Report to the
Faculty, Administration, Trustees, Students

of

WILLIAMS COLLEGE
Williamstown, Massachusetts

by

An Evaluation Team representing the
Commission on Institutions of Higher Education
of the
New England Association of Schools and Colleges

Prepared after study of the institution's
self-evaluation report and a visit to
the campus October 28-31, 2007

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Introduction

Under the guidelines of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Williams College completed a self-study in preparation for its decennial reaffirmation of accreditation in compliance with NEASC's Standards of Accreditation.

The Committee wanted first to affirm what a pleasure it was to participate in the evaluation of such an outstanding institution. The team came to Williamstown knowing that Williams College was a superb institution, and we had that impression more than confirmed. Williams has one of the strongest undergraduate programs in the country with a history of evolving and changing without compromising or diluting that core strength.

When Morton Schapiro became president of Williams College in 2000, he set out to reaffirm the College's commitment to undergraduate teaching and its focus on liberal arts. He has worked well with both Trustees and faculty to ensure that Williams remains a model for liberal arts colleges nationally. Early in his presidency he developed a strategic plan for the institution that subsequently informed the campaign statement for the College. In keeping with that plan, President Schapiro has expanded the faculty, increased the diversity of the student body, reorganized the residential system for undergraduates, and significantly expanded the physical campus. In addition, the College has enhanced its financial aid packages and extended need blind admissions to international students. Williams has already exceeded the financial goal set for its campaign that will end in December 2008.

President Schapiro has initiated a conversation with the multiple Williams constituencies to map out a vision for the College in 2020. While this process is just underway, we found his approach imaginative, timely, and inclusive. The senior management team and the trustees are comfortable using sophisticated models to predict evolving trends in higher education and these tools are used effectively to inform their planning. As the College moves forward with this process over the next couple of years, it will develop plans to ensure that Williams is well placed to meet the challenges of 2020.

The team thanks President Schapiro for the hospitality and openness with which he and his staff approached this review. Their commitment to Williams and to ensuring that Williams remains the outstanding institution that it is was inspiring. Our conversations with President Schapiro, trustees, members of the senior administration, faculty, students, and others were candid, helpful, stimulating, and enlightening. Each group affirmed the special sense of pride and purpose that is pervasive at Williams College.

The team particularly wanted to acknowledge the outstanding work of Professor Roger Bolton in coordinating preparation of the Self-Study Report and of Sharon Marceau in making all the arrangements for our visits as well as for their flexibility and responsiveness during our time on campus. The culture of the administration is open and transparent, and we found this immensely helpful as we went about our assessment. We would also like to thank the many people who contributed to the report and who responded to our inquiries and requests.

Standard 1: Mission and Purposes

The Williams College Board of Trustees adopted their most recent mission statement in April of 2007. The statement was based on "public statements made by Williams presidents and others associated with the College," as well as "at a deeper level from the felt experience of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and parents over many decades," and discussions with the Faculty Steering Committee and the Self Study Committee. It is a full and comprehensive statement that represents well the long-standing mission of Williams College. It is now published on the College website and at the beginning of the College catalog. The visiting team hopes that the statement will become part of ongoing discussions about priorities as well as the broader conversation about the College in 2020.

Standard 2: Planning and Evaluation

Planning

Through the self-study and our review, we found evidence that planning and evaluation at Williams is data-driven, appropriate, and used to improve institutional effectiveness and the teaching and learning mission of the institution.

Planning and evaluation are the responsibility of the President, guided and supported by senior staff (Provost, Vice Presidents, Deans, and others). Faculty, students, and trustees are involved through participation in planning committees; faculty and trustees also receive frequent administrative reports.

In President Schapiro's first year in office (2000-01), he engaged the faculty in strategic and curricular planning that resulted in the Williams Campaign, a five-year $400 million effort that began its public phase in 2003. The campaign's major initiatives included support for an expansion of the tutorial program, experiential learning, and interdisciplinary team teaching; thirty new faculty positions; new construction for Sawyer Library and Stetson Hall, humanities/social science offices and classrooms, a new center for theater and dance, and a new student center; a redesigned residential life system; expansion of need-blind admission to international students; and annual gifts to support these initiatives, all of which have been or will be achieved by 2011. In the past year, the beginnings of the next strategic plan have been discussed among trustees and senior administrators, and faculty are now undertaking preliminary discussions about such topics as technology and the environment, globalization, finances, faculty recruitment and retention, and the student experience in light of demographic change, all with the aim of investigating "What should Williams look like in the year 2020?"

The long-range Financial Plan (first introduced in the '90s) outlines assumptions about expected operating and capital expenditures (compensation, financial aid, debt repayment, community support, etc.), revenues (tuition and fees, grants, other income), gifts and endowment return. The Provost's office maintains and updates the plan, and the Board of Trustees reviews it quarterly. The plan is also used for contingency planning and modeling exercises projecting the consequences of new capital projects, over or under performance of investments, reduced giving, and the like.

The proposed budget for the coming year is built through requests from departmental budget managers to senior staff, and reviewed by the faculty, student, and staff Committee on Priorities and Resources (CPR) each spring. The CPR also reviews capital renovation projects, current-year adjustments proposed by the Provost to the Board, and other resource issues. Other significant planning groups are the Committee on Appointments and Promotions, which allocates faculty positions on an annual basis, including replacements for faculty on leave, and the Committee on Educational Policy, which reviews proposals for new courses, changes in major requirements, and new and continuing curricular initiatives, such as the tutorial and intensive writing programs.

Because Williams' financial resources are so deep, the institution has been able to cover unplanned or new expenses with relative ease; however, the college could be even more rigorous in planning and budgeting for the true costs of new initiatives. More integrated and comprehensive planning would enable the college to consider academic, admissions, student life, development, and facilities goals in relation to one another, to help everyone understand how each element contributes to Williams' overall mission and purposes.

Although the senior administration does not anticipate much new construction beyond that already in the planning stages (e.g., Sawyer construction and Athletics Master Planning for space resources for athletic teams and recreational use), we would encourage Williams to consider the benefits that might be gained from the development of a master plan for campus facilities, which integrates planning for recent construction, the new residence neighborhoods, and new athletic and recreational facilities.

Evaluation

Williams systematically evaluates its major curricular initiatives, using a wide variety of quantitative and qualitative methods to allocate resources and to improve or expand academic initiatives. It now aims to schedule external reviews of each academic department at least every ten to twelve years, and to establish a more regular schedule of review for programs offering concentrations and majors, many of which have not been reviewed in the last decade, or have never been reviewed. We would expect these new review processes to include consideration of the learning objectives and outcomes for each academic program.

On a more ad hoc basis, Williams reviews administrative offices and policies and procedures to support institutional improvement. Recently an internal review of the Office of Career Counseling brought about new staff, centralization of internship and fellowship administration, and pursuit of higher visibility for the office. Studies on family income distribution conducted by the Advisory Group on Admission and Financial Aid have resulted in a change in the loan policy for low income students, and a full review of the housing system by the Committee on Undergraduate Life led to creation of a new Office of Campus Life, new staff positions, new room selection procedures, increased funding for student activities, and major renovations to selected residence halls. Data assembled in the "Williams Diversity Databook" in 2005 supported the Diversity Initiatives Self-Study and its resulting new appointments, structures and programs. Data points such as the proportion of majors, thesis and tutorial involvement, fellowships and prizes, sorted by racial group and gender, have now been established for reporting every two years and for use in the institutional evaluation of outcomes. In addition, a review of the "peoples and cultures" general education requirement brought about the evolution to a new "Exploring Diversity" requirement to debut in 2008-09, with a full review of the new requirement planned for 2013.

