

**INSTITUTIONAL SELF-STUDY**  
**BUNKER HILL COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

**February 2010**

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**Standard Eleven**

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## PREFACE

In fall 2008, Bunker Hill Community College began to prepare for the spring 2010 visit by NEASC's evaluation team. President Mary L. Fifield appointed two Co-Chairs for this self-study: Dr. Joan Connell, Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs, and Natalie Oliveri, Professor of English.

Together, President Fifield, Dr. Connell, and Professor Oliveri appointed Co-Chairs for each of the eleven Standard Committees. Most Standard Committees had at least two Co-Chairs, who represented both full-time faculty and professional staff. Committees for the larger Standards had more than two Co-Chairs. In this way, the College spread out the work involved in this self-study and guaranteed a representational cross-section of views among Committee leadership. In total, twenty-six College personnel served as Committee Co-chairs. These twenty-six faculty and staff also constituted the Steering Committee for this self-study.

Once the Steering Committee was established, the President sent a letter inviting the College community to volunteer for one of the Standard Committees. Ninety-two faculty and staff volunteered. Thus, 117 faculty and staff, in total, participated on the Standard Committees. With the Committees constituted, the College held a NEASC Kickoff, where the Co-Chairs introduced the College to the nature of the self-study process. At that point, the Standard Committees began meeting to gather information and produce drafts for each of the Standards. The Steering Committee met once a month to discuss problems the Committees were confronting and to brainstorm solutions.

During the fall 2008 semester, the College also established a NEASC Website, under the direction of Ian Churchill, Web and E-marketing Manager. This Website contains all of the information related to this self-study. Standard drafts are posted on this Website; the required NEASC Data First and E1 forms are also posted there. In addition, all supporting documents for the eleven Standards are available electronically on the NEASC Website, as well as in hard copy in the Document Room. Professor Richard Boulware has been appointed to supervise assembly of the Document Room for the visiting NEASC team. In spring 2009, the College conducted an electronic survey of faculty and staff which is also available on the NEASC Website. This survey consisted of questions submitted by the eleven Standard Co-Chairs, based on their inventories of information needed to complete their Standard drafts.

During the spring 2009 semester, the Standard Committees completed their research. Co-Chairs submitted drafts by the end of June 2009. The draft of the entire self-study was completed during summer 2009. In fall 2009, the self-study draft was posted on the NEASC Website. The College community was encouraged to check this draft for accuracy and to comment on chapter appraisals and projections. The Website contains an email function that allowed readers to submit their comments through the Website immediately after reading the draft. This process resulted in widespread input on the initial version of this report and led to a more accurate final product.

In the months leading up to NEASC's visit, the Co-Chairs will conduct a series of public forums to solicit feedback on the self-study report. Notification of the NEASC visit will also be published in the local papers.

As indicated in this description of BHCC's self-study process, the College conducted a comprehensive and open analysis of its operations with substantial opportunity for community input. The result is a self-study that reveals how BHCC has systematically addressed issues identified by NEASC in 2000. This self-study reveals significant progress across all NEASC Standards while identifying the paths to continued growth during the next ten years.

## SELF-STUDY OVERVIEW

### **Bunker Hill Community College: 2000-2010**

Since the last self-study, Bunker Hill Community College has changed dramatically. BHCC's 2000 self-study describes an institution in transition from a period of continuously changing leadership to stable leadership and steady growth. In 2010, the College is an institution that has seen thirteen years of stability under the leadership of President Mary L. Fifield and BHCC's Board of Trustees.

This stability has resulted in clear progress across all of the NEASC Standards. The College has initiated and sustained many successful initiatives which advance its mission. These initiatives have often been the result of 13 years of strategic planning that involved both internal and external stakeholders and was tied to BHCC's budget process. The governance process works to move the institution forward in an orderly and democratic fashion. BHCC's academic program is sound and the College continues to use assessment data to modify its programs and courses to increase student success. BHCC has a Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Program which is on its way to institutionalization. The College is also focusing significant effort on using data to improve student success through two grant-supported initiatives. BHCC received a 1.9 million dollar Title III *Engaged Campus* grant. The College also received a Lumina Foundation *Achieving the Dream* grant after being recognized, through a competitive process, as an *Achieving the Dream* institution. The Directors of these two grants are institutionalizing freshman seminars and Learning Community Clusters with integrated student support services.

The College has hired a significant number of new full-time faculty. BHCC's faculty are actively engaged in teaching, mentoring students, and sustaining College initiatives to increase student success. Student enrollment continues to increase. With approximately 11,000 students registering for courses in fall 2009, BHCC is currently the largest community college in Massachusetts. To accommodate the surge in students, BHCC has started offering late night and midnight classes, as well as expanding classes at off-campus sites and online. The College has continuously upgraded student support services and created a rich extracurricular life for its students. The long-awaited new Health & Wellness Center, the first new building on the Charlestown campus since 1979, is almost completed. BHCC's information resources have expanded, as have its technological resources. Both the College's technological infrastructure and its use of instructional technology have grown exponentially. BHCC has experienced financial growth in the face of decreased State funding and has launched a high quality marketing campaign. BHCC's mission has driven all of this activity. Since NEASC's last visit, the College has significantly advanced accomplishment of its Mission.

The College is also confronting several challenges in its thirty-seventh year. With student enrollment steadily increasing, the College is running out of space on its Charlestown campus, in spite of its new building. State funding levels continue to decrease in the midst of a serious State fiscal crisis. The State's financial health also affects the collective

bargaining agreements that govern working conditions and compensation for many of BHCC's faculty and staff. Faculty teach a heavier load than they did in 2000, but the State has not met its promises to maintain a prescribed salary level. These Statewide contractual issues clearly affect morale at a time when many faculty have chosen to exceed the prescribed contractual load.

In the face of these challenges, BHCC remains, in 2010, a strong and dynamic, mission-driven institution that continues to put student success at the center of its operations. The health of the College is evidenced by the growth accomplished since the 2000 self-study and illustrated in the chapters that follow.

