’s PPR (07.5.01 Library PPR May 2007). Also, the Vice President of Academic Affairs recently co-wrote an article with the Chief Librarian discussing the Library’s assessment efforts (07.1.01 CC Week Library Article).

Outside of the College's academic departments (see Chapter 8 for a description of how student learning assessment drives the cycle of change and improvement in each academic program), the Division of Academic Affairs administers a number of student academic support centers, programs and services whose diversity inhibits establishing a centralized assessment system. Nevertheless, every major program has its own programmatic assessment criteria, frequently using CUNY (including elements from the PMP) or national standards as benchmarks. Assessment in Academic Affairs is particularly strong in the Center for Teaching and Learning and the Academic Peer Instruction program as will be discussed in Chapters 7 and 8. More examples can also be found in Appendix 2.24.

The division of Adult and Continuing Education (ACE) is divided into three “clusters,” each of which contains at least half a dozen thematically related programs: Business Services, Workforce Development, and Academic and Career Preparation (13.2.45 ACE Bubble Chart 2010). Each spring, directors of individual programs establish their annual program goals and also meet with other directors within the same cluster to establish cluster goals, which in turn lead to the creation of overarching divisional goals, measured by assessment strategies.

Goals at all ACE organizational levels are informed by the College’s Strategic Plan, but they also respond to the specific needs identified by each program according to its own methods. As an example, The English Language Center (TELC), the largest single program in ACE, determines
its annual goals from data it gathers from such sources as quarterly student course evaluations, quarterly reports of demographic trends, marketing analytics, and periodic student satisfaction surveys. ACE program directors submit Program Goals Forms (07.2.07 ACE Program Goal Form 09) that show not only how a given goal fits into the College’s Strategic Plan but also require the completion of a Work Plan and a Timeline. Similar Work Plans and Timelines are then incorporated into each program’s Final Goals document (see example from TELC, 07.2.08 Final Goals (TELC) 09-10), which also identifies key staff with primary responsibility for the attainment of each goal. Key staff have the same goals included in their individual work plans for the year, and information on their success in attaining these goals is included in their annual evaluations—another form of assessment. Program directors provide a six-month progress report each fall and, in the following spring, an end-of-year completion report. In this way, there is a built-in assessment of each program’s success in meeting each of its annual goals.

ACE also maintains feeder programs to help students transition from non-credit work into college-credit courses. The programs monitor the success of these students once they have matriculated. The challenging assessment of this transition is discussed in more detail in Chapter 7. To push this assessment further, ACE has received a grant from the Robin Hood Foundation to undertake a controlled, randomized study of the impact of ACE’s GED Bridge programs.

Our research confirmed that the majority of areas at the College, Academic Affairs departments, all grant activities, Student Affairs, and IT Institutional Advancement projects have clear realistic guidelines and a timetable, supported by appropriate investment of institutional resources for assessment (FE 7.1d). These assessment processes have sufficient simplicity, practicality, detail, and ownership to be sustainable within the strategic planning process (FE 7.1e).

Under new leadership in the spring of 2010, the Division of Student Affairs began a process of mission development, departmental effectiveness review, and realignment. During fall 2010, the Division began a comprehensive division-wide assessment process which will continue through 2020 (07.2.04 Stu Affs Review Schedule). The culmination of the review and planning has resulted in a Student Affairs Realignment plan, distributed in January 2011.

Student Affairs facilitates student access, retention and degree completion. Beginning in the winter of 2010, the division has sponsored workshops for all its employees on goal creation and assessment (07.1.11 SA Assessment Presentation, 07.1.12 SMARTER Goals, 07.1.13 Assess Presentation I, 07.1.14 Assess Worksheet I, 07.1.15 Assess Presentation II, and 07.1.16 Assess Worksheet II) as they begin a new, formalized assessment cycle. The division has set up a SharePoint website to support assessment with the assessment calendar, templates, best practice examples, copies of the workshop presentations, and other training materials.