More reviews are planned for curricular initiatives such as Williams in New York, the Williams-Exeter Programme, experiential education, the summer humanities and summer science programs, and the writing intensive requirement.

Resources devoted to planning and evaluation include significant amounts of faculty and staff time (such as, for example, the Director of Institutional Research and data analysts in such offices as Admissions and the Registrar) and funding for administration of surveys, including the student course surveys (SCS) and course evaluations, external reviews, outside consultants and temporary hires for specific data collection projects (e.g., collection of data on factors affecting first generation and high financial need students, as initiated by the Office of the Vice President for Strategic Planning and Institutional Diversity).

Some of the surveys used for planning and evaluation include the College Board Admitted Student Questionnaire, the Cooperative Institutional Research Program survey of entering first-year students, the National Survey of Student Engagement, the Higher Education Research Institute faculty survey, and many Consortium on Financing Higher Education (COFHE) surveys of seniors, alumni, parents, enrolled students, Non-Faculty Staffing, etc. These surveys, all of which are administered on a periodic basis, serve as indirect measures of Williams' institutional effectiveness and inform policy and decision-making in the Offices of the President, Provost, Dean of the Faculty, and Admissions, as well as in Board of Trustees and College committees.

In accordance with Williams' strong culture and tradition of faculty governance, faculty are fully engaged in the planning process, and expect to be deeply involved in formulating the next strategic plan. Williams already does an excellent job in peer group benchmarking. The 2020 plan would benefit from continued linking of admissions, academic and student life planning goals to outcome variables, which track progress toward achieving operational goals, and management variables, which track processes necessary to achieve outcomes in such areas as instructional/informational technology.

Institutional Effectiveness

Williams is committed to incorporating planning and evaluation activities into the annual routines of the college. These activities are used to aid the college in achieving its mission of providing the highest quality liberal arts education in a community that prizes teaching excellence and is committed to diversity. Institutional decision-making, particularly the allocation of resources, is consistent with planning priorities.

Standard 3: Organization and Governance

Williams College has an intelligently designed and clearly documented system of governance assisted by an administrative organization that supports the institution's mission in an effective and appropriate way. Authority and responsibilities are described in detail in a series of excellent publications and documents available to the members of the College community and delivered to the team. These documents include everything one might hope to find, from the Charter and Laws of the College, to well-designed handbooks for faculty, staff, and students. While Williams is a small and collegial community, the institution has taken the time and effort to make its organization and regulations widely known and understood.

The Self-Study section on Organization and Governance is clear and thorough, listing the various governing bodies, from the Board of Trustees to the most important committees, including how they are elected or appointed and their role in the governance and administration of the institution. The Self-Study includes a detailed description of two changes made in 2006 in the organizational structure. The first is a decision to consolidate all of the financial functions of the institution under the control of the Provost, bringing into one office responsibilities that were formerly shared with the Vice President for Administration, whose title has since been changed to Vice President for Operations. What is particularly interesting about this change, is that it was informed by an outside consultation initiated by Williams, evidence that the institution is committed to a self-assessment of its effectiveness even at the organizational level, and ready to seek outside advice when appropriate.

The second major change is the creation of the position of Vice President for Strategic Planning and Institutional Diversity to coordinate the many initiatives on diversity. Again this change resulted from an internal self-study followed by two consultancies, which highlighted the need to consolidate and strengthen efforts in this area and to ensure that the institution has the structures in place to support the increasing diversity of the students, faculty, and staff and to implement programs that will create an environment of inclusion for all members of the College community. This is an admirable and important goal, and one that will require the coordination of many offices and constituencies. It is also one that will almost certainly take the commitment of considerable resources, both human and financial, to accomplish.

A study of the governance structure of Williams reveals several significant features. The Board of Trustees is an unusually active and engaged body of 25 individuals, some appointed and some elected according to clear and well-designed procedures. The Trustees operate with an effective committee structure, which was recently improved in a number of small but important ways as the result of a Board-initiated consultancy. Trustees are given excellent orientation materials and are helped to be very effective. The Board meets formally four times a year and is kept fully abreast of all financial and policy issues, approving all major College initiatives, including the levels of spending, fundraising, and personnel. It is also engaged in the current strategic planning exercise along with key administrators and certain faculty committees. During its quarterly meetings and at other times, particularly though its committee structure, the Trustees have ample time for direct interchanges with senior administrators and representatives from the faculty and the student body.

An important feature of the senior leadership at Williams is the extensive involvement of faculty in the governance of the institution. This involvement appears in several significant areas. First, three key members of the senior staff are drawn from the faculty for extended terms of service: the Provost and Treasurer, the Dean of the Faculty, and the Dean of the College. These individuals are appointed by the President after consultation with the faculty and, after serving in these roles, typically return to the faculty. Second, several important standing committees, all of which play major governance roles, are composed of faculty who are elected to those committees by their peers. The most important of these committees are Appointments and Promotions, Educational Policy, Priorities and Resources, and the Faculty Steering Committee. The result of this use of faculty is that the governance of the institution is an unusually shared one. This has a widespread and lasting effect on the institution. As these individuals return to the faculty and are replaced by others, over time a large percentage of faculty come to play important roles in the administration of the College. The faculty to whom the team spoke confirmed the beneficial effect of this shared

governance. They are ready and willing to accept the opportunity to serve, and they see themselves as an integral part of the institution.

The connections between senior administration and the staff of the institution are not as deep or as regular, but lines of communication are maintained thorough such devices as annual meetings between staff and key administrators and more formal mechanisms for staff discourse represented by the President's Administrative Group and the Staff Council, which meets with the Director of Human Resources. Williams also participates in the Management Development Series, to which it sends eight to ten managers a year for staff development.

Among the strengths of the institution's organization and structure are:

1. The active, engaged, and well-structured Board of Trustees. The visiting team met with three members and was very impressed with their commitment to Williams, their detailed knowledge of the institution and its current activities, goals, and problems, and their readiness to assist the institution in any way possible. During a difficult period of transition the Trustees played a helpful and very active role in the administration of the College. The team was pleased to see that the Board was now more focused on its appropriate role as an independent and advisory body, monitoring and discussing the key initiatives of the administration and engaging in long-range strategic planning.

2. The effective engagement of the faculty at nearly all levels of governance. Faculty bring wisdom and intelligence to the planning and administration of the institution and they bring back to the faculty at large a clear sense of shared governance. There is no sense of tension or even a distance between the faculty and the administration.

3. The readiness of the institution to assess, and when appropriate to alter, its own governance and administrative organization to accomplish its goals. Improvements in the committee structure of the Board, changes in the responsibilities of the Provost, and the creation of a new position to plan and implement the institution-wide commitment to diversity are all examples of this striving for improvement.

The team found no significant concerns in the area of Organization and Governance.

It is too early to know how effective either the reorganization of the Provost's responsibilities or the new position of Vice President for Strategic Planning and Institutional Diversity will be, but it is clear to the team that the motivation for changes was sound, the goals and plans are excellent, and the commitment to improve the functions in these areas is genuine. It is also clear that if further changes prove desirable, Williams will be prepared to make those changes.

The team believes it likely that some effort to engage more fully the support staff of the College, particularly at the director level, in the goals and plans of the institution would be beneficial. The success of the current goals, and certainly whatever goals emerge from the ongoing strategic planning process, will depend on the commitment and energy of the entire College staff, and it is important to find ways of bringing the key individuals from the

administrative group into the implementation process as stakeholders. The institution's success in engaging the faculty in shared leadership should be imitated among this important group of the administrative staff.