### **Major Findings of this Self-Study**

#### ***Standard One: Mission and Purposes***

BHCC's mission accurately and appropriately addresses the needs of the BHCC community. The College has multiple successful initiatives that foster accomplishment of this mission. However, BHCC should institute a schedule for regular review of its mission.

#### ***Standard Two: Planning and Evaluation***

Planning is a significant strength at BHCC, as evidenced by successful operation of the College's strategic planning and Action Plan processes. The next logical refinement in this area should involve use of a uniform assessment process for Action Plans, designed at the time that planning goals are established. As explained in Chapter Four, several ongoing initiatives, including Program Review, the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Program (SLOAP) and two grant-supported initiatives, are effectively maintaining and advancing academic assessment at the College. Assessment of non-academic College units began two years ago. Non-academic units now complete these assessments annually.

#### ***Standard Three: Organization and Governance***

BHCC's governance structure is coherent and inclusive. While participation is not as widespread as it could be, the Forum and its Committees function effectively to move the College agenda forward. The College needs to put in place a method for assessing the Forum and its Committees and for increasing cross-College participation in governance. As with most areas in this self-study, the most significant obstacle to implementing these projections is the reality that a significant number of BHCC faculty and staff are already squeezing maximum performance from their time.

#### ***Standard Four: Academic Program***

The College maintains a sound academic program, including a carefully planned and well maintained General Education requirement. BHCC has taken aggressive steps to maximize access to its academic program for its target population through BHCC Online and other non-traditional formats and schedules. Program Review, SLOAP, the *Engaged Campus* and *Achieving the Dream* have moved the College toward a significant culture of assessment. Projections in this area involve fine-tuning of some administrative functions.

***Standard Five: Faculty***

BHCC faculty are key to the College's current academic health. Faculty are actively engaged in teaching and assessing student learning with clear focus on improving student success. Faculty engagement is central to the many successful ongoing teaching and learning initiatives at the College. However, in many cases, key faculty who are involved across College initiatives are significantly overextended. Since working conditions are set by the Statewide faculty collective bargaining agreement, the College has limited leverage in addressing this problem. Other important concerns in this area are adjunct issues and advising issues.

***Standard Six: Students***

BHCC's students are, as a whole, committed to obtaining an education in the face of significant external and academic barriers. The College has effectively assessed these barriers and is aggressively using the resulting data to modify its academic program and expand student support services in ways that will allow students to overcome these barriers. Two major grant initiatives, the *Engaged Campus* and *Achieving the Dream*, are responsible for much of the progress in increasing student success. The College has a vibrant extracurricular program that reflects the cultural diversity of its student body. A student corps of "cultural ambassadors" does everything from assisting with orientation to working in classes with faculty on social, class and race-based issues. BHCC should continue its current effort to aggressively measure student success. The College should also focus on strengthening student advising.

***Standard Seven: Library and Other Information Resources***

Students make heavy use of the College Library which provides appropriate print and electronic resources to support student learning. The Library staff has made significant efforts to educate the College community about current information literacy skills through an extensive workshop program and through the Library Website. The Library should focus next on systematic assessment of its overall services and more widespread integration of information literacy skills into the BHCC curriculum.

Over the last ten years, the College has made significant strides in integrating technology into its curriculum and support services. BHCC Online and the Visual Media Arts technology suite, specifically, have used instructional technology to significantly expand BHCC's educational environment. The next focus should involve increasing faculty and staff use of the training resources available in the Teaching, Learning and Instructional Technology Center.

***Standard Eight: Physical and Technological Resources***

The College effectively maintains two attractive campuses, one in the Charlestown section of Boston and one in Chelsea, and has recently completed a new building, the Health and Wellness Center. Over the past ten years, BHCC has made optimal use of space on the Charlestown campus to create private faculty offices, space for student support services, and other meaningful improvements. However, space on the Charlestown campus is currently a primary concern for the College. Campus facilities are

overcrowded and the student population continues to grow. Acquiring more space is perhaps the most crucial priority for the College in 2010.

As with physical resources, BHCC effectively plans and manages its technological resources. Faculty and students express satisfaction with these resources which support the effective daily functioning of the College. Projections in this area involve steady augmentation of BHCC's technological infrastructure.

***Standard Nine: Financial Resources***

The College enjoys excellent management of its financial resources which have supported steady improvement in all areas of the College since the last self-study. BHCC has managed to offset significant decreases in State funding through effective fiscal management and aggressive searches for alternative funding sources. The most significant problem in this area is that the State will likely further decrease its funding level in the next few years. The steady increase in student enrollment has allowed the College to offset decreases in State funding in recent years. However, continuing to accommodate the surge in student enrollments will be a significant challenge in light of the space issues described throughout this self-study. Thus, BHCC should engage in advocacy around funding and acquisition of more space as well as beginning a capital campaign for another building.

***Standard Ten: Public Disclosure***

BHCC represents itself effectively and accurately in the College Catalog, on the College Website, and through its marketing campaign. These are high-quality information vehicles which serve the College well. To maintain excellence in this area, the College should consider implementing a yearly assessment of the accuracy of its public disclosure statements.

***Standard Eleven: Integrity***

The evidence gathered for this self-study leads to the clear conclusion that BHCC conducts itself with integrity. The information in all Chapters of this report reveals an educational enterprise characterized by good relationships among faculty, staff, and administrators, an open and inclusive process for formulating and implementing policies, and conformity to both College values and State/Federal laws. The College's collective bargaining agreements present some problems in this area, but the State, not the College, has ultimate control over solutions to these problems.

## STANDARD ONE: MISSION AND PURPOSES

### DESCRIPTION

#### Introduction

At the heart of Bunker Hill Community College's Mission is respect for students and dedication to their success. To fulfill its mission, the College focuses resources on providing open access to an affordable, high-quality education that is truly student-centered. BHCC's population is extremely diverse, and the College's Mission also stresses creating a community that values diversity. The College puts these factors at the center of all operations. This Chapter will explain the College's combined Mission and Vision Statements, which drive the activities described in the next ten chapters of this self-study.

