Chapter 6

Standard 11: Educational Offerings

Standard 11: Educational Offerings
“The institution’s educational offerings display academic content, rigor, and coherence that are appropriate to its higher education mission. The institution identifies student learning goals and objectives, including knowledge and skills, for its educational offerings” (Characteristics of Excellence).

Introductory Overview of Standard 11: Educational Offerings
LaGuardia Community College follows a well-defined faculty-led process for developing and enhancing degree programs. The CUNY Basic Guidelines for New Programs (11.3.89 Basic Guidelines for New Programs-CUNY 2010), prepared by the CUNY Office of Program Review, Articulation and Transfer, guides collaboration among LaGuardia faculty and administration, the CUNY Board of Trustees, and the New York State Education Department. The CUNY Guidelines stipulate how new programs must be planned, developed, and approved. To facilitate new program development, in September 2004 the College created the position of Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs for Program Development and Evaluation. The Assistant Dean plays a critical role in enhancing curricula and ensuring the smooth implementation of new programs. The current Assistant Dean has noted that the program development and revision process is becoming more uniform throughout CUNY, with increasing emphasis on using existing facilities, and on divisional and CUNY-wide collaboration.

New programs in the liberal arts and sciences have enhanced LaGuardia’s distinctive identity as a community college that challenges national preconceptions. Following the restructuring in 2009 of the Natural and Applied Sciences Department into two departments—Health Sciences and Natural Sciences—the College has strengthened its science offerings by launching new programs in Biology and Environmental Science; programs in Chemistry and Forensic Sciences are currently in development. These programs have a strong component of undergraduate research and are supported by a faculty research lab that engages students. In the humanities, the new Philosophy program, which was featured in a 2011 National Public Radio story (11.2.21 NPR on Philosophy Program) and has the distinction of being the largest in the country of comparably-sized two-year and four-year colleges, serves 4,500 students a year, 60 majors, and is staffed by eight full-time and 20 part-time faculty members (11.2.13 Philosophy Program Description). The new Theater program features a partnership between the LaGuardia Performing Arts Center and the Humanities Department, providing students with the opportunity to learn from accomplished theatre professionals. Another example of the College’s breadth of offerings is the recent expansion of Modern Language/Literature courses offered by the Education and Language Acquisition Department. Since 2007, 16 new courses have been created, including Chinese, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Spanish, and Russian. Enrollment in these courses has increased dramatically, rising from 362 in spring 2006 to a high of 1105 in fall 2009, in part as a result of recently launched weekend institutes (11.2.14 Enrollment Trends in Modern Language/Literature and Course Offerings).

In addition, the College offers an extensive range of basic skills courses, which play a key role in LaGuardia’s curriculum. The basic skills curricula are discussed under Standard 13 in Chapter 7.
It should be noted that the CUNY-wide “Pathways to Degree Completion Initiative,” currently scheduled for full implementation in fall 2013, will have an impact on curricula across the CUNY system, including significant revisions in the curricular structure of LaGuardia degree programs. In June 2011, The CUNY Board of Trustees approved a resolution establishing the Pathways Initiative “to create a curricular structure that will streamline transfers and enhance the quality of general education across the University” (11.2.17 Pathways Website). All CUNY colleges were asked to submit a campus-wide response to the draft Pathways proposal by November 15, 2011. LaGuardia’s official response, coordinated by an ad hoc committee, praises the effort to create “a more seamless, less cumbersome transfer system” while also voicing concern about “process issues, flexibility, and implications for degree programs” (11.2.18 LaGuardia Pathways Response 11-15-11). In addition, the University Faculty Senate and most of the CUNY faculty governance bodies have passed resolutions opposing the Pathways Initiative, in part based on concerns that it undermines the governance role of elected faculty bodies (11.2.19 UFS Pathways Resolutions). Nevertheless, in December 2011, the Chancellor approved the recommendations of the CUNY-wide Pathways Task Force to create a 30-credit Common Core of general education, the details of which are available on the Pathways website (11.2.20 Common Core Structure Final Recommendation).