In recognizing the unusual and admirable level of engagement of the Board of Trustees in planning and other more operational issues, the Team hoped that this kind of engagement would not in the future lead to any compromise in the important role of the Board to act as an advisory body.

Standard 4: Academic Program

Exceptional in its breadth and excellence, the academic program of Williams College meets even the most stringent expectations and sets a standard of leadership for liberal arts colleges in the United States.

Students are required to fulfill a four-part distribution requirement, which includes one course in Peoples and Cultures/Exploring Diversity, one course in Quantitative/Formal Reasoning, two writing intensive courses, and a cross-divisional requirement of three courses each in Science and Mathematics, Languages and the Arts, and Social Studies. Students are strongly advised to complete these requirements during their first two years so as to provide a foundation for the focused studies they will undertake in their major. In addition to the 34 majors Williams presently offers, the academic program includes 12 concentrations, a notable increase from the 7 concentrations offered 10 years ago. In 2001-02, the Faculty adopted a new common framework for concentrations, enhancing consistency across programs, requiring courses designed specifically for the concentration, including an interdisciplinary capstone course, and regularizing the review of concentrations by the Committee on Educational Policy. Growth in concentrations and the faculty appointments made to support the associated programs have facilitated the College's efforts to diversify its curriculum and its faculty, and made the faculty's commitment to a more regular review of these programs an important goal.

The Peoples and Culture requirement, which was criticized by some students and faculty for being ambiguously defined, will be replaced by the Exploring Diversity Initiative (EDI) in 2008-09. Although cultural diversity remains a major focus, the EDI purposefully includes economic, religious, and political diversity among others. Emblematic of the College's curricular and student life goals, the development of successful EDI courses will be a focus of a newly appointed faculty director.

A signature of the College's commitment to small classes, the tutorial program has been a locus of growth since the faculty voted to expand tutorial offerings in 2001. From a low of 21 tutorials in 2000-01, the program nearly tripled to 62 offerings in 2006-07, and then declined slightly to 54 tutorials planned for 2007-08. The proportion of graduating seniors taking at least one tutorial grew from 35 per cent in the Class of 2001 to 55 percent in the Class of 2007. Though the faculty's goal (voted in 2001) of increasing the number of tutorials offered at the sophomore level has yet to be fully realized (between 15 and 21 tutorials have been offered each year at the 100/200 level between 2002-03 and 2006-07), the stated goal of offering 60 tutorials overall was achieved in 2006-07. The very substantial expansion in the Williams faculty during these years made it possible for the College to offer many more small classes, including tutorials. Though some smaller departments and those with especially structured majors may feel less able to offer tutorials, the creative use of "staffing contracts" by the Committee on Appointments and Promotions and the Dean of the Faculty

has encouraged more departments to participate in the tutorial program. A staffing contract requires a department to provide certain teaching resources to the tutorial program or another College priority (such as an interdisciplinary program or writing intensive courses) in exchange for the granting of a new tenure-eligible line (FTE). This promising system has worked well in a time of faculty expansion, but, as the pace of faculty expansion slows, the need to flexibly, but firmly, administer these contracts may increase. Maintaining the number of tutorials at or near the goal of 60 annually may also prove to be challenging, though the Associate Dean of the Faculty estimates that approximately 25-to-30 tutorials are currently guaranteed each year by staffing contracts.

Student response to the tutorial program, as measured not only by enrollment increases but also by student course surveys (SCS, which are administered at the conclusion of the semester in every course) is especially encouraging. Even after controlling for class size and faculty rank (a possible proxy for faculty experience and pedagogical skill), courses taught in the tutorial format score significantly higher ($p < .05$) than non-tutorial courses. Also encouraging is the relative balance among tutorial offerings and student enrollments in them across the three academic divisions (Div. I: Languages and the Arts, Div. II: Social Studies, Div. III: Science and Mathematics). Of the 210 tutorials taught between 2002-03 and 2006-07, 70 were offered in Div. I (33.3 percent), 79 in Div. II (37.6 percent), and 61 in Div. III (29 percent). Over the same five-year period, student enrollment in tutorials numbered 1884, 613 in Div. I (32.5 percent), 691 in Div. II (36.7 percent), and 580 in Div. III (30.8 percent).

The College has identified creativity in student learning as a special challenge, a newer concern on which Williams and most liberal arts institutions have not focused in a systematic or comprehensive way. The discussion of and reflections upon topics such as "teaching creativity" and "encouraging creative risk-taking among students" are to be commended and will be watched with interest by many of Williams' peers. While specific assessments of how well students have been "taught" creativity may remain elusive, there are numerous examples of creative student work at Williams supported by specific faculty efforts. Especially notable are the impressive student-faculty summer research program, which attracts over 250 students each summer; the honors thesis program, which included 25 percent of the Class of 2007; and the tutorial program described above. Many members of the faculty have testified to the value of summer research experiences for developing their students' creative capacities. To date, the overwhelming proportion of summer research students have worked in the sciences, mathematics, or statistics. For its potential to enhance creativity in student learning, the development of summer student research projects in Div. I and Div. II is properly regarded as a priority. There is some sentiment that financial inducements for faculty may be required to extend the program more evenly across the disciplines.

Through the efforts of a Coordinator of Experiential Education and a faculty member designated as the Gaudino Scholar, the faculty is encouraged to develop experiential learning courses that may incorporate cooperative, community-based, and/or problem-solving pedagogies. A new off-campus program, Williams in New York, offers eight students per semester an opportunity to work closely with a resident faculty member, take a course from a commuting Williams faculty member, and undertake an academic fieldwork assignment in the city. In only its fourth semester of operation, the Williams in New York program will be formally reviewed in 2007-08. These "learning-by-doing" opportunities may be described as both experiential and creative.

The College also sponsors off-campus programs in Mystic and at Exeter College of the University of Oxford, each of which has been notably strengthened over the last five years. The Williams-Mystic Program is staffed by two Williams faculty members in residence, one of whom is the Program Director. Over the past 30 years, the College has sent an average of seven students per year to the Williams-Mystic program, over 60 per cent of whom are science majors, mostly in biology and geosciences. The program's presence on campus has been recently enhanced by the introduction of a new Maritime Studies concentration in 2004-05, which requires four courses in the Williams-Mystic program in addition to three courses taught in Williamstown. A new 8,400 square foot marine science laboratory facility has just opened in Mystic, a more than ten-fold expansion of the previous laboratory space. Through an agreement signed with Exeter College in 2003-04, the Williams College Oxford Programme became the Williams-Exeter Programme at Oxford. With this change, Williams students became visiting students at Exeter, a status that enhanced their access to Oxford's academic facilities and permitted them to be better integrated into the Exeter College community. Williams has also invested in three new faculty positions at Exeter, which serve directly to support its students' acclimation to Oxford-style tutorials.

The two graduate programs of the College also bear particular mention. The one-year Master of Arts in Policy Economics is offered through the Center for Development Economics (CDE). The program attracts between 20 and 25 students annually, who have typically already begun a career in government or public service. The teaching faculty of the CDE consists of full-time faculty members who also teach economics to undergraduates and are appointed to the College's faculty under the same general procedures. A curricular review of the rigorous ten-month program was undertaken approximately three years ago. Most CDE courses are now cross-listed in the Economics Department. Over the last ten years, a large increase in the number of undergraduates taking courses at the CDE has occurred, so that currently between 40 and 50 Williams economics majors take CDE courses each year. The growing presence of international undergraduates at Williams provides another opportunity for the CDE to become better integrated into campus life. This past year CDE students began taking their dinners in the undergraduate dining halls, a change that quickly led to the establishment of new language tables in Arabic, Russian, and French.