#### BHCC's Mission and Vision

In effect, BHCC's mission is described in three statements. The Department of Higher Education (DHE) Mission Statement describes the generic mission of the fifteen Massachusetts community colleges. BHCC's Mission and Vision Statements each make the DHE Mission Statement specific to this College. The Vision Statement actually represents additional goals that BHCC wanted to include in the Mission Statement. Since the DHE was not permitting revisions to Mission Statements at that point, the College formulated an additional statement, the BHCC Vision Statement, which incorporated the desired additions. Together, these Statements provide a clear picture of what drives activity at the College. The College Mission and Vision Statements are published in the Catalog and Fact Book which are available on the BHCC Website.

### APPRAISAL

#### Achievements

1. BHCC's institution-specific Mission and Vision Statements capture accurately the educational environment that this College continuously works to provide for its students. These Statements describe a dynamic educational environment that is constantly evolving to serve the social and economic needs of its community. These Statements also communicate the strong respect the College has for its students and their diverse backgrounds, as well as BHCC's central commitment to student success. In 2003, BHCC was awarded the Charles Kennedy Equity Award, as the top College in the country for providing opportunities to women and people of color. This award attests to BHCC's success in providing quality education for its diverse population.
2. Both the Mission Statement and the Vision Statement provide the starting point for each strategic planning cycle, driving both goal-setting and Action Plan funding at the College. Each planning event provides another look at whether the Mission and Vision Statements still accurately reflect College goals.
3. In the spring 2009 NEASC survey, 70% of faculty and staff indicated that they are aware of BHCC's Mission.
4. The College complies with its mission to offer effective academic preparation. BHCC offers seventeen programs leading to the Associate in Arts degree and twenty-eight programs leading to the Associate in Science degree. These programs serve both

students interested in transfer to other colleges and students seeking job preparation. In addition, the College offers thirty-two certificate programs designed specifically to train students for high-demand jobs in the Boston area. The College regularly updates its curriculum in response to local workforce needs.

5. BHCC meets its Mission mandate to provide affordable open access. In fact, BHCC remains the least expensive higher education institution in Massachusetts.
6. The College has demonstrated strong commitment to its mission of creating and sustaining a successfully diverse community. Not only do the Mission and Vision Statements emphasize this commitment, but the College also publishes the Inclusion Statement, authored by the American Association of Community Colleges, in the College Catalog, on the Website, and in the Commencement Program. Fifty-eight percent of BHCC students identify themselves as belonging to a minority group. Since 1999, the Director of Diversity and Inclusion, a member of BHCC's Executive Staff, has sponsored many initiatives to encourage awareness of the ways in which diversity enriches the College community. One such initiative involves regular *Days of Dialogue*, when the entire community is invited to discuss issues of race. The College also received a Ford Foundation grant to implement a *Difficult Dialogues* project in fall 2006. This grant-supported initiative involved faculty, staff, and students in projects which tackled the sensitive and complex questions about issues that inevitably arise but are often avoided.
7. The College Administration has aggressively worked to increase the diversity of the College faculty. The Director of Human Resources oversees advertising for positions to make sure this advertising effectively reaches minority candidates. The number of faculty of color has increased by 4% since 2000 while the number of Caucasian faculty has decreased by 5%. Currently, 23% of BHCC faculty are people of color, up from 17.8% during the last self-study.
8. In line with its Mission, the College collaborates with the surrounding academic community on many initiatives. These collaborations are comprehensively outlined in BHCC's 2008 Fact Book. The following initiatives serve as examples:
  - The Dual Enrollment Program at BHCC enables high school and GED students from Boston area schools and programs to earn high school and college credits simultaneously by taking college courses at BHCC while still in high school.
  - The STAND Program (Students Taking Action for Nursing Diversity) offers dual enrollment in BHCC's Introduction to Nursing course to fifty selected students from Boston public high schools each year. These students receive both high school and college credit for this course.
9. In addition to academic collaborations, the College also actively collaborates with the Boston business community through the Workforce Development Center. This Department designs and implements non-traditional training programs for greater Boston businesses. In 2008, the College serviced forty-five workforce contracts with nineteen companies. In addition, BHCC has recently established the Community Center for Entrepreneurship, which works with a number of small merchants in the surrounding areas.
10. BHCC's Vision Statement contains a clear commitment to creating increased global awareness in BHCC students. The International Center, established in 1999, sponsors

many initiatives to help the College meet this Mission mandate. Every year, the International Center provides programs and services to foster global awareness in the College community. The International Center hosts many visitors each year through such programs as the Netherlands Exchange Program. In addition, the Center coordinates the World Studies Certificate. To earn this certificate, students take a cluster of courses which develop the competencies needed to live and work in a globally interdependent world. The International Center also coordinates an annual Study Abroad Scholarship Program which began in 2000 with ten students studying in China. This year, thirty-one students received scholarships to study in seventeen countries. Together, the College and the Student Government Association contributed \$110,000 to increase these scholarship opportunities for students. Faculty led two of these seventeen study abroad programs.

11. All of the Mission-driven initiatives described above serve to facilitate achievement of BHCC's central mission: student success. The College has, in the last ten years, devoted significant time and resources to improving student success by creating an effective, learner-centered environment. Details of this pervasive effort to create a student-centered curriculum that stresses active learning are found throughout this report. Major initiatives aimed at transforming BHCC's learning environment include, among others, SLOAP, the *Engaged Campus* and *Achieving the Dream*. Later chapters will fully explore these programs.

### **Areas of Concern**

1. BHCC indirectly reviews its mission at the start of every three-year planning cycle. However, the purpose of College planning conferences is not primarily to review the Mission and Vision Statements. Nor does this conference provide a clear mechanism for refining these Statements. There is, at present, no process in place that requires regular review of the College's Mission by the entire College community in a forum which allows agreed-upon revisions to be made.
2. While the Mission and Vision Statements together provide an accurate picture of what goals drive BHCC, these Statements would be more logical and coherent if combined.

### **PROJECTIONS**

1. In fall 2010, the President will establish a process for ensuring that BHCC's Mission and Vision Statements are reviewed by the entire College community every five years.
2. When the DHE allows community colleges to write new institution-specific mission statements, the President will make certain that one coherent statement is written to encompass the entire mission of the College.