The IT division operates within two spheres: operations and projects. The role of assessment is different in each. The Operations area includes the day-to-day work of maintaining hardware, responding to helpdesk tickets, and running regular reports, downloads and system maintenance. Assessment in this system includes a regular analysis of helpdesk tickets (07.4.43 IT 09 Help Desk Report) and annual personnel performance evaluations. Any evidence that points to a need for improved IT performance triggers a project.
The College has funded a Project Management Office (PMO) within the IT division. The office was expanded in 2009 when it offered its services to the College as a whole, taking on the telephone switch upgrade project as its first project outside the division. The PMO methodology assures that complex technology efforts at the College have clear goals at the beginning and a final assessment phase at the end. While most major technology projects are within the IT division, the conversion to a new platform for ePortfolio was project managed by Academic Affairs and the installation of a new phone system was overseen by the division of Administration. Each project’s planning documents are stored on the project server. These include briefs, inventories, meeting minutes, project tables and test runs (07.4.02 IT Project Brief OSP, 07.4.03 IT Project Charter Half Smart, and 07.4.04 IT OnTrack Project Brief).

The Division of Administration consists of ten diverse departments. Assessments are variously built within Strategic Plan targets using the CUNY building assessment reports (07.1.08-paper only), satisfaction surveys (07.5.03 Faculty Staff Satisfaction Survey Summary, 10.10.05 2005 UFS Faculty Experience Survey, 07.3.11 2010 CUNY Student Experience Survey, and the 07.5.06 2006 ACT Survey - Student Experience), On-line Work Request System Evaluations, HR On-line Help Desk analyses, and Hot Line analyses. Each system is used to gather data and feedback from the campus.

Institutional Advancement assessment has been concentrated at the project level, where a number of assessments have led to improved performance. Institutional Advancement’s assessment efforts required support from IR&A in survey design for their website redesign project (07.4.82 Communications Website Redesign Survey), their LiveWire redesign project (07.4.89 LiveWire Questionnaire 11-08), and their alumni communications surveys (07.4.93 Alumni e-Newsletter email Blast Analysis). The Information Systems department contributed analytics to their web site redesign project (07.4.96 Website Dashboard Report and 07.4.81 Web Benchmarking).

As noted in Chapter 3, the performance of each CUNY president is assessed every five years. These assessments include surveys of students, faculty, staff, and community leaders. Thus, the College’s divisions engage in an extensive and sustained process, outlined above, to continually evaluate a range of programs and services.

Our research demonstrates that the College has an assessment process to evaluate and improve the total range of programs and services with a foundation in the institution’s mission and strategic plan goals that encompasses all programs, services, and initiatives (FE 7.1). The College’s assessment of the vast array of programs and initiatives is revealed through multiple examples, again demonstrating how the culture of evidence is organically expressed across the campus. The College requires detailed work plans and progress reports for each target to be posted on the College’s website (05.3.09 Strat Plan Progress Report Workplan links 09-10). This allows administrators, faculty and staff to see all work plans for each initiative and improve coordination of efforts across a college objective. Posting work plans and progress reports helps College leaders assess overall efforts across Divisions and Departments. While the use of work plans to assess overall effort and integration into a broader assessment of institutional effectiveness is still a work in progress, the President and Vice Presidents have used the review of work plans for key targets (e.g., retention, basic skills pass rates, etc.) to strengthen the development and assessment of future targets. Some of the best examples of how this works
relate to the initiatives to improve academic advising. As noted in standard 9, President Mellow, elaborating on the 2008-09 strategic plan College Target 6.1.1 (Make substantial progress in strengthening the effectiveness of advising; implement recommendations from formative assessment of developmental advising plan to improve advisement process.), challenged the Developmental Advising Committee (DAC) to assess its implementation of previous recommendations. DAC continued work the following year under College Target 6.1.2. The results of the assessments are tabulated in the DAC final report (09.1.095 DAC Final Report Draft 7-5-10), which lists dozens of assessments made for the many aspects of developmental advising, outreach, and implementation and shows how each was used to change the way we do advising at the College in support of the College’s overall retention goal as measured in the PMP. The continuous work of the DAC gives an integrated view of how written strategic plans reflect consideration of assessment results (FE 7.3).

While the evolution of assessment technique takes many years, the college has benefited from periodic evaluation of the effectiveness and comprehensiveness of the institution’s assessment processes (FE 7.1f). Assessment of the Early Alert program (see Chapter 4) began largely as counts of participation by faculty and students. The current assessment is a randomized comparison of retention and grade performance of participants and a matched control group (08.4.17 Assessment Design for Early Alert). After auditing the assessment methodology of the project to increase student work on campus and the College Discovery project, project leaders initiated the randomized matched comparison method into their upgraded assessment designs.