The two-year Master of Arts program in Art History is offered jointly with the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute and enrolls roughly 12 new students per year. The intensive curriculum culminates in a qualifying paper project, which includes a public symposium. Each student is responsible not only for presenting his or her own paper, but also for offering responses and commentaries on peers' work. The curriculum is being reviewed in 2007-08. The program is taught jointly by Williams art history faculty and professional colleagues from the Clark, the Williams College Museum of Art, and MASS MOCA, nearly all of whom are appointed to the College and evaluated by the same procedures as other faculty at Williams. The program offers seminars in art history, which are often taken by upper-level undergraduates, and is looking for ways to enhance the informal mentoring by graduate students of undergraduates interested in graduate study. Faculty colleagues in art history and economics have reported that the presence of these graduate programs is a substantial asset in their recruitment of new faculty. Mirroring the priorities of the undergraduate college, the development of additional financial aid resources for both programs is seen as a goal for the next decade so that the programs may further extend their reach within underserved populations.

The commitment of the College to promote the success of underrepresented students at Williams, with particular emphasis on the sciences, begins with two pre-enrollment

programs: Summer Science (SS), established in 1987, and Summer Humanities and Social Science (SHSS), created in 2000. Both programs last five weeks and are open to all matriculating African American, Latina/o, Native American, and first-generation-college students. Through course offerings designed to resemble the first-year courses that many entering students take and through introductions to key faculty, staff and upperclassmen, the programs seek to facilitate the academic transition to Williams. The Summer Science program seeks to retain SS students' declared early interest in science by offering them continuing internship opportunities in science labs throughout their undergraduate careers. Beyond the SS program's retention goals, which often enable individual students to complete pre-medical requirements, both programs may be seen as initial steps in fostering students' interest in research and graduate study. The development of a Team for Diversity in Science, including a biology professor who has been appointed Associate Dean for Institutional Diversity, underlines the College's stated goal of "participation in the sciences by all racial and socioeconomic groups to reflect their presence in the student body" (Williams College Self Study for Accreditation, September 2007, p. 45). Facilitating students' academic success will be crucial to the attainment of this ambitious goal. An assessment of the academic performance of SS and SHSS students relative to a cohort of comparable non-participants, through a study to be undertaken by the Director of Institutional Research and the staffs of the SS and SHSS programs this year, will provide valuable data. Evidence of tangible success in improving academic performance through these pre-enrollment programs would be of great interest to many peer institutions.

It should be noted that the College embraces assessment throughout its academic program. With the assistance of the Committee on Educational Policy, the Dean of the Faculty has designed a survey, to be conducted in 2007-08, to assess the effectiveness of the College's writing requirements. Through the College Board, the Consortium on Financing Higher Education (COFHE), the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) and the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE, based at Indiana University), surveys of students—from the newly admitted to graduating seniors—are regularly administered and evaluated. By using the student course surveys (SCS) collected at the end of the semester in every course and the broad program of surveys administered by the Office of Institutional Research to facilitate faculty discussion, Williams has developed an admirable culture of review and reflection.

By sustaining a culture of critical review, together with the remarkable commitment of its faculty, Williams should maintain an academic program that continues to evolve while exemplifying the finest in liberal arts education.

Standard 5: Faculty

The pride that Williams College takes in its Faculty and the privileged position it holds was amply confirmed by this visit to the College, with faculty, and with administrators.

Meetings with a range of faculty, from part-time, new faculty pre-tenure, mid-career post-tenure, and senior faculty over 60, bear out the commitment by the College to attract, retain, promote, and support highly qualified teachers and scholars in a variety of substantial ways. Faculty members we interviewed confirmed the reports of administrators, Trustees, and the Self-Study that the College makes serious and continuing new efforts to attract top young scholars in their respective fields, to provide teaching support in several ways (some new), to support scholarship and research through release time and funding, and to integrate faculty in the substantive work of the College, including administration and governance.

The faculty members we interviewed confirmed their widely shared commitment to excellence in teaching, scholarship and research, and service to the community. They explicitly recognize and value the commitment of the College to support them in the accomplishment and recognition of these goals. The Faculty Handbook, which is readily available, very clearly identifies and defines the terms of the College, Faculty, and Administration roles, expectations, policies, procedures, benefits and services, faculty-student relations, and facilities and services. This document is comprehensive, well and clearly written, and fully covers the standards for faculty.

Conversations with faculty and administrators (some of whom are also faculty) underscored and provided examples of the mutual confidence and respect with which they share in service to the mission of the College. Faculty serve on major standing committees such as the Committee on Appointments and Promotions (3 of 6), Faculty Steering Committee (6 of 6), Committee on Educational Policy (7 of 17), Faculty Compensation (all of 8-10), as well as 19 other committees. In fact, faculty suggested very gently that these, and possibly others, are perhaps too many, notwithstanding their appreciation of wide faculty inclusion. Moreover, faculty members move in and out of administrative roles and currently hold the key positions of Provost and Treasurer, Dean of the Faculty, and Dean of the College.

Teaching and Advising

These faculty groups repeatedly identified teaching excellence as the paramount value. Teaching excellence is both expected and supported. Recently, the College reduced the teaching load by one course every other year in support of recent curricular changes such as Tutorials and interdisciplinary programs. The Program for Effective Teaching offers faculty, but especially new, younger faculty the opportunity to visit classes and discuss mutual teaching interests and experiences, and receive the guidance and support of senior faculty. Younger, pre-tenure faculty cited this as helpful and valued the contact with and support of senior faculty. Faculty reported prompt and effective support and training in IT. Several faculty in different departments and with different levels of experience mentioned a more selective use of instructional technology in response to students' often cited preference for "chalk and talk", the more direct interaction with their faculty. Nevertheless, newer and integrated forms of technology are widely available and in use.

The College has introduced new methodologies, especially tutorials, that prove popular with both faculty and students. However, members of smaller departments voiced a common frustration, that their smaller number of faculty are needed to cover the essential courses, and they want to find the means to offer such tutorials in their respective departments. A new off-campus program in New York City, offers a new experiential learning opportunity yet to be fully assessed.

All faculty members are evaluated annually, a process clearly described in the Faculty Handbook, Assistant and Associate Professors most thoroughly. Many faculty interviewed identified the process as lengthy and comprehensive but also recognized it as a valuable means of communication, self-evaluation and improvement, and peer support. Faculty mentioned that while tenure is critical, the process leading up to it provides assistance, clear communication, and support. All pre-tenure faculty have a year or more leave prior to their tenure review to devote to professional work. Funds are also available through departments and Deans for travel and research, although that amount has not increased in six years.

We suggest that the College consider meaningful increases to the funds for professional activities.

Faculty advise most first-year students and their own majors. The Advising Handbook identifies procedures, requirements, and resources for all advisors, which, for some first-year students may include Staff and Athletic Department members. Academic Advising seems to be clearly an academic responsibility of the Faculty.