### **Institutional Effectiveness**

BHCC's Mission is clear and permeates all College initiatives. The Mission and Vision Statements accurately assess the needs of the BHCC community and simultaneously describe the character of the College. The projects described in this Chapter offer evidence of this. Since the College is continuously evolving, BHCC should institute regular review of its Mission every five years.

## **STANDARD TWO: PLANNING AND EVALUATION**

### **Introduction**

Bunker Hill Community College has grown exponentially in this area in the last ten years. The College now regularly plans and evaluates its activities on an institutional level, in academic areas, and in non-academic areas. In fact, at BHCC planning and evaluation are routinely tied together in a process that integrates goal-setting with funding and assessment. This approach serves to continually move the institution forward in a thoughtful, evidence-based manner.

### **Strategic Planning Process**

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Since 1999, BHCC's strategic planning process has been successfully institutionalized. In the 2000 self-study, the College reported on its first planning conference, the 1999 Future Search Conference. Since then, the College has sponsored two more planning events, in 2002 and 2006, where internal and external stakeholders met to set goals for three-year planning cycles. Approximately 300 faculty, staff, student leaders, business leaders, and civic leaders attended each of these conferences. These three conferences mark ten years of progress with integrated strategic planning. Since 1999, BHCC has consistently focused planning efforts around specific Mission-related goals which have been determined through consensus-building. Faculty and staff who had not attended the planning conferences participated in discussing and elaborating these goals at follow-up meetings on campus. Goals are published in the College Catalog and Fact Book. In addition, goals are displayed on a large banner in the second floor lobby and on banners hung from the ceilings, visible to students, faculty, and staff as they walk through the halls of the College. The next large-scale planning event will take place on January 20, 2010.

Each strategic planning cycle has tied goal achievement to the College budget. For each cycle, BHCC has included funds in the budget for Action Plans designed to accomplish College goals. These funds are dispersed through an Action Plan process described later in this Chapter.

Between the large-scale planning events involving external constituencies, faculty, staff, and student leaders participate in annual planning events to discuss potential Action Plans for the forthcoming year. Throughout each year, the College works on achieving goals through Action Plans and finally assesses the progress of Action Plans through quarterly reports to the Board of Trustees. Before a new planning cycle begins, the College publishes a report documenting achievements related to the goals and distributes approximately 3,500 copies to both the internal and external College communities.

## **APPRAISAL**

### **Achievements**

1. The strategic planning process has become institutionalized. The process is orderly, democratic, and highly visible, creating an institution where employees, students, and community members understand what the College is working to accomplish. Constituents regularly make use of the planning process to implement projects designed to achieve strategic goals. The College budget integrates funds for these projects. Each cycle ends with an assessment which allows the goals for succeeding cycles to build on what was learned in the previous cycle.
2. The unifying emphasis through each set of planning goals has been student success, the central element of the College's mission. Assessment reports show that projects for each planning cycle concentrate clearly on student success for all segments of the student community. So, the 2003 assessment reports that the College achieved Commonwealth Honors Program status, while simultaneously running the GEAR-UP Program to prepare eighty-five Boston public high school students for college work. This same report plans to improve technological resources for all students.
3. The inclusive nature of the group that sets strategic goals at BHCC reflects the open communication which exists within the College and between the College and its surrounding community. The inclusion of community and civic leaders in planning events attests to the College's dedication to effectively serving the surrounding community. This deliberate inclusion of external stakeholders has enhanced BHCC's image in the Boston area, as well as infusing the planning process with multiple perspectives not seen from within the walls of the College.

### **Areas of Concern**

1. Some members of the Standard Two Committee questioned whether the three-year planning cycle may be too short. The concern here was that projects designed to achieve goals do not always have time to fully evolve during this time frame. As a result, assessment of these projects may not be accurate and new ideas about achieving a given goal may not have time to surface.
2. When stakeholders agree on goals at the beginning of each planning cycle, they do not agree on uniform measures to assess goal achievement. Thus, while assessment always takes place at the end of a planning cycle, this assessment does not follow a uniform process agreed upon at the start of the planning process.

## **PROJECTIONS**

1. During the 2010/2011 academic year, the Long-Range Planning Committee will examine the merits of changing the planning cycle from a three-year cycle to a five-year cycle. The Committee will make a recommendation to the College Forum by spring 2011.
2. During this same time period, the Long-Range Planning Committee will need to decide how to build assessment of goal-achievement into the planning process itself.

## **Action Plans**

### **DESCRIPTION**

The vehicle for encouraging projects designed to achieve BHCC's strategic goals is the Action Plan process. Once goals are set, all members of the College community are invited to submit Action Plans. These Plans propose projects meant to fulfill a specific goal-related need. For example, one Action Plan proposed creation of a language lab to provide tutoring and other supplemental instruction to students. This project addressed the need to provide more academic support for the College's many ESL and bilingual learners, as well as for native speakers. Clearly tied to the College's mission and to the goal of encouraging student success, the language lab project was funded from money set aside in the budget for this second phase of the planning cycle.

The College Connection Program also resulted from a funded Action Plan that proposed a program to increase the retention rate in developmental reading and writing courses by providing a range of support services for these students.

BHCC allocates approximately one million dollars each year for Action Plans. When the Action Plan process begins, the College holds a series of meetings to familiarize employees with the process of formulating and submitting Action Plans. Sponsors submit Plans to their direct supervisors who funnel them to the Executive Staff. The Executive Staff then decides which Plans to fund. If an Action Plan is funded, involved personnel work on the project during the next fiscal year, submitting reports midyear and at the end of the year. Some Actions Plans are completed within one year. For multi-year initiatives, the Executive Staff can authorize continued funding as an Action Plan for several years - on the basis of assessment results. The Executive Staff sometimes institutionalizes Action Plan projects at the end of the first year based on assessment results, which means these projects are funded regularly in the College budget - outside of the Action Plan process.

The two examples above illustrate the two methods for continued funding of Action Plans. The Language Lab has been institutionalized and is now funded through the Academic Support/College Pathway Programs budget, and the College Connection continues to be funded under an Action Plan while data are collected to determine if this program does improve retention for developmental reading and writing students.