Appendix 2.25 examines two examples of Academic Affairs assessments within strategic planning: the Business and Technology Department’s accounting lab initiative and the Natural Science Department’s efforts to add sustainability to the curriculum.

For many elements in the strategic plan that involve IT, assessments are drawn directly from the Project Management Office project briefs. In the IT division, responsibility for each strategic target is assigned the most appropriate departmental director, who is then responsible for transferring basic elements of the project brief into the strategic plan online documentation (07.2.01 Strat Plan Excerpt 7-2 for 10-11). All major IT projects become strategic plan college targets. For example, the 2010-11 strategic plan included target 9.2.3, “Implement identity management mechanism, network login, web portal, and update Degree Works.” One of the project element assessments listed on the work plan is the narrow set of goals: “Software is implemented. User identity information is accurate and secured. Data passes into and out of system in a timely and secured manner.” In our review, as in this example, we noted few PMO assessments that tied directly to college outcomes.

Another example of assessment imbedded in strategic planning is Human Resources, which in response to a 2009-10 college target to increase on-campus employment of students indicated that they would track new hires of all College Assistants and note whether these were LaGuardia students. As a second example, the 2008-09 target, 9.2.4, was set to improve the cleanliness of LaGuardia’s restrooms after the Faculty/Staff Satisfaction survey (07.5.03 Faculty Staff Satisfaction Survey Summary) indicated that people were not satisfied with restroom conditions. Under several strategic plan targets, the division renovated 45 restrooms on campus and increased the number of cleaners so that restrooms could be cleaned more frequently.
Despite the fact that each divisional target proposed is filed with an accompanying assessment outline, our review finds that none of the assessments for Institutional Advancement or the President’s Office examined the success of the strategic initiative. For example, Institutional Advancement in the 2010-11 Strategic Plan set as a goal to raise the profile of community colleges and importance of their mission through branding, media placement, and outreach to alumni and the community. However, no measure of the height of the “profile of community colleges” was included. Instead, the assessments only aim at measuring step completion within timelines.

In addition, we found that assessment results are shared and discussed with appropriate constituents and used in institutional planning, resource allocation, and renewal to improve and gain efficiencies in programs, services and processes (FE 7.2). Institutional assessment results are compiled annually in a “PMP End of Year Report” (05.1.52 Final LaGCC PMP Report 09-10 and 07.3.10 2008-09 PMP Analysis Revised) that is submitted to the Chancellor and posted on the College’s website. This report is discussed in detail with the Executive Council and the 65 senior leaders in the President’s Cabinet, which includes the Chair of the Senate and student leaders. End-of-year results are discussed and used in setting and adjusting targets for the following year and in the performance evaluations of the President, the Executive Council and division administrators. The Strategic Plan (02.1.01 Strategic Plan-Workplans) is available from the public LaGuardia web site with individual strategic target work plan progress reports accessible to all LaGuardia employees.

Other assessment results have been shared by individual projects. The Achieving the Dream project has developed retention analysis slides for major presentations by the President (Opening Sessions, Professional Staff Meetings) and division and department presentations (07.4.15 AtD Findings Presentation). The API (Academic Peer Instruction) website (07.3.08 API Website) provides comparative statistics on student performance for classes with and without API. The website helps disseminate program results among students, prospective tutors, and faculty. The Library regularly collects and shares with decision-makers a range of information. For instance, the Library’s Statistics Committee tracked the usage of the print reference books, and the results of that study (07.3.01 Library Statistics Summary, Fa 09) were shared with a Library committee deciding which electronic reference titles to purchase.

Additionally, a variety of ACE group meetings are regularly held to disseminate many types of information, including assessment results at full divisional meetings held twice each year. In addition, there are “Cluster Group” meetings each quarter for areas of common interest such as Business Services, Workforce Development, and Academic and Career Preparation. There are also separate tuition-based and grant-funded program directors’ meetings held on a more frequent basis. Division publications, such as a “Grants Report” (07.4.19 ACE Current Grants), which describe the various divisional grants, provide assessment data as well as connections to the College’s Strategic Plan.