Scholarship and Research

The members of the Williams faculty are professionally productive and win numerous fellowships and prizes as well as publish widely. The College recognizes and supports the research and scholarship of its faculty members in significant and substantial ways. All tenured and tenure-eligible faculty have funds available to travel to conferences and do research, and they are given released time to pursue professional work. The College recruits top young faculty candidates, and provides resources to be productive scholars. The bar is set high for achievement, and a relatively generous leave policy is in place for tenured and non-tenured faculty. (For example, tenured faculty are eligible for a semester of paid leave after three years of teaching or for a year of paid leave after six years of teaching. The rate of pay for a sabbatical is 75 percent of base salary, but a sabbatical grant program is available to supplement salaries up to 100 per cent for the semester or the year, and these grants are almost always awarded.) Another series of paid leaves for junior faculty are available and widely used and appreciated. There are several other smaller grants. However, many faculty identified the need for increased funding to enable them to engage in professional activities in greater depth and length, and to use more costly methods. This support also affects the attraction and retention of top scholars. Considering the overall financial health of the College, this should become a high priority.

Assessment and Effectiveness

The annual and thorough process of faculty evaluations includes a self-evaluation, a summary of the Student Course Surveys, interviews with students, class visits, exit interviews with majors, and in some cases tracking of alumni scores on the GRE and graduate work. Follow-up with majors who have gone onto graduate school is generally the practice of individual faculty by interest.

It was clear in our interviews that evaluation of faculty and the assessment of learning are a priority of the departments and evidence of a commitment to the success of their students.

Special Notes:

> a. Diversity
> The College has identified diversity among students, faculty, and staff, as a major priority. This concern is widespread, shared, and focused and includes women, in addition to race and ethnicity, as under-represented groups. To that end they have undertaken many significant initiatives and programs such as a new position of Vice President for Strategic Planning and Institutional Diversity, a part-time Associate Dean for Institutional Diversity, as well as the creation and strengthening of programs such as Latino/Latina Studies, Africana Studies, and American Studies, and a number of professional development initiatives for both high school

students and recent doctoral students. We commend and encourage the continuation and broader development of this goal.

b. Spousal support
The faculty identify and the College recognizes the unique location of the College as a continuing and serious factor in the attraction, hiring, and retention of faculty, many with professionally active spouses/partners who have considerable difficulty finding appropriate and satisfying employment locally. The College has provided an Employment Counselor for Spouses/Partners as one means of providing support. This has had mixed results. Faculty appreciate the effort, recognize the difficulty, and yet continue to find this a serious problem. We encourage continued effort and innovation in this area.

c. Senior and Emeritus Faculty
The College has devoted serious attention to the senior and retiring faculty, seeking to find effective and meaningful ways to support, encourage, include, and recognize their ongoing professional and teaching interests. We commend this initiative.

Particular strengths in this standard include:

- A highly accomplished and productive faculty committed to the shared institutional value of teaching excellence and professional achievement.
- A highly competitive record of attracting, hiring and supporting this faculty in both teaching and research/scholarly practices.
- A high degree of faculty involvement in the activities of the College, both academically, and administratively.
- A well-developed Faculty Handbook that represents the values of the College as it identifies clear, fair and transparent academic practices.
- Commendable support of the academic and professional work of the faculty at every stage of their academic life.
- A significant and substantial commitment to diversity among the faculty, with meaningful and innovative efforts to cultivate, attract and support a diverse community in a geographic location lacking many obvious and critical factors.
- A commitment to senior and retiring faculty to maintain a continuing supportive relationship with them as important members of the academic and civic community.

Concerns include:
- Professional development funding for travel, research, and scholarship needs to be reviewed and updated.
- Academic Advising needs to be more clearly the responsibility of the academic faculty.
- Although the College recognizes and is committed to addressing spousal/partner issues, continuing and creative approaches are needed to address faculty spousal and partner concerns.

Standard 6: Students

Williams College has established Admissions and Financial Aid processes that assure the identification, recruitment, admission, and matriculation of students of extraordinary talent and ability. The College has partnered with external organizations like QuestBridge to increase access by historically underserved and underrepresented populations in the United States, and the Admissions office is engaged in recruiting the most able students from around the world. Financial aid, all of which is need-based, is generous and is responsive to the demonstrated needs of students and their families. In the past five years the number and quality of international students has increased, a result of the College's extension of its need-blind admission policy to non-citizens. In 2007-08, Williams allocated $31 million for need-based scholarships and grants. Methodologies are re-examined periodically to assure that the needs of students from lower- and lower-middle income families are recognized and met. "Fly-in" programs, paid for by the College, are available for prospective students who are unable to afford campus visits.

Williams offers summer academic programs in the sciences and humanities for selected students. Academic support services, including an Academic Resource Center that offers peer tutoring and skills instruction in writing and math, are available to students during the academic term. A program of academic advising assures individual attention to academic planning and counseling. The College is committed to creating an inclusive community, one in which all students may thrive and excel. The six-year retention rate of 95 percent reflects the success of these efforts; and the Institutional Research Office, in collaboration with the offices of the Dean of the College and the Dean of the Faculty, has established measurable benchmarks by which to assess the success of initiatives. Williams also benefits from its membership in COFHE and other consortia that conduct research studies on student performance and success.

Student services are largely organized within the office of the Dean of the College, who is traditionally a tenured faculty member who serves a term appointment. Reporting to the Dean are associate deans responsible for such academic services as registration, withdrawal and readmission, degree progress, academic advising, learning disabilities, study abroad, career counseling, and academic resources. Also reporting to the Dean are such traditional student affairs services as health and counseling services, orientation, the chaplaincy and community engagement office, judicial affairs, crisis management, international student advising, and campus life (which includes the new student center, housing, upper-class residential life, student activities, and campus bookings). Public Safety also reports to the Dean of the College. This integrated model of student services has many benefits, including the assurance of communication across units engaged with students. The visiting committee noted that the Department of Athletics, which reports to the Dean of the Faculty, is a natural partner with these units.

The vast majority of Williams College undergraduates reside on campus. Residential life is organized around entryways with upper-class students, Junior Advisors or "JAs", serving as the primary peer advisors for first-year students. The JAs have traditionally been an autonomous, self-selecting group who receive no compensation (neither stipend nor housing) for their volunteer efforts. As described by administrators and students, they are primarily responsible for the transition of freshmen into "the Williams culture." A primary goal of Orientation is to develop a strong bond among the students in each entryway. Each

entryway includes about 20 students who are randomly assigned. Students note that Williams is small enough for intimate interactions, too small to be anonymous.

Students are actively involved in governance, and take special pride in their opportunities for leadership and influence over College policy. They work collaboratively with the deans on most issues of interest, including such perennial concerns as alcohol policy. They lead the Honor System Committee and share leadership of the Discipline Committee.

In the past five years, Williams has made numerous improvements to the quality of campus life. Several residence halls have been renovated or restored. The new Paresky Center, opened last year, is a popular gathering place for students from across the community. The reorganization of upper-class housing into four 'neighborhoods', in its second year of implementation, is intended to reduce the balkanization among groups that was an undesirable consequence of the room selection process in the previous housing system. Resources have been added—most notably additional staff in the recently established Campus Life department and additional program funding for campus-based events. Significant intentional efforts are underway to maximize the benefits of the growing diversity within the student body: new cultural groups have been recognized and nurtured, faith communities are receiving expanded institutional support, and the College's diversity initiatives have been centralized under a new Vice President for Strategic Planning and Institutional Diversity. That office's strategic plan has identified areas for improvement in the recruitment and retention of faculty, staff, coaches, and students from underrepresented backgrounds.

The Self-Study Report has highlighted the many ways in which the College, under the leadership of an analytical, ambitious and effective administrative team, has identified challenges and proposed strategies for measuring the success of its new policies and initiatives. Williams is highly effective in achieving its stated goals, but is not complacent.