Further, the Library’s instruction program touches virtually every student at the College through one-hour classes mandated for all English 101 (Composition) and English 103 (Research Paper) classes. The Library also promotes information literacy though credit instruction (including online sections), mandated input into the curriculum development process, consultations with faculty who bring classes to the Library, participation in learning communities and professional development seminars, an annual Research Review competition for student essays, and speaker programs to publicize the importance of information literacy instruction.

To assess the quality of its educational offerings, the Library collects many kinds of data beyond traditional measures of library service (collection size, gate counts, satisfaction surveys), including web usability studies, observation studies of reference desk transactions, semiannual statistics samplings, and pilot studies. Library faculty and staff are heavily invested in the implementation of new technologies (ebooks, streaming video, online interlibrary loan, email reference, online courses) but also work to preserve the benefits of traditional library resources (print textbooks on reserve, reference desk service, and face-to-face instruction, citation clinics, and research consultations).

Supporting the pursuit of LaGuardia’s educational offerings, the College accepts more than 2,500 new transfer students every year. More than half are international, most are above traditional college age, and one-third does not transfer from community colleges. The College’s Office of Transfer Credit Evaluation reviews records of all incoming transfer students to ensure that course equivalencies and expected learning outcomes are comparable to LaGuardia’s curricula and standards. The College provides transfer students with information and step-by-step guidance pertaining to transferring their educational credits.

The Standard 11 Working Group examined how the process for developing new programs strengthens the quality and rigor of program curricula and ensures that educational offerings are consistent with the college mission. The group also investigated whether graduates are well-prepared for transfer to baccalaureate programs or for employment, whether data about graduates
has been used to change the curriculum, what resources are available to support students in achieving learning goals, and how the college communicates policies and procedures regarding transfer credit.

The Standard 14 Working Group addressed several of the fundamental elements listed under Standard 11: the extent to which student learning outcomes are incorporated into program goals and course syllabi (FE 11.3, 11.12), and the assessment of student learning and program outcomes relative to the goals and objectives of the undergraduate programs and the use of the results to improve student learning and program effectiveness (FE 11.13). (Sentences and phrases that have been bolded have been taken directly from Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education.) The Standard 12 Working Group investigated the incorporation of general education core competencies into the curriculum, assuring appropriate breadth of programs (FE 11.1). Please see Chapter 8.

Findings for Standard 11: Educational Offerings

New program development has accelerated in recent years, reflecting a renewed sense of purpose at the College and providing an increasing range of educational opportunities. Since 2007, the College has created 11 new degree programs. As of fall 2011, the College offered 57 programs and options. These educational offerings include significant additions in the liberal arts and sciences, including new majors in Biology, Communication Studies, Environmental Science, Philosophy, Spanish Translation, Theater, and Writing and Literature. New programs in Accounting (AS), Aviation Management, Criminal Justice, and Radiologic Technology (AAS) have also been launched. A full list is available in Appendix 6.1. In addition, the curriculum has been substantially enriched by an expansion of the College’s Honors Program, which was revised in 2007 to provide a more structured path for students to complete the Honors Concentration. Since 2007, Honors courses have grown from seven to 17 per semester, while participating students increased from 100 to 278 per semester (11.2.15 Overview of Honors Program and 11.2.16 LAGCC Honors Courses-Students 07-11).

Our research confirmed that the process by which LaGuardia’s programs are developed, implemented, and modified is designed to ensure that the College’s curriculum is academically rigorous and consistent with its mission (FE 11.1). As required by CUNY, all of the College’s new AA and AS programs are articulated with senior CUNY colleges (see 11.4.07 Articulation Agreements). This policy guarantees the integrity of curriculum development by involving faculty at senior colleges in determining the rigor and breadth of the curriculum. The College also offers three dual/joint programs articulated with senior CUNY colleges: Criminal Justice AA (John Jay), Accounting AS (John Jay), Engineering Science AS (City). Two additional joint/dual programs are currently under development: Science for Forensics (John Jay) and Nursing (Lehman). Among the AAS programs, eight are subject to the rigorous standards established by national accrediting bodies (14.7.05 Accredited Programs); the Practical Nursing program is evaluated by the New York State Education Department; the Business Administration and Business Management programs follow the standards of the National Business Education Association; and the Paralegal program follows the accreditation standards of the American Bar Association. Moreover, all courses and programs, including learning objectives, are developed within departmental curriculum committees through peer review among LaGuardia faculty with relevant expertise. Appendix 6.2 explains the new program development process in more detail, including required internal evaluation procedures that specify desired student outcomes and
assessment measures, thus ensuring that new programs contain appropriate learning objectives (11.3.89 Basic Guidelines for New Programs-CUNY 2010).