Student Affairs shares assessment information internally at monthly Cabinet and Management meetings and at the division meeting each semester. The Deputy to the Vice President for Student Affairs has delivered several workshops on assessment at division meetings. These
workshops have assisted each Student Affairs office in the development of an institutional effectiveness plan (09.1.119 IEP Schedule, 09.1.116 IEP Fin Svs, 09.1.117 IEP Health Ctr, 09.1.118 IEP Stu Life, 09.1.127 IEP Single Stop, 09.1.128 IEP Testing, 09.1.129 IEP SIC, 09.1.130 IEP Reg, and 09.1.131 IEP Admis).

The IT division has a semi-annual business meeting for all staff (07.3.05 IT Meeting 12-16-09 and 07.3.06 IT MidYear Presentation). A primary purpose of the meetings is to review the status of projects and to discuss the goals and challenges of the coming year’s projects. IT-related elements of the strategic plan are reviewed at the end of the year and a short assessment is included in the final strategic plan report which is sent to the chancellor.

Results of the alumni survey were shared with alumni in an online newsletter article (07.4.91 InterspireAlumniSurvey Article). Results of the LaGuardia web site redesign survey were shared with the Executive Council and the President’s cabinet in formal presentations (07.3.18 Mock-ups Questionnaire EC Presentation 3-1-11). The results of the survey of LiveWire readers were presented in a later article (07.4.90 LiveWire Questionnaire Results 2-09).

Moreover, we confirmed that **assessment results are used by the College to improve and gain efficiencies in programs, services and processes** (FE 7.2). Throughout the various divisions are found multiple instances of how assessment results are used to improve services. Retention rates, graduation rates, and basic skills pass rates are the top three areas in which assessment results indicate a continuing need for improvement at all institutional levels. Outcomes in these areas are reported by CUNY’s Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (01.2.16 2010-11 Final PMP Report) and regularly reviewed and assessed at greater levels of detail by the College. Efforts to significantly raise rates in these three areas are undertaken at the department, division and institutional levels.

Retention and passing rates in basic skills classes are regularly evaluated by academic departments involved in basic skill instruction. For example, as discussed more extensively in Chapter 7, new methodologies and approaches are always under development and then tested in the Mathematics, Engineering and Computer Science department to improve pass rates in Basic Skills Math.

Appendix 2.26 includes further examples of actions taken in response to assessment findings within the PPR process.

Another example of how assessment was used to improve services is in the library. Surveys continue to indicate library users want more library study space. In response, the College prioritized library expansion funding and has received approval for all phases of the project (02.3.32 Preparation of Fiscal 12 Operating Budget, 07.4.39 Library User Satisfaction Survey Results Fa 09 and 07.4.40 Library User Sat Results Sp 09). Survey data also indicated patron frustration with the copiers which led to an upgrade of copiers. The Library now receives very few copier complaints on user surveys. The Library’s March 2009 web site redesign was informed by data from a two-round usability study of students (07.4.41 Library Website Usability Results I, and 07.4.42 Library Website Usability Results II).
Assessment data have also led to specific changes in ACE programs. For example, the Cohort Studies showed that GED students were not sufficiently prepared for college-level coursework, leading to a realignment of GED curricula with the College’s curriculum. These assessments also led to the establishment of a College Transitions Initiative and a “Bridge” program that combines GED studies with a career focus, leading to much higher pass rates (07.4.16 ACE Target 3.5.3-Student Progression 2-9-10, 07.4.17 ACE to LaGCC Mega, 07.4.18 ACE Comparison of Mega 08-09 to 09-10, 07.4.19 ACE current grants, and 07.4.20 ACE studies Cohort).

Outcomes of evaluation and assessment have led to many changes within Student Affairs. Program assessment provided evidence for a new operations model in the Enrollment Services Center and the creation of the Student Generalist Services Department in March 2010 (08.1.14 IEP Enroll Services Ctr), as well as the need to scale up the Early Alert program (08.1.12 Early Alert Presentation and 08.1.13 Early Alert Presentation II) to include all degree students beginning in fall 2009. Since the last Middle States review, assessment outcomes, especially CCSSE data (07.4.11 CCSSE Report 2007), were used as the basis for improvements to the Student Information Center and the Enrollment Services Center to provide more centralized one-stop service.