Strengths in this area include:

- Financial resources to support arrival of new populations and introduction of new projects and programs
- Students who bring intellectual passion, healthy competitiveness, forthrightness, discernment to problem-solving, and joy to their academic and extracurricular activities
- New campus center that adds centralizing community space to campus
- Commitment to improve recreational and fitness facilities
- Demonstrated commitment to enhancing student life on campus and to 'leveling the playing field' for all students
- Willingness to introduce cultural competency education for staff and faculty

The concerns are as follows:

- The Dean of the College office might benefit from an organizational structure review, as well as a review of their mission (and possible addition of a senior-level dean of judicial affairs and associate dean of academic affairs). It is also not clear how academic and student life are bridged.
- We recommend a review of the freshman orientation program, with emphasis on defining mission, goals, and outcomes of the program (how to address alcohol

education; how to create effective 'ignition experience' that focuses on community norms, conduct, and character).
- The Campus Life staff feel responsibility, but not authority for decision-making; there may be a need to clarify their roles.
- More multipurpose programmable social spaces for students are needed.
- We recommend continuing attention to the Neighborhood Housing program, with special attention to incentives for faculty participation and "signature events" that might help to forge sustainable identities.
- Eventually, the College will need to provide greater support for the special needs of international students and students with disabilities.
- The team would encourage the development of a Writing Center.
- A review of the Student Handbook may address the number of student questions regarding policies.
- Students and staff need greater clarity and transparency in governance structures especially with regard to how decisions are made.

Standard 7: Library and Other Information Resources

The institution demonstrates sufficient and appropriate information resources and services and instructional and information technology and utilizes them to support its mission.

Facilities

The College has made significant progress towards addressing the identified deficiencies of the Sawyer Library facility. Cramped study spaces and confusing collections sequencing in the current building will be replaced by a more open and inviting Library building. Construction on the new building is scheduled to begin in 2008, with anticipated occupancy in 2011. The Library staff, as well as staff members of the Office of Information Technology (OIT) and of the Chapin Library, have been working collaboratively to develop the building program and to respond to ongoing "value engineering" requests to trim the program in order to conform to the requirements of the estimated project budget. As the anticipated groundbreaking date nears, a final agreement regarding program elements will need to be reached so that staff may move forward to develop more detailed plans for service delivery, study spaces and housing of collections, both during construction and once the new Sawyer-Stetson building opens.

An innovative component of the building program is the inclusion of the Center for Media Initiatives, a facility managed by OIT Instructional Technology staff. It will provide an array of multimedia resources and production capabilities and is designed to encourage student-faculty interaction. In anticipation of the opening of the physical center, Library and OIT staff members are beginning to explore the potential opportunities and challenges of the collocation of these high-end technology resources and library resources. Some concerns were expressed that the demands of staffing the new Center (and the anticipated increased level of activity associated with meeting student needs) will reduce the amount of OIT staff time that can be dedicated to supporting the instructional and research needs of faculty. The College embarked on this building project with the agreement that there would be no associated increase in staffing ("staff-neutral") except as related to the management of the off-site collections storage facility. We encourage the Library and OIT staff to continue their mutual exploration to determine the best strategies for meeting the instructional support needs of both faculty and students, and to consider creative approaches to exploit the talents present in both organizations.

The College has made substantial investments in integrating technology into the classroom. Nearly all classrooms are equipped with the necessary technologies to support a wide array of pedagogical approaches. In addition, sufficient funds are available to support ongoing upgrades for computers and media and projection equipment located in classrooms and laboratories. OIT staff work in consultation with the Provost's office and other relevant faculty groups to determine priorities for classroom renewal and enhancement.

Collection Development and Resources

 The Library has greatly expanded the range and number of electronic resources during the past several years, increasing the number of electronic journal subscriptions (from approximately 400 in FY02 to more than 14,000 in FY07), adding digital newspapers, and purchasing large sets of digital materials (for example, Congressional Hearings). In consultation with faculty, the decision has been made to eliminate duplicative paper subscriptions and to go "e-only" when possible. Though budget considerations are a factor, this decision responds to the needs of faculty and students who generally prefer the ease of identifying and accessing digital information resources. Print collections continue to grow as well, and the Library is fortunate to have received ongoing budget increases to respond to rising costs and to information resource needs associated with curricular change (for example, emerging and expanding interdisciplinary programs such as bioinformatics, genomics, and Africana Studies). Faculty concur that the library's collections are strong and that, if a gap is identified, funds can generally be found to acquire the needed materials.

As part of the strategy to meet the information needs of faculty and of students engaged in advanced research, the Library has sought and formed strong partnerships with other libraries through membership in the Boston Library Consortium and as a founding member of NExpress. These resource sharing alliances offer a cost-effective and robust approach to dramatically increase the breadth and depth of accessible collections resources, providing what one faculty member described as "a research university library with a 2-day lag."

Services and Support

OIT and the Library offer a variety of support services to the community in order to ensure the effective use of resources and technologies and to enable faculty, students and staff to work productively.

The essential elements for high quality technology services are in place. OIT provides a stable, secure and reliable network infrastructure, integrating new technologies (such as identity management) in a timely fashion. Implementation of PeopleSoft, the College's ERP, is complete, allowing for better data management and more flexible access to data to support academic tasks and administrative operations. Desktop equipment is replaced on a predictable 3-year cycle. Costs associated with the ongoing renewal of the network infrastructure, hardware replacement and software purchase and licensing are embedded within the College's operating budget. Though students are not required to own computers, over 95 percent do. Students who do not own a computer may apply for a loan to offset the cost of purchasing one. As the College continues to diversify the student population, funding to support the costs of purchasing computers for these few remaining students may be needed to "level the playing field."

OIT staff members provide training for the community on an array of applications, offering workshops and one-on-one consultations. The Williams Instructional Technology summer intern program supports faculty in the development of course-related technology resources. User support, including problem resolution, is provided through the HelpDesk and via Student Technology Consultants.

Based on the comments from faculty and students who attended the campus meetings, there were few (if any) unmet needs for technology support, an enviable situation given the constant rate of change and expected increase in demand associated with maintaining an increasingly complex technology environment.

Library staff provide reference assistance for students engaged in course work and research activities via the reference desk, course-related instruction sessions and individual consultations. The Library website is a very effective entry point, providing a clear path into the resources and service offerings for members of the community. Library staff liaisons provide a conduit between academic departments and the library, and often these personal relationships are the means by which curricular developments are first identified. Though these individual connections are a valued part of the Williams environment ("it's a people-to-people place"), a more structured approach may be needed, such as including the College Librarian or his designee as an *ex officio* member of the Committee on Educational Policy, the group that determines the College's academic priorities.

Library staff and some faculty expressed concern about the level of student skills to critically evaluate and responsibly use information resources. As part of the College's curricular review in FY01, library staff proposed that "information literacy" be included as a foundation element within the curriculum, but this was not approved by faculty. Survey data compiled in FY04 (Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills/SAILS) indicate that students do not deepen their research skills during their time at Williams and perform at similar levels to students at large and somewhat less selective state universities. An Information Literacy Working Group has been formed to continue this discussion and to determine if there are further efforts needed to strengthen student research skills and to ensure that all students are informed about copyright and the appropriate use of intellectual property. In order to move this agenda forward and to productively engage the faculty in these conversations, the Provost and other senior officers will need to clearly identify information literacy as an academic priority, not merely a library initiative.