Based on its review of Letters of Intent, program proposals, and other Curriculum Committee documents, the Standard 11 Working Group found that all new programs and recent curricular revisions have been consistent with the College mission, and most curricular proposals include explicit references to either departmental missions or the College mission. The CUNY Basic Guidelines require explicit reference to the college mission, but only in formal program proposals, not in Letters of Intent (11.3.89 Basic Guidelines for New Programs-CUNY 2010). The Working Group therefore concluded that it may be advisable to require all Letters of Intent to include a short reflection on how the proposed effort is aligned with the College mission.

In addition to developing new programs, the Curriculum Committee is responsible for overseeing curricular revisions, which often emerge from the Periodic Program Review (PPR) process. Appendix 6.3 provides details about curricular revisions, and Chapter 8 describes how recent enhancements to the PPR process, including more guidance on assessment, ensure that the College’s curriculum is academically rigorous (FE 11.1) and that degree programs are designed to foster a coherent student learning experience and to promote synthesis of learning (FE 11.2).

At LaGuardia, capstone courses play a key role in advancing coherence and synthesis in the educational experience (FE 11.2), and since 2007 the College has worked toward strengthening capstone learning across the curriculum. In 2007-08, a faculty research team studied the theory of capstone learning, assessed capstone practices at LaGuardia, and examined practices at other colleges. The research team’s recommendations laid the foundation for a faculty development process, supported by a Title V grant, in which faculty study capstone literature; rethink capstone courses in their disciplines; and develop new strategies for strengthening integrative elements, including ePortfolio. Since fall 2008, 60 faculty from nine academic departments have taken part in this process. Evidence suggests that their courses strengthen student engagement (as measured by the CCSSE) and encourage progress towards the degree. Student portfolios from capstone courses demonstrate high degrees of integration. In 2011-12, many programs plan to bring their revised capstone courses to College Wide Curriculum Committee to formalize the restructured curriculum and pedagogy (11.1.05 2010 APR Report).

One measure of the success of the College’s new programs is the increasing numbers of degree-seeking students enrolling in these programs (11.1.03 2011 Institutional Profile). Of particular note are four examples: (a) enrollment in the Accounting (AS) program rose from 698 in fall 2010 to 746 students in fall 2010; (b) the Criminal Justice (AA) program grew from 241 students in fall 2009 to 650 in fall 2010; (c) the Writing and Literature (AA) program grew from 40 majors in its initial year (fall 2008) to 123 in fall 2010; (d) the Communication Studies (AA) program initially enrolled 20 students (fall 2009), growing to 86 as of fall 2010. Although some portion of these increases may be attributable to the rise in enrollment, they also demonstrate the College’s success in developing new degree programs that respond to educational and employment needs.

Enrollment in the College’s Associate in Arts and Associate in Sciences degree programs increased 58% between fall 2005 and fall 2010 (Appendix 6.4). The growth of this population
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has placed extra emphasis on transferability in curriculum deliberations, since most of these students intend to transfer to baccalaureate programs at four-year institutions.

Based on recent outcomes, there is substantial evidence that LaGuardia graduates are well prepared academically for transfer to baccalaureate programs. In fall 2009, the average first term GPA of LaGuardia AA/AS graduates who transferred to CUNY senior college was 2.72, the highest among community colleges, and exceeding all other CUNY community colleges. (07.4.08 LaGCC Year-End PMP 09-10). Moreover, LaGuardia significantly exceeds the national five-year transfer rate to senior colleges by 32%. LaGuardia graduates transfer at the rate of 55%, far above the national rate of 23% (11.1.02 2010 Institutional Profile). See Appendix 6.5 for additional data.