In IT, the decision to begin the Single Sign-on Project was based on an analysis of IT Help Desk Tickets. The 2009 Help Desk report (07.4.43 IT 09 Help Desk Report) on the IT web site, showed that 440 of 1,600 work orders for Accounts Management were for password resets, indicating the need to reduce the number of passwords that users had to manage.

In the Division of Administration the ACT Outcomes Survey (07.4.07 Opinion Survey Graphics 05-09) indicated that the students were dissatisfied with the College bookstore. Discussions with student leaders revealed that students wanted more used books available for purchase. The division was able to increase the availability of used books, and the used book sales proportion went from 10% to 23%. The survey also indicated that people wanted more menu variety in the cafeteria, and the division successfully requested that the vendor do so. The HR training needs assessment (07.4.31 HR Training Needs Survey 2-17-05 and 07.4.32 HR Training Needs Survey Analysis 05) indicated the need for computer skills training, customer service skills, time management and conflict management training. The Human Resources department has now partnered with Instructional Services/IT to provide computer skills training each semester. In addition, professional development programs for new supervisors and administrative staff includes courses on time management, organization skills, and conflict in the workplace (07.4.36 HR LEAD Eval Survey 5-07 and 07.4.37 HR STEP Survey Fa 09).

One of the most successful collaborative assessment projects has been undertaken for the redesign of the web site. IA convened focus groups designed by IR&A staff to understand better how students used the current web site. This led to an online questionnaire to students, faculty, staff, ACE students, community members, graduates and parents. The results helped establish which content and features would be most important to students (07.4.83 Comm Response to Fixed Questions, 07.4.80 Communications Response to Open Questions, and 07.4.82 Comm Website Redesign Survey). IT then presented the results of web site analytics, showing the relative “success” or “failure” of the site overall as well as specific pages based on the number of visitors to the site, the content pages most visited, the amount of time users spent on each page,
how quickly a user left the site, and where visitors originated. These statistics were monitored over time, especially after changes (07.4.96 Website Dashboard Report). The re-design then relied heavily on these statistics.

The foregoing are just a few of the ways in which assessment data is used to guide the improvement of services. LaGuardia has sought to avoid a bureaucratic approach to assessment, while also working enthusiastically to make assessment part of its culture. The strategic plan cycle begins with reflection to determine what was learned in the previous year, data are then combed for clues, more data are gathered, including surveys, and studies are initiated to analyze results. As each area and cross-college project plans its coming year, strategic plan targets are developed that must include a preliminary assessment design.

Although the College is able to gauge institutional effectiveness within the PMP/strategic planning framework and has an effective system of allocating marginal resources, a global review of the strategic allocation of resources has not been undertaken. For example, the College has found it difficult to measure or justify resources spent on student advising, tutoring, or records processing as strategic endeavors in themselves.

In the last five years, LaGuardia has become increasingly sophisticated in the wide range of assessments it carries out. The College’s entrepreneurial spirit has carried over into the drive to improve the quality of assessment and the usefulness of results. Nevertheless, a more formal and centralized system of sharing results would benefit the College.