### **APPRAISAL**

#### **Achievements**

1. The Action Plan approach encourages faculty and staff to envision projects that move the College toward accomplishing the goals set for a planning cycle. The Language Lab and College Connection are representative examples of this.
2. The high participation rate in the Action Plan process suggests that faculty and staff have embraced the concept of Action Plans and are using these Plans to test new strategies for improving education at BHCC.

### **Areas of Concern**

1. The funding process sometimes appears oblique. Plans move through a short chain from area supervisor to Executive Staff with no defined process for advocacy. Again, College personnel are not always clear about why some Action Plans are funded and others are not. The final list of funded Action Plans is not published for the community, although this list is shared at a public meeting of the Board of Trustees. More transparency about criteria used to decide which Plans to fund seems desirable.
2. As suggested previously, the College does not currently establish an assessment method for institutional planning goals at the time that College goals are set. As a result, originators of Action Plans determine individually how to assess whether an Action Plan has contributed to achievement of institutional planning goals. There is a no uniform method for assessing the results of Action Plans in terms of goal achievement.
3. The success of the Action Plan process depends on a budget that will support the current level of innovation at the College. When times are lean, this process will not work as effectively to move the College toward accomplishment of its goals. For example, BHCC is not funding any new Action Plans for the 2009-2010 year because of the current State fiscal crisis. However, some of the 2008-2009 Action Plans were approved for continuation this year.

### **PROJECTIONS**

1. For the planning cycle which begins in spring 2010, Executive Staff will publish the final lists of funded Action Plans, as well criteria used to make funding decisions, via email to the entire College community.
2. By spring 2011, the Long-Range Planning Committee will identify a process for assessing Action Plans which ties directly to achievement of planning goals.

### **Evaluation of Academic Functions**

#### **DESCRIPTION**

BHCC evaluates its academic program in several ways. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness systematically collects and uses data, academic departments conduct regularly scheduled Program Reviews, and faculty assess student achievement of course and student learning outcomes through the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Project (SLOAP). Each of these evaluation methods focuses on gathering evidence about student achievement, a central component of the College mission, and using that evidence to make changes that increase the success of BHCC's students.

BHCC's Office of Institutional Effectiveness consistently gathers data about student success. This office publishes an annual Fact Book that presents extensive data on student demographics, enrollment trends and success rates. Since the start of the *Engaged Campus* and *Achieving the Dream* grant initiatives, the College has intensified this focus

on creating a “culture of evidence.” BHCC has used grant resources to identify new ways to generate and interpret quantitative and qualitative data. Through these grant initiatives, the College has also improved its ability to use these data to determine what course and program adjustments are most likely to increase student success. For example, BHCC has identified gateway courses with low retention rates and planned learning communities that pair these courses with content courses. The College has also used data on the success of its initial Learning Community Seminars to modify learning outcomes and assessment methods for subsequent seminars. The Mathematics Department also changed the mathematics developmental program from a two-course sequence to a three-course sequence, based on assessment data. **More detailed description of the *Engaged Campus and Achieving the Dream* can be found in Chapter Six.**

The College also evaluates its academic programs through a systematic Program Review process. Program Reviews at BHCC follow guidelines that provide a common evaluative core while allowing departments the flexibility to review programs within an appropriate context. Academic departments review their programs on a regular schedule and include external evaluators in the review process. **The Program Review process is described in detail in Chapter Four.**

Another important method for evaluating student success at BHCC is the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Program (SLOAP), started in 2003. This assessment program is a faculty-driven effort to assess student success in achieving course and program learning outcomes. SLOAP functions through a taskforce that includes representatives from each department. Academic departments propose projects to assess student learning outcomes for their courses and programs. The SLOAP taskforce reviews these project proposals, recommends modifications when necessary, and ultimately funds appropriate proposals. SLOAP also maintains a database where assessment results from these projects are filed. **Chapter Four describes the SLOAP initiative in detail.**

## APPRAISAL

Taken together, BHCC’s focus on creating a culture of evidence-based assessment, its Program Review process and the SLOAP initiative provide a comprehensive framework for evaluating the College’s academic program. BHCC’s Office of Institutional Effectiveness regularly collects appropriate data on student success rates. The BHCC Fact Book provides the College community, as well as business and civic leaders, with ready access to these data. By purchasing ZogoTech software, BHCC has increased its ability to generate assessment data quickly. The *Engaged Campus, Achieving the Dream*, and SLOAP have contributed significantly to creating a culture of academic assessment at the College by using assessment data to improve academic courses and programs in ways that are likely to increase student success. **More specific appraisals and projections for the grant initiatives are found in Chapters Four and Six. Chapter Four includes detailed appraisals and projections for SLOAP.**

## **Evaluation of Non-Academic Functions**

### **DESCRIPTION**

Administrators of the College's non-academic units are currently developing a common vehicle for assessing these areas of the College. This assessment effort began in 2006 when BHCC administrators designed and published an initial assessment model. After using this model for one year, however, administrators concluded that this "one size fits all" approach did not work effectively. Since then, BHCC administrators have experimented with a revised assessment model that is easier to adapt to the specific characteristics of each non-academic area. This revised model acknowledges that different questions frame assessments for different non-academic areas and allows individual areas to tie their assessment directly to BHCC's mission and goals. The revised model also puts more emphasis on closing the feedback loop by instituting changes suggested by the self-study data. At present, progress using this common assessment model varies from unit to unit. In part, this varied rate of progress reflects the reality that the work of some units is easily quantified, while the work of other units requires a more complex evaluation process. BHCC administrators will publish a third assessment report for the College's non-academic units in fall 2009.

While non-academic unit assessment is still evolving, several non-academic areas have already used an informal but effective assessment process. One such area is the Advising and Counseling Center. The center listened to concerns from students, faculty, administrators, and the larger community. This input confirmed that the Advising and Counseling Center could improve its interactions with students and that such improvement might positively impact student retention. The center then gathered data about possible ways to fix identified problems. These data came from student surveys, *Engaged Campus* and *Achieving the Dream* planning groups, the WebAdvisor planning group, and research on how advising and counseling functions at other colleges.