The College is in the process of improving its ability to gather information about the transfer and employment experiences of graduates. According to the Director of Development, since 2008 the College has increased efforts to establish regular relationships with graduates. The College hosted several informal alumni gatherings, new student orientation activities have included alumni, and five newsletters have been e-mailed to alumni on a quarterly basis since September 2009. Most recently, discussions have begun with program coordinators and department chairs about ways to help the College maintain contact with alumni so as to utilize information about transfer and employment experiences as the basis for making revisions to program curricula.

Although most AA and AS degree programs focus primarily on preparing students for transfer, a fundamental aspect of the College’s original mission has been the responsibility to provide degree programs of sufficient academic rigor that will enable students to enter the workforce upon completion of a terminal degree. According to current data, the College’s vocational programs are achieving considerable success. Based on a survey of graduates, the six-month job placement rate for LaGuardia’s vocational AAS programs is 75.4%, slightly above the CUNY average of 74.9% (02.1.11 PMP 2010-11 Final 7-11-2011, p.85).

Allied health programs constitute one of the largest curricula areas focused on preparing students for employment. These programs, which are subject to educational standards established by accrediting bodies, have become increasingly rigorous about using student success data on state and national licensure, certification, and registration exams to assess program effectiveness. Curricular revisions are also based on recommendations stemming from the PPR process. Recent pass rates on state and national certification exams in allied health clearly indicate that these programs are effective at preparing students for employment (See Appendix 6.6). In addition to how test performance may influence curricular revision, the systems involved in organizing and evaluating clinical placement sites provide a conduit for information about health care innovations and policy changes that are subsequently incorporated into curricular revisions. Appendix 6.7 provides examples of how recent changes in allied health program curricula are based on assessment linked to employability of graduates.

In addition to vocational programs, the College helps students transition into the workplace by requiring certain cohorts of students to complete an internship before graduation. Internships are arranged by either the Cooperative Education Department or specific degree programs (14.1.01 COOP PPR May 2010). See Chapter 7 for a discussion of the Co-op Department’s efforts to improve assessment of its program offerings.
The Co-op Department has recently entered a period of change, although cooperative education itself remains a curricular staple at LaGuardia. The 2002 report of the College’s Task Force on Redesigning Cooperative Education (co-chaired by Co-op and Natural Sciences faculty members) recommended the development of “new Co-op Program delivery models” in order to create stronger connections between experiential learning and discipline-specific curricula. These “delivery models” were to emerge from a collaborative “Program-Major Review Process” involving faculty from Co-op and other departments (13.5.19 Final Report Coop TF). Since this time, four faculty members of the Co-op Department requested and were granted transfer to the Business and Technology Department. In addition, in an interview with the Chair of the Self-Study Steering Committee, Vice President Katopes explained that in the last few years several programs have requested more control over the internships for their students and as a result were allowed to assume responsibility for those internships, ideally with the assistance of Co-op faculty.

In May 2010, two meetings of the College Senate included informational items regarding the Co-op department. Several faculty and staff expressed concern about the department’s future, including the Senate Chairperson and the senator representing Co-op, who felt that the internship program would be “endangered” if the department became “decentralized” (13.5.2.02 Minutes of May 12 Senate Meeting 2010). At one meeting, President Mellow and Vice President Katopes sought to address what they viewed as a misunderstanding about the changes to Co-op. President Mellow explained that encouraging departments to take more ownership over their internships is “designed to strengthen the presence of Co-op rather than eliminate it,” and Vice President Katopes assured the audience that he is “committed to the Cooperative Education Department,” which “remains as a department, with a chairperson and a P&B” (13.5.2.01 Minutes of May 26 Senate Meeting 2010).

The most recent change in cooperative education occurred in spring 2011 when the College Senate approved revisions to the curriculum of the Liberal Arts Social Sciences and Humanities: AA Degree that make a co-op experience optional for day students. In his interview with the Self-Study Chair, Vice President Katopes pointed out that this proposal was an initiative put forward by the Liberal Arts chairs after polling their respective faculties, illustrating that the recent changes affecting Co-op were being driven by faculty. Chapter 3 discusses how the repeated votes taken on this curricular revision demonstrate the difficulty the College sometimes encounters in balancing two of its core values: full participation in governance by all constituencies versus the imperative to maintain faculty control over the curriculum.