Summary of Findings and Conclusions for Standard 2
1. LaGuardia responds to priorities established in CUNY’s Master Plan and addresses performance goals established by the Chancellor. LaGuardia strategic plan initiatives respond to the assessments included in annual CUNY PMP reports and are built to reach University objectives and College targets, although the wider college community has not been thoroughly introduced to the measures tracked in the PMP.
2. The College’s strategic planning process requires extensive collaboration with students, faculty, staff, alumni and the community. The structure of the strategic plan, including university goals and vision strategies, makes the general priorities clear to all departments and focuses strategic initiative proposals on priority areas. While the process is complex, it has evolved such that the College effectively plans for its future with increasing momentum from year to year.
3. In 2010, the Executive Council concluded that division and department goals should be more focused so as to reflect the interests and drives of the divisions and departments. The Council therefore transferred oversight of the strategic planning process from the President’s Office to Academic Affairs, which introduced a revised Strategic Planning Template that emphasizes designing assessments and proposing budgets. By focusing on fewer targets and formalizing the strategic target budget allocation process, the College strengthened the direct impact of its planning process.
4. The College has been able to allocate resources to areas where PMP measures have indicated the need for improvement. The addition of assessments to strategic plan initiative proposals has allowed the College to determine more precisely whether resource allocations have brought about the desired results.
Summary of Findings and Conclusions for Standard 3
1. Budget, capital funding, and strategic planning processes and timelines are well communicated to the College community. Although a large number of stakeholders are involved, key members are on multiple committees, linking efforts.
2. Long-term planning for the College’s operating budget has evolved in recent years. The new reserve account and CUNY’s Multi-year Financial Outlook have improved projection of revenues and expenses, allowing more lead-time to plan for austere years. Long-term budget and capital planning relies on the College’s strategic and facilities master plans.
3. Recent changes to the strategic plan timeline allow greater college community participation in the budget process. Even so, at present stakeholders do not have an opportunity to provide input to the Executive Council regarding which strategic plan initiatives will be funded.
4. The College uses funds from various sources for capital projects, but capital funding depends on the economy and the financial viability of the city and state. The requirement for matching funds by the city and state, especially in the recent period of economic downturn, has been a challenge and has forced CUNY to delay some projects. Nevertheless, a regular assessment process keeps priorities focused on maintaining the infrastructure necessary to provide high-quality instruction and student support. College assessment of the needs and efficacy of its human and technological resources is similarly embedded in the strategic plan process.
5. All finances are controlled under University regulations and subject to regular external audits. Internal CUNY audits focus on areas of risk and assist the College in maintaining compliance.

Summary of Findings and Conclusions for Standard 7
1. Placing a priority on student learning, LaGuardia views assessment as integral to the work of the College’s varied operations. Because the College’s senior leadership has sought to avoid a bureaucratic approach to assessment, no single template has been imposed on the College’s myriad unique programs and processes. Continuing its entrepreneurial tradition, LaGuardia’s assessment efforts are organic, inventive, and increasingly sophisticated.
2. Despite this diversity of approaches, the overarching assessment of the College is structured within the PMP-initiated strategic planning process. With each division formulating its own framework, managerial personnel are assessed on strategic plan goal achievement and area operational goal accomplishments. Major IT and other technical projects are subsumed under the strategic plan but are assessed within a project management framework.
3. Through its history of strategic initiatives, the College has become a national leader in the assessment of learning, adding greatly to the formation of innovative assessment practices by employing rubrics to assess basic competencies and in the use of ePortfolio as a repository of assessment learning artifacts. As detailed under Standard 14, the Academic Affairs division assembled the Assessment Leadership Team to support continued advancement in the assessment of learning. In addition, the College has built a seven-person Institutional Research & Assessment Office (IR&A) to promote assessment across the College. Using a client/expert system of support, the office develops data sources, produces analyses, and builds individual assessment designs.
4. LaGuardia’s approach imbeds assessment into its strategic planning and resource allocation system. Especially strong within this system are learning, retention intervention, and academic support assessment. The College is currently in the process of developing
centralized systems to support the assessment of departmental effectiveness, including repositories of assessment documents.

**Recommendations for Standards 2, 3, and 7**
1. The College should report each year if a strategic plan target has been met and targets should remain on the strategic plan until met.
2. The College should consider enhancing stakeholder input into the budget development process by providing the college community with an opportunity to comment on the Executive Council’s proposals for prioritizing strategic plan initiatives before the funding decisions are finalized.
3. The College should devise a succession plan that takes into account the large number of faculty and staff eligible for retirement in the coming decade.
4. The College should assess the classroom allocation process and explore ways to ensure that faculty understand the process.
5. The College should develop a more formal technology planning process that allows regular input from stakeholders on the priorities that the College has developed for the upgrading of all aspects of its technology interfaces and infrastructure.
6. The current uncoordinated system for the acquisition of faculty and staff computers should be assessed to determine if it meets the needs of the faculty and staff.
7. The College should regularly assess the effectiveness of institutional resource allocation, including the budget process itself, to ensure that it is aligned with strategic objectives and initiatives.
8. The College should encourage all areas to file formal assessment designs and assessment results with IR&A. IR&A should maintain a centralized assessment library on SharePoint and periodically update the College community on recent assessments.
9. Each Vice President should file an audit of assessment activities in his or her division each year with the President, providing the President with an overview of all assessment activities at the College. IR&A should provide an annual agenda of key assessment activities at the College to permit broad involvement in the design of the research and dissemination of the findings.