After assessing these data, the Advising and Counseling Center made several changes to improve the quality of the services students receive there. These changes ranged from making the physical space more user-friendly, to streamlining the registration process, to using WebAdvisor to formulate an educational plan for each student. The assessment process used by the Advising and Counseling Center did not solve all the problems with Advising at BHCC, but this process did result in positive changes. This basic approach to assessment – listening to evidence of problems, researching possible solutions, and implementing the most effective solutions – represents a viable assessment model for non-academic units.

### **APPRAISAL**

#### **Achievements**

1. BHCC administrators are committed to building a culture of evidence for non-academic units. The College has already experimented with two different assessment

models for non-academic units and is in the process of publishing a third version of what will become an annual report.

2. Some non-academic work areas, like advising and counseling, have already used assessment effectively to identify and correct problems.

### **Areas of Concern**

1. Currently, directors of non-academic units complete assessment reports and submit these reports directly to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. This process sometimes bypasses personnel in the unit and intermediate supervisors. In these cases, workers and supervisors are not encouraged to take responsibility for collecting and analyzing data and making logical improvements in their work areas.
2. Survey data on student satisfaction are not used clearly and consistently to inform non-academic unit assessments.

### **PROJECTIONS**

1. In fall 2010, the Executive Staff will pilot a reporting process for non-academic unit assessment that moves from departmental staff to immediate supervisor to upper-level supervisor to Executive Staff to provide more intermediary responsibility for the assessment process.
2. By fall 2011, the Executive Dean of Institutional Effectiveness, in collaboration with the directors of non-academic units, will adopt an assessment model that can be used effectively by all units to produce assessment data that consistently measure a unit's performance on its goals. This model will guarantee that input from student satisfaction surveys informs the assessment process. By this deadline, administrators will also establish a timeline for submission of assessment reports and guidelines for collecting and archiving assessment reports within each non-academic unit.

### **Institutional Effectiveness**

Planning and evaluation are part of the institutional fabric at Bunker Hill Community College. This planning and evaluation occurs across the institution in a systematic way. The institutional strategic planning process works very effectively to move the College toward achievement of its mission-related strategic goals. Next steps in maintaining a vigorous strategic planning effort involve examination of the benefits of a longer planning cycle and formulation of a uniform plan for assessing efforts to accomplish strategic goals. Both academic and non-academic units are moving area-specific evaluation forward at BHCC. The College comprehensively evaluates its academic programs through data collection, Program Review and SLOAP. Staff in non-academic units are actively focused on designing a flexible common assessment plan for these areas of the College.

### **ADDENDUM TO STANDARD TWO: UPDATE**

#### **Description/Strategic Planning Process**

“The next large-scale planning event will take place on January 20, 2010.”

## **Update**

On January 20, 2010, the College held its latest planning session. Over 250 participants, representing both the BHCC community and key sectors of the greater Boston community, attended this day-long event. In the morning, key health, civic and corporate figures addressed the audience about ways in which the College might address community needs over the next three years. During the afternoon session, BHCC faculty, staff, students, and alumni formulated preliminary planning goals, based on input from the morning's speakers. As has been done for previous planning events, BHCC will issue a report to the community on this planning session.

## **Area of Concern #2/ Evaluation of Non-Academic Functions**

“Survey data on student satisfaction are not used clearly and consistently to inform non-academic unit assessments.”

## **Update**

Within the last several years, two national student surveys have been administered on campus. The Community College Survey of Entering Student Engagement (CCSSE) was administered in spring 2007 and again in spring 2009 to a randomly selected sample of students. In addition, BHCC participated in both the field test for the Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE) in fall 2008, and in the first national administration in fall 2009. The College has used the results of these surveys to establish baselines.

The Director of Institutional Research has met with administrators of BHCC's non-academic units to review the survey results. The College has also arranged for key non-academic unit administrators to receive training in using survey data for assessment. A team which will include the Registrar, as well as the Directors of Institutional Research, Advising & Assessment, and Admissions will attend the Entering Student Success Institute (ESSI) in April 2010. At this institute, these administrators will work with data, learn about strategies that can help improve the entering student experience, and formulate an action plan for initiating appropriate strategies. This will aid the non-academic unit administrators who attend the institute in making effective use of student survey data to assess their units and make appropriate changes. Administrators attending the institute will share what they learn with other non-academic unit administrators at the College.

As BHCC continues to administer national student surveys on a regular schedule, non-academic unit administrators will continue to use data from these surveys to assess unit performance and make changes to better serve students.

## **STANDARD THREE: ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE**

### **Introduction**

The governance structure of Bunker Hill Community College is multi-tiered. College governance begins at the State level and proceeds to the College's Board of Trustees. The Board designates executive responsibility to the President. Under this leadership umbrella, the College Forum, through its various Committees, functions as BHCC's central governing body. This governance structure conforms to the stipulations of the Statewide collective bargaining agreements which cover the majority of BHCC employees. Students are integrated into BHCC's governance structure through participation on Forum Committees. Students also have their own governing body, the Student Government Association. The College can conduct its business in an orderly and democratic fashion because its governance system provides clear channels for communicating information and broad participation in decision-making.

### **DESCRIPTION**

#### **Governance on the State Level**

BHCC is one of fifteen public community colleges in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The College operates under the jurisdiction of the Department of Higher Education (DHE) which governs all higher education institutions in the State.

#### **Internal College Governance**

##### ***Board of Trustees***

The Board of Trustees is responsible for setting policy that allows the College to achieve its mission and strategic goals. In this context, the Board requires its members to lead the College in a way that is ethical, values diversity, and promotes student success. To make BHCC's mission the driving force behind Board activity, the Trustees read aloud the Vision Statement at the start of each meeting. The Board delegates power to the President to act as administrative head of the College and works with the President to implement mission-driven policies. The Board reviews the President's performance annually. The Board operates within the general guidelines established by Massachusetts General Laws and the specific guidelines of its own by-laws.

##### ***Administrative Structure***

The administrative structure of the College is clearly outlined in BHCC's organizational chart. The Board of Trustees governs the College while the President oversees its operation. The College President reports directly to the Board. Six administrators report directly to the President. Three of these administrators, who are all vice presidents, supervise the administrative heads of College departments.