Learning Resources
We determined that LaGuardia’s library services and professional library staff provide excellent support for the College’s educational programs (FE 11.5). The Library provides a circulating collection of print and electronic books and serials, electronic databases, interlibrary loan, reference support, credit courses on information literacy, laptop loans for students, media equipment, and audio and video taping. Appendix 6.8 provides more details about these services and the Library’s collections. While visits to the Library have risen only modestly since 2007, visits to the Library’s website and use of its databases have skyrocketed. Between fall 2005 and fall 2009, FTE enrollment rose 29% (11.1.02 2010 Institutional Profile). Use of the Media Lab, which contains equipment for viewing or listening to the media collections, as well as computers and printers, rose by 40.7%, while visits to the library’s website increased by 125.5%. The use of
the reserve collection has also gone up by 34.7%, reflecting increased use of the electronic reserve system implemented in 2004. In 2009 LaGuardia students made more use of full-text databases than students at any other CUNY community college (and some four-year colleges with larger enrollments) (07.1.01 CCWeek Article and 07.1.02 CUNY database usage 09).

In spring 2011, the College secured funding for a major expansion of the Library that will add 12,400 square feet, as envisioned in the Faculties Master Plan. The Library Expansion Committee is in the process of designing these additions.

The spring and fall 2010 User Satisfaction Surveys (11.6.18 Library User Satisfaction Results Sp10 and 11.6.21 Library User Satisfaction Results Fa10) indicate that most students feel that Library services are being well-maintained. The fall 2010 report “shows evidence that the satisfaction rate remains at a very good level while accommodating the growing number of users at the college.” The 2010 CUNY Student Experience Survey also demonstrates high levels of satisfaction at LaGuardia with Library facilities (73% satisfied or very satisfied), services (71%), and collections (72%) (07.3.11 CUNY Experience Survey). The open-ended responses on the User Satisfaction Surveys include complaints or recommendations for change focused on the need for more space, more computers and photocopy machines, and longer hours, all of which are subject to physical or budgetary constraints, largely out of the hands of Library faculty and staff. However, the planned expansion of the Library should alleviate many of these concerns.

Enrollment increases, coupled with a rise in the number of degree programs and the recent CUNY hiring freeze, have placed pressures on the Library’s resources. Although the Library has received three infusions of funds since 2004, these were one-time windfalls that have not been renewed. In 2004-2005, $100,000 was received from the Community College Investment Program (CCIP); in 2007-2008, $100,000 in COMPACT money was allocated; and in 2009-2010, the CUNY textbook initiative provided $110,000, which enabled the Library to increase the number of textbooks on reserve and to expand the ebook collection. Since 2002, the Library’s total operating expenditures have fluctuated greatly, ranging from $1,928,308 to $2,801,544 for 2009-2010. From 2005 to 2007, there was a substantial increase from $1,848,372 to $2,774,754, but since 2007 the budget has increased only slightly (See Appendix 6.9).

To meet the needs of 18,000 matriculating students, the Library fields a professional staff of 16 librarians, four College Lab Technicians (CLTs), and a support staff of 23. These numbers remained unchanged from 2005-2006 to 2008-2009 (11.1.02 2010 Institutional Profile), and they decreased during the 2010-2011 academic year due to retirements and the CUNY job freeze. The Library now has 18 professional staff and 19 support staff.

The number of degree programs offered at LaGuardia have increased, but the Library has not been allocated additional funds to support these programs. The Working Group found that this may be result of a gap in the strategic planning and budget allocation processes, since the implementation of new programs does not entail additional funding to purchase resources recommended to support the program. In fact, the number of volumes per student in the Library’s collections has declined from 8.8 in 2005-2006 to 7.7 in 2008-2009 (Appendix 6.10), a problem partially offset by the availability of electronic books.