Institutional Effectiveness

OIT and the Library regularly and systematically evaluate their services and resources and integrate the findings to improve and increase the effectiveness of their offerings. Comparative data (from, for example, Oberlin Group, Educause Core Data) and surveys (SAILS, COFHE library-specific questions) guide service choices and inform budget discussions. OIT and the Library each completed substantial internal unit reviews as a means of identifying strengths and areas of improvement. The Library completed an updated strategic plan in 2006 and the library building project has also provided a rich opportunity for collaborative planning efforts among the library, OIT, faculty and students. The College's recently initiated 2020 strategic planning effort offers a timely opportunity to engage in long-range questions about the ways in which technology may impact and potentially transform residential liberal arts education.

Standard 8: Physical and Technological Resources

Williams College maintains a large and well-maintained rural campus with more than 170 buildings aggregating approximately 2.5 million square feet of space. Buildings range from academic and administrative to athletic, residential, and support space. The College has made significant investments in its facilities over the past 10 years and has aggressive plans to continue to add buildings in accordance with its strategic plan. The College added a new theatre and dance facility, a student center, affordable housing for junior faculty, renovated science and laboratory facilities and student residence and dining facilities and upgraded core support infrastructure. Over the next four years the College expects to add several new facilities including academic classroom and office buildings, renovated athletics and fitness facilities, and a new library in furtherance of its strategic plan. The College is now considering sustainable design as an important consideration and objective of new major building projects. All of these activities have been planned through an inclusive process focusing on long-term strategic goals and objectives. The College's facilities planning efforts take into consideration the initial financial impact of each project before proceeding. However, the College may want to reevaluate how it projects and models future operating costs of major projects within its long-run plan, to ensure that adequate resources will be available. There are adequate management supervision and controls to ensure that project results are within budget parameters and completed on a timely basis.

In addition to major projects noted above, many smaller renovations and maintenance projects have been undertaken to enhance campus safety, to provide upgraded facilities for students and faculty in areas such as athletics and classroom technology, and to enhance campus parking and circulation. Given the major amount of ongoing large projects and future planned projects, the College might be advised to develop an overall campus master plan that may incorporate more focused planning efforts than have taken place or are ongoing (e.g., athletics master plan, 2001 Venturi, Scott Brown study).

Deferred maintenance and capital renewal funding are integrated into budget planning. The College budgets and sets aside approximately 2 percent of the replacement value of its physical plant each year. Through third party benchmarking studies, the College has determined that its overall annual capital spending is comparable to peers, but has also identified that more information is needed to assess whether this annual renewal spending is sufficient. Based on preliminary findings, the estimate used for replacement cost of the physical plant may be insufficient to maintain the facilities in an acceptable level of repair. The College is working on obtaining such information that should help inform future budget planning and further link capital spending (particularly renewal spending) and planning with its strategic objectives. Based on benchmarking data provided by a third party, the College has adequate staffing and supervision in its facilities areas to meet its objectives. The level of service provided to the College community from facilities operations staff appears acceptable. It is evident through external and internal documentation that the College's physical and technological resources are sufficient and appropriate to achieve its mission.

The College has engaged consultants to ensure that its risk management protocols are effective. Several changes have been made to insurance coverage to address the findings of the consultants. An overall campus risk assessment is scheduled for later in 2007. The College's independent auditors review data security and integrity annually and no material findings have been noted. Safety and environmental compliance are a comprehensive

component of the College's operations. Safety meetings and safety training in a number of key areas take place on a regular basis. The College may benefit from a more holistic approach to risk assessment that takes into consideration all potential risks facing the College, not just life/safety related risks.

Institutional Effectiveness

Williams College is continuing to develop an in-depth understanding of its physical and technological needs. Through third party reviews and internal surveying, the College has identified a number of areas for investment. Planning and budgeting are informed by the College's strategic plan. A new planning effort, known as Williams 2020, is underway. The College may want to use this as an opportunity to more fully integrate the many strategic priorities that will emanate from this effort into its long run planning models. Financial resources are sufficiently available to accomplish goals that are set forth. The College has appropriate human resources to implement its plans.

Standard 9: Financial Resources

Williams College's financial condition is strong, anchored by its significant endowment resources. This strength is further evidenced by the size of the College's expendable net assets, a very high endowment per student ratio, and moderate use of debt. The College enjoys very high credit ratings from the major credit rating agencies. Sources of operating revenues are broad and dependable. Net tuition revenue constitutes slightly less than 50 percent of operating revenues, while endowment support represents a very significant 37 percent and annual gifts another 11 percent. Given the growth of its endowment over the past ten years, the College strategically decided to increase the endowment draw for its operating revenues, reducing its dependency on student charges.

Recognizing that the endowment is one of its most important resources, the College recently hired its first Chief Investment Officer (CIO) and established an investment office to ensure that adequate resources are provided to maintain and enhance the value of the endowment, and keep its draw amount at an acceptable level of risk. Working with an outside consulting firm and employing modern portfolio theory, the College recently revised its asset allocation policy better to align expected returns with expected volatility. Such modeling and continued review of the asset allocation and risk parameters are essential to maintain and increase the endowment support that is so significant to the operating budget.

Another significant source of operating funds is annual fundraising. Nearly 11 percent of operating revenues are generated through annual gifts. Sixty percent of graduates participate in the Alumni Fund, a major source of unrestricted funds for current operations. The College's comprehensive $400 million fundraising campaign has already surpassed its goal with 17 months remaining and is providing significant resources for the ongoing high priority capital projects. Fundraising goals are aligned with the College's strategic planning.

The College employs an annual budget development process combined with a long–run financial planning model. The approach employed is very data driven. The administrative team is relatively new and is bringing a fresh perspective to the process. A consultant has been retained to review the budget process and make recommendations for its improvement. The Provost is now the Treasurer of the College and is working to build a treasury function within that office. The annual budget development is based on appropriate input from relevant College constituencies. However, the College may benefit from a more

integrated approach to planning. Such an approach could focus on area-specific strategic plans with a central prioritization process that may better inform the long-run planning model.

A more holistic approach to risk management (e.g., adoption of an enterprise risk approach) may also help inform planning inputs. Capital budget planning assumptions may benefit from an overall campus master plan that takes into consideration certain priority specific plans that are ongoing. Regarding specific aspects of the annual operating budget development, the amount of budgeted contingency funding is limited relative to the size of the overall operating budget. For fiscal year 2008, only about $700,000 is set aside as a contingency against an almost $176 million operating budget.

Model inputs related to financial aid may need to be reevaluated because actual aid awarded in this fiscal year far exceeded budgeted amounts. The College has a strategic goal of increasing its financial aid awards to enhance diversity on campus. This policy change is resulting in a sharp increase in budgeted financial aid with a corresponding need for an increase in endowment support. Financial aid awarded has increased by more than $11 million over the past 3 fiscal years.

Funding for deferred maintenance is based on 2 percent of the replacement cost of the physical plant. This amounts to approximately $12 million for fiscal year 2008. While this is an admirable recognition of the need to provide for long-term renovation and replacement costs, this amount may not be sufficient to maintain the College's large physical plant at an acceptable level of repair. The College has employed a consultant to better understand the condition of its facilities and to help it determine an appropriate approach to deferred maintenance and renewal funding. Further, with the increase in large building projects ongoing and planned, the College may want to reevaluate how it projects future operating costs of these projects and incorporates such in its long run model.

The College is mindful of the allocation of budget resources among instruction, student support, plant and auxiliary, and general administration, and it regularly compares such with its own long-term trends and peer data. The College budgets principal payments on its debt through draws from the endowment. Overall endowment support for both operating and capital is determined on an annual basis. Over the past several years, overall endowment draw has averaged approximately 5.3 percent of its three-year average market value. Given the significant reliance of the endowment to support both operating and capital activities, the Provost may want to work more closely with the new CIO on modeling the potential impacts on resources of negative financial market scenarios and share such modeling with the appropriate Board committees. With respect to appropriate oversight of the budget and planning processes, the administration regularly updates the budget model and makes quarterly reports to the Board of Trustees. The Board approves the annual operating budget.