##### ***The College Forum***

The College Forum is BHCC's central governance structure. The Forum is an inclusive body, representing all segments of the College from both the Charlestown and Chelsea campuses. All administrators, faculty and professional staff, as well as three representatives from support staff and three representatives from the Student Government Association, constitute the membership of the Forum. Adjunct faculty are invited to

attend Forum meetings but do not have voting rights. Meetings occur monthly during the academic year on the Charlestown campus. The agenda is published ten days in advance, as are motions scheduled to come before the Forum for a vote. In addition, Committee Chairs circulate information about important motions to all Forum members via email before the Forum meeting. For example, every month, the Curriculum Committee chair sends all Forum members the specifics of the Committee's recommendations about new courses or programs - or changes to old courses – so Forum members can evaluate this information before they vote.

Under the umbrella of the Forum, eleven Forum Committees operate: six Policy Committees which, like the Curriculum Committee, may present recommendations to the Forum and five Advisory Committees which present information but may not present motions.

Faculty hold the majority of slots on all Forum Committees. In addition, all Committees have at least one professional staff member, an administrative representative, a support staff representative, and one student representative. The Forum elects the majority of members to these Committees, and the President appoints the remaining members.

Forum Committees make recommendations on issues pertaining to each Committee's charge. Thus, the Academic Affairs Committee considers academic issues and the Library Committee considers issues related to information literacy. Committee agendas can be generated by members of a Committee or by other members of the College community. When a Forum Committee arrives at a policy recommendation, the Committee Chair presents the recommendation to the College Forum for discussion and, where appropriate, a vote.

For example, the Academic Affairs Committee recently dealt with an agenda item that required a decision on whether to grant college credit for BHCC's new Learning Community Seminars. An Ad Hoc Committee asked to have this item put on the Academic Affairs Committee agenda. After lengthy discussion, the Academic Affairs Committee decided that these seminars should receive college credit and made this recommendation to the Forum. The Committee provided Forum members with advance notice of their recommendation. The Forum then discussed the Academic Affairs Committee's proposal, considered dissenting opinion, and voted to approve college credit for Learning Community Seminars. Once the Forum approves a Committee's recommendation, the recommendation goes to the College President for final approval.

The Forum Moderator uses Parliamentary Procedure to lead College Forum meetings and is also a member of the Governance Committee. The moderator carries motions passed by the Forum to the President for her approval. The moderator then reports the President's decisions back to the Forum and its Committees.

### ***Collective Bargaining Units***

Faculty and professional staff are organized under two Statewide collective bargaining

agreements between the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education (DHE) and the Massachusetts Community College Council (MCCC). One contract pertains to full-time faculty and professional staff, while the other pertains to adjunct faculty. Both full-time and adjunct faculty members have Faculty-Management Committees, comprised of three representatives from the union and three from management, which meet together monthly to address and resolve concerns that arise. One joint Committee meeting, for example, resolved the issue of whether faculty can bring bottled water into computer classrooms when they are teaching. These joint Committees often reach agreement on such issues and prevent formal grievances.

College support staff are organized under a collective bargaining agreement between the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). AFSCME stewards represent the concerns of union members to management. Stewards monitor compliance with the terms of the AFSCME contract and work with management to resolve problems as they occur. Again, the AFSCME Steward reports that issues are often resolved without grievances.

#### ***Student Government Association***

The Student Government Association (SGA) operates under a Constitution that was ratified by the student body in May 2005. All registered students at BHCC automatically become members of the Student Government Association (SGA). Each spring, the SGA elects officers who meet regularly throughout the academic year to consider issues that relate to student life at BHCC. Meetings of the SGA are open, and all students are encouraged to take part in student government deliberations.

### **APPRAISAL**

#### **Achievements**

1. The BHCC Board of Trustees and the President have a sound working relationship. The Board strongly supports the mission of the College and the President's efforts to make BHCC an effective model of that mission. This shared vision allows the Board and BHCC's Executive Staff to collaborate productively to move the College forward. The successful initiatives described throughout this self-study attest to the positive relationship between the Board and the President.
2. The Board of Trustees completed its first self-assessment in fall 2009.
3. Under the leadership of the current President, the College has experienced growth and stability. The President's management style encourages campus-wide participation in planning, goal setting, and initiating goal-related projects (as described in Chapter Two). This collaborative approach to setting the College agenda has fostered initiative at all levels of the College community, as seen through minutes of the College Forum, the record of completed Action Plans, and the activities described in the other chapters of this self-study.
4. Union leadership and management concur that their working relationships are positive and constructive. The College observes the terms of its collective bargaining agreements and addresses contract-related problems through constructive dialogue. These cooperative relationships set a respectful tone for the BHCC workplace.

5. Student Government Association Officers have regular opportunities to represent student concerns directly to the College Administration. The SGA President meets regularly with the College President and the SGA Vice Presidents meet with their administrative counterparts. The SGA President also reports at each meeting of the College Forum. In this way, elected student representatives have the opportunity to keep the College community aware of student issues and to work directly with College personnel who can help resolve those issues.
6. The SGA has worked to positively affect student life at BHCC. This year, the SGA created a new student scholarship, entitled the “Leaders of Tomorrow Scholarship” and also voted to contribute ten thousand dollars to BHCC’s new Student Emergency Fund. Over the past years, the SGA has contributed money to the Study Abroad Program and the Museum Pass Program. In addition, the SGA has contributed \$50,000 annually for the last seven years to construction of the new Health & Wellness Center.