Further, we found that the College offers programs that promote student use of a variety of information and learning resources, and the professional library staff, faculty, and
administrators collaborate to foster information literacy across the curriculum (FE 11.6, 11.7). In addition to information literacy instruction and promotion, Library faculty serve on the College-wide Curriculum Committee, discuss information literacy issues with proposers of all new courses, act as liaisons to departments and programs for collection development, and help with re-accreditation of licensed programs. The structure of the Library’s Information Literacy program remains largely unchanged from the description in the Periodic Program Review of 2007 (07.5.01 Library PPR May 2007, p. 4). New developments are noted in Appendix 6.11.

One-hour classes: Classes are mandatory for all ENG 101 (Composition) and ENG 103 (Research Paper) courses and optional for all others. All Library faculty teach one-hour classes. The Library is working on a pilot to improve communication between Library and English faculty in order to minimize scheduling problems and improve content of mandatory ENG101 instruction sessions, using a checklist dubbed the “instruction menu” (11.6.11).

Drop-in or sign-up workshops on Web basics, selected databases, citation styles, and other topics, as needed. Citation clinics at the end of semester are especially popular (11.6.01 Library Stats Sp10, p. 5).

Mandatory sign-off on the Information Literacy component of all new course proposals: Course proposers are asked how these competencies will be transmitted.

Research Review Competition: Annually awards three term papers that best demonstrate library research and the use of information resources (website, 11.6.10).

The Library has experimented with multiple methods of assessment and has applied findings to improve services. Standardized collection of statistics takes place during “Statistics Week” each semester, resulting in a rich cumulative report of comparative data. Successful innovations include observation and analysis of reference desk transactions; Web usability studies; and rubric assessment of web evaluation skills instruction in Library courses. Partially successful experiments included the iSkills test, the SAILS test, and rubric assessment of a broad range of information literacy skills. Changes made in response to assessment include purchase of more e-books and fewer reference books; better analysis of staffing needs at the Reference desk; and changes in Library spaces including more chairs and quieter study spaces. Appendix 6.12 provides details of these assessment measures, including the Library’s ongoing efforts to improve the assessment of the information literacy of LaGuardia students.

We also confirmed that the College’s learning resources include extensive tutoring services that provide support for educational programs (FE 11.5). LaGuardia supports students with a variety of tutoring centers and programs designed to address a wide array of academic endeavors. There are several special programs, such as Accelerated Study in Associate Programs, College Discovery, and Office of Services for Students with Disabilities, which offer tutoring as part of a set of internal programs available to a designated population. However, the majority of tutorial services at LaGuardia are linked to academic departments, dedicated to particular areas, and available to all matriculated students at the college. Although these programs vary in structure, size, and systems of operation, together they form a college-wide effort to address the academic support needs of the overall LaGuardia student population. Appendix 6.13 provides details about the following tutoring programs, including assessment measures and challenges in meeting student demand during peak periods in the Academic ESL
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Lab, the Math Lab, and the Writing Center: Academic ESL Lab, Academic Peer Instruction, Computer Tutoring, Mathematics Tutoring Center, Reading Lab, Writing Center, CSTEP Science Lab, Science Study Hall, Business Academic Resource Center/Accounting Lab, Speech Lab, and Student Services/Student Government Study Hall.

Transfer Credit
Finally, we found that the College policies and procedures regarding transfer credit are fair, consistently applied, and publicly communicated. Rather than being determined solely on the basis of the accreditation of the sending institution or the mode of delivery, credit is granted based on course equivalencies and the College’s expected learning outcomes (FE 11.9), as expected by Middle States. The College has a dedicated Office of Transfer Credit Evaluation within the Admissions Office with two full-time staff members and one office assistant to evaluate transfer credit and to communicate and advise incoming students about the procedures and policies regarding transfer credit. Transfer credits are evaluated by this office prior to the student’s invitation to register and the first semester of attendance in a degree program at LaGuardia. The office conducts re-evaluations every semester for students who are readmitted to the College with new transfer credit. Continuing students who change their curriculum are instructed when completing the Change of Major Form in the Registrar’s Office to seek re-evaluation in the Admissions Office. The office offers workshops to transfer students to explain the transfer credit process. The maximum number of transfer credits to be granted toward a degree is 30 (10 toward a certificate). Students who transfer science credits for sequential courses must transfer both parts to receive the full science credit (11.7.06 Catalog Transfer Eval Policies). All credit is granted at the discretion of the individual academic departments in conjunction with the Transfer Credit Office.