Independent auditors audit the College's financial records annually. The auditors have issued unqualified opinions on the College's financial statements. An independent Audit Committee of the Board oversees the audit and meets regularly with the auditors. No significant internal control weaknesses have been noted.

In summary, through verifiable internal and external factors, the institution's financial resources are sufficient to sustain the achievement of its educational goals and objectives now and into the foreseeable future.

Institutional Effectiveness

Williams College has recently changed its administrative structure. The decision to combine the positions of Provost and Treasurer, the hiring of a Vice President for Operations, and the creation of a Chief Investment Officer position, should help the institution gain a better understanding of its priorities, determine its risks, and better allocate and protect its resources. Through the use of consultants, the College is continuing to review its budget processes, determine its deferred maintenance needs, and adopt best practices in endowment management.

Standard 10: Public Disclosure

In presenting itself to students, prospective students, and other members of the interested public, Williams College provides information that is complete, accurate, accessible, clear, and sufficient for intended audiences to make informed decisions.

The College provides both print publications and online resources to inform the campus community, prospective students, and the public. The primary print resources are the Williams College Bulletin, the Student Handbook, and the Prospectus. The Bulletin and the Student Handbook are available in their entirety on the College's website. In addition, the departmental website for the Registrar contains the full and up-to-date course listings for the current academic year. Admissions and financial aid information is provided very effectively via the website, including particularly informative and easily understood examples of possible aid scenarios as well as helpful FAQs.

Materials associated with the reaccreditation process are easily accessible from the top-level page and the full self-study is available.

Public Affairs staff are responsible for the top-level design, templates and for the general management of the College's website. OIT staff provide the technology infrastructure to support this environment and are in partnership with the Public Affairs department and with other departments (such as Admissions) that maintain web presences to ensure ongoing system compatibility. This appears to work effectively for the present, though there are concerns about the maintenance of administrative and academic departmental websites that do not have staff designated for these purposes. Some departments contract with outside consultants and/or web design firms or employ students to do initial design and content development for their websites. When these contracts expire or students graduate, these websites may become outdated and contain information that is no longer accurate. In order to address the concerns regarding currency and continuity of web content, Public Affairs plans to investigate potential organizational structures and determine appropriate staffing levels with the assistance of an outside firm knowledgeable about these matters.

Institutional Effectiveness

The College engages in analysis of print publications and the website to ensure that its print and electronic resources are complete, accurate, and current. Surveys of parents and entering students provide useful data to guide this analysis and to inform changes in the presentation of the College to prospective students and to the general public.

Standard 11: Integrity

Williams College has articulated its commitment to integrity and fairness in many places, including the *College Bulletin, the Student Handbook,* the *Faculty, Administrative Staff and Support Staff Handbooks*, in several places on the College website, and in the published Guidelines for Contractors. The Self-Study describes the ways in which the College has codified its principles and policies in all of the important areas: grievance procedures are in place; the College's commitment to free speech is well advertised and has been upheld when challenged; the academic honor system and codes of conduct are published in the *Student Handbook* and are regularly reviewed and fully endorsed by the academic community.

The College has fulfilled its obligation to publicize other relevant policies. The Policy on Conflicts of Interests for Trustees and Officers is a clear and straightforward document, excellent in its breadth and detail. Travel and Expense Guidelines for faculty and staff are published. Risk Management and Safety committees and guidelines are in place for institutional animal care, radiation safety, laser safety, institutional biomedical safety, and chemical and biological safety. An Institutional Review Board reviews specific proposals from faculty for research involving human subjects.

It is worth noting that the first sentence of the institution's Mission and Purposes underlines the role of integrity in the educational mission of the College in "nurturing in students the academic and civic virtues, and their related traits of character." From everything the team could determine from its interviews with students, staff, and faculty, these commitments are widely understood and fully imbedded in institutional policy and behavior.

Williams College presents no concerns in the area of Integrity.

Institutional Effectiveness Summary

Strengths:

1. Williams College seeks to provide one of the best liberal arts educations in the country. Our considered view is that it succeeds admirably in meeting this goal. Williams is a model academic community whose size and focus allow it to provide undergraduates with an outstanding and challenging education.

2. Teaching excellence is a paramount value at Williams and is both expected and supported. A generous faculty teaching load as well as the tutorial program, summer research programs, writing program, and other curricular developments reflect the priority given to teaching by the institution and the faculty.

3. Williams is clearly a well-resourced institution. Every area of the College, from the student experience, to the faculty, to the physical campus, seems to have the resources needed to be able to meet the full mission of the College. Recently added facilities as well as those under construction at this time, including a library with state of the art information resources, add immensely to the academic environment.

4. Williams has a senior leadership team with vision, experience, ambition, and integrity; an engaged and talented faculty; experienced and dedicated staff members; and active Trustees who support the administration. They are matched by one of the most highly selective student bodies in the country and alumni who are deeply loyal and generous to the institution. The sense of a shared enterprise and a commitment to the mission of the College is especially strong.

5. President Schapiro encourages a fully engaged discourse around all issues and welcomes the role that faculty play in the governance of the institution. The committee was particularly impressed with the willingness of Williams' faculty to be involved.

6. Williams has made significant strides in diversifying the student body with students of color, first generation, socioeconomic, international, and other groups and has worked hard to increase the diversity of the faculty and staff. The appointment of a Vice President for Strategic Planning and Institutional Diversity will help the community to further cement and coordinate these efforts. Williams is committed to making a diverse community into a more fully inclusive community.

7. At the time of our visit, Williams College was in the second year of a new housing system. While the transition has caused some discontent among students, the team felt that it was a move in the right direction and particularly praised the development of a more systematic residential education system.

8. The accreditation report from 1997 raised concerns about the level and integration of technology into the life of the College. The team was pleased with the amount of progress made in this area and encourages the College to continue to innovate aggressively around information technology especially as it relates to pedagogy.

Concerns:

1. The team was pleased with the greater coordination around the planning effort especially as President Schapiro moves forward with the planning for 2020. The team would encourage the president and his senior staff to move from modeling to conversations with the faculty, and indeed the whole community, about Williams College's strategic goals in a changing environment.

2. As Williams continues to build and develop its campus, the development of a campus master plan with a more detailed assessment of the life cycles of different types of buildings and their replacement costs would be a valuable exercise. The College is to be praised for its current practice of putting aside 2 percent of the value of buildings, but the replacement costs of some buildings will likely be considerably more than this.

3. The team was encouraged by the movement toward a more transparent and formal budgeting system. The College could be still more rigorous in establishing the true cost of the various new initiatives, which will in turn require more careful prioritization.

4. The team was impressed with the faculty and the support they receive including a generous teaching load and strong benefits and compensation packages. Faculty generally expressed appreciation of the support they received, but the team has some concerns about the need for more resources for individual research, professional development, and other professional activities. The team would also urge the administration and faculty to review the number of faculty committees and the time commitment required of faculty on these committees.

5. The committee hopes that the administration will also continue to pursue the development of a diverse faculty and staff. Williams has the resources to be able to attract and support the very best faculty from diverse backgrounds.

6. The College also needs to develop a more robust spousal and partner hiring policy, although the team recognized that Williams' size and location will make this difficult to accomplish.

7. Williams College is grappling with many of the same issues around student life as are other colleges and universities. They have significantly expanded their support for student life, and the team would encourage them to continue to support this critical area.