### **Areas of Concern**

1. College Forum Bylaws do not contain a plan for ongoing assessment of BHCC’s College Forum and its Committees.
2. In the last ten years, the College has had four Academic Vice Presidents, two of whom have served on an interim basis. Although all four Vice Presidents have been vigilant about maintaining the quality of the academic program, keeping program offerings current and responding effectively to increased science and technology demands in the Boston workforce, the number of changes in this office has produced some discontinuity. The current Vice President of Academic Affairs is an interim vice president whose term ends on June 30, 2010.
3. Although the Forum Committees, both standing and advisory, function effectively, the current workload of the Curriculum Committee is cause for concern. This Committee is responsible for researching and approving all changes to the College curriculum for all courses, wherever or whenever they are offered. Thus, this Committee regularly operates under pressure which comes from two sources:
  - the volume of new courses and programs - as well as updates to current courses and programs - which the Committee must review
  - the necessity of completing reviews in timely fashion to meet publication deadlines for the College Catalog

This Committee is crucial to maintaining the quality, currency and congruence of academic offerings. Although Academic Deans, program chairs, and department chairs plan academic offerings, the Curriculum Committee exerts the final quality control. Because of the heavy work load, BHCC has recently experienced difficulty finding Curriculum Committee members who are willing to chair this Committee.

4. Data from the spring NEASC survey indicate that, of eligible voting members of the College Forum, more than half report that they do not regularly attend the Forum. Likewise, an even larger number report that they do not often serve on a Forum Committee. This suggests that the governance process and the Committee work that supports that process do not involve the broad constituency which the College Forum was designed to include. As explained in Chapter Five, faculty and professional staff carry heavy contractual workloads and also perform Committee work and grant work.

Likewise, support staff often find that their work schedules preclude involvement in the Forum and its activities. In the case of students, their own governance meetings are often scheduled in conflict with the College Forum. The common thread here is the limited time available for multiple meetings. The Governance Document specifies that three voting support staff and three voting students must be present at each meeting of the College Forum. However, the Forum does not usually have the required attendance from these groups. Since the required representation from these groups is relatively small, when the group representatives do not attend, their constituents have no voice in the Forum. This presents a different problem from the problem that occurs when faculty and staff absent themselves from Forum meetings, since some faculty and staff are still present to represent their constituencies.

5. Although the SGA is an active governance organization, many BHCC students have significant responsibilities outside of the College and are not actually aware that the Student Government Association exists. The SGA is working hard to raise awareness about this organization among students. Thus, in FY 08-09, the SGA conducted an aggressive marketing campaign to recruit candidates for its spring election of officers. The SGA is also planning to publish a newsletter to increase its outreach to all BHCC students.

### **PROJECTIONS**

1. By spring 2011, the Governance Committee will formulate and begin implementing a method for assessing the work of the College Forum on a regular basis. This assessment will include assessment of the Forum Committees.
2. The President will begin a search for a permanent Academic Vice President in fall 2009.
3. By fall 2010, the Governance Committee, in close consultation with the Curriculum Committee, will recommend to the Forum a plan to effectively stagger the workload of the Curriculum Committee and/or the responsibilities of the Chair.
4. By spring 2011, the Governance Committee will thoroughly review data about participation in the governance process across the College community. The Governance Committee will then formulate and implement a plan for increasing participation in the Forum and its Committees.
5. Over the next five years, the SGA will continue its efforts to increase student participation in governance.

### **Institutional Effectiveness**

The Board of Trustees functions effectively at the top of the College's internal governance structure. Likewise, the President effectively manages the College and has presided over an unprecedented period of growth. Although the College community does not participate as fully as possible in the College Forum, the BHCC governance structure is open and inclusive and the Forum Committees are active. BHCC students have created an active student government on campus and are working to increase visibility of this organization. To ensure maximum institutional effectiveness, the College Forum should implement regular, comprehensive assessments of its operations.

## **ADDENDUM TO STANDARD THREE: UPDATE**

### **Area of Concern #2**

“In the last ten years, the College has had four academic Vice Presidents, two of whom have served on an interim basis. Although all four vice presidents have been vigilant about maintaining the quality of the academic program, keeping program offerings current and responding effectively to increased science and technology demands in the Boston workforce, the number of changes in this office has produced some discontinuity. The current Vice President of academic affairs is an interim vice president whose term ends on June 30, 2010.”

### **Update**

The College has engaged the services of The Pauly Group, an executive search firm specializing in community colleges, to assist in the hiring of a Vice President of Academic Affairs & Student Services effective July 1, 2010.

## STANDARD FOUR: ACADEMIC PROGRAM

### **Introduction**

BHCC's academic program is sound and effectively maintained. The College has a solid academic infrastructure that assures the integrity of its curriculum. BHCC's General Education requirement guarantees that degree recipients are exposed to a representative cross-section of this curriculum. The College maximizes access to its academic program by offering courses in a variety of instructional modes at times which are convenient for students. To continuously upgrade the effectiveness of its academic program, College departments regularly review their programs for quality and currency. In addition, faculty are actively engaged in assessing student learning across the curriculum and modifying courses to increase student learning. Two major grant initiatives have contributed significantly to creating a culture of assessment at BHCC. Together, these realities attest to a strong academic program which promotes personal growth in students and prepares these students effectively for transfer or work.

### **Academic Infrastructure**

#### DESCRIPTION

##### *Programs*

As required by its mission, the College supports an academic program which meets the needs of its student population. BHCC offers seventeen A.A. degrees. These degrees all meet the criteria of the Commonwealth Transfer Compact which assures students ease of transfer to other Massachusetts colleges and to the University of Massachusetts. BHCC also offers thirteen separate A.S. degree programs, most having two or more options. Taking options into account, the College offers twenty-eight separate A.S. degrees. Traditionally, the A.S. programs have been designed not for transfer but for employment. However, the College has recently established a transfer A.S. program in Biological Sciences that is designed to transfer to similar science programs in four-year colleges. The Science Department has articulation agreements for transfer of this A.S. program to the University of Massachusetts.

For students seeking skills directly related to quick employment, BHCC also offers over thirty certificate programs in thirteen different departments. The College also offers a Commonwealth Honors Program.

BHCC plans its offerings each semester to make certain that required and elective courses are offered on a timetable that ensures a student can graduate within the time frame published in the Catalog. The institution always makes "appropriate arrangements" for students enrolled in programs which are eliminated, or for which degree requirements are changed. As changes of this sort are proposed, the Curriculum Committee looks closely at how such changes affect students.

In most cases, the College accommodates affected students by designating appropriate substitute courses. Courses that are eliminated also go through a "phase out" period during which they continue to be offered for one