The Coordinator of Transfer Services places transfer information in the College Catalog (11.7.06 Catalog Transfer Eval Policies), the College’s Web-page (11.7.07 Transfer Credit Eval Website), printed brochures (11.7.03 How Does Credit Transfer, 2010 Bulletin, 11.7.04 Transcripts Request, and 11.7.05 Transfer Evaluation 9-10), and individual letters to incoming transfer students (11.7.12 Letter to Student). The newly-designed website (11.7.07 Transfer Credit Eval Website) was launched in November 2010 with a dedicated e-mail address Creditevaluation@lagcc.cuny.edu for transfer-credit inquiries.

Summary of Findings and Conclusions for Standard 11
1. LaGuardia’s process for developing, implementing, and modifying new programs is designed to ensure that the College’s curriculum is academically rigorous and consistent with its mission.
2. All new programs and curricular revisions since 2007 have been consistent with the College’s Mission Statement.
3. Substantial enrollment growth in the College’s Associate in Arts and Associate in Sciences degree programs has exerted extra pressure on transferability in curriculum deliberations.
4. In fall 2009, the average first term GPA of LaGuardia AA/AS graduates who transferred to CUNY senior colleges was the highest among CUNY community colleges, and the five-year transfer rate to senior colleges for LaGuardia graduates is far above the national rate.
5. The College helps prepare students for employment through internship experiences arranged by either the Cooperative Education Department or specific degree programs. The College’s six-month job placement rate for AAS programs and pass rates on certification exams
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indicate that the allied health programs are very effective at preparing students for employment.

6. Although the College has taken steps since 2007 to improve outreach to alumni, it is still in the process of improving its information gathering ability regarding transfer and employment experiences of graduates. Allied health programs provide a model that other applied programs might emulate in revising curricula based on assessment linked to employability of graduates.

7. The Cooperative Education Department has recently entered a period of change, although cooperative education itself, including internship programs, remains a curricular staple at LaGuardia. Consistent with recommendations of a 2002 college Task Force, the Co-op Department works closely with other departments to better serve students, and several programs have requested and been granted more control over internships for their students.

8. The College has secured funding for a major expansion of the Library that will add 12,400 square feet and will alleviate the increasing space demands concomitant with recent enrollment growth. Surveys indicate that most students are very satisfied with Library services. Growth in enrollment, an increased number of degree programs, and the recent CUNY hiring freeze have put pressure on the Library’s resources. When new programs are implemented, the Library is not necessarily allocated additional funds to purchase resources that have been recommended to support the program.

9. The Library promotes information literacy though credit instruction, mandated input into the curriculum development process, consultations with faculty who bring classes to the Library, participation in learning communities and professional development seminars, annual student essay competitions, and speaker programs.

10. The College supports students with an extensive array of tutoring centers and programs. Most of these services are linked to academic departments, dedicated to particular areas, and available to all matriculated students. In addition, special programs offer tutoring as part of a set of services available to a designated population. The Academic ESL Lab, the Math Lab, and the Writing Center face challenges in meeting student demand during peak periods.

11. Since 2007, the number of transfer students evaluated each semester by the College’s Office of Transfer Credit Evaluation has more than doubled. Credit is granted based on course equivalencies and expected learning outcomes. College policies and procedures regarding transfer credit are disseminated widely.

Recommendations for Standard 11: Educational Offerings

1. The College should systematically collect and use information on the success of its transfer students and working graduates to improve curriculum and future employment prospects for its current students.

2. The College should strive to address the funding and staffing issues affecting the efforts of the tutorial programs and the Library to better serve our students. In particular, the College should explore ways of ensuring that the implementation of new programs is accompanied by budget allocations to fund library resources recommended to support the program.

3. New course and program proposals and proposals for revisions should require a short reflection on how the proposed effort is aligned with the College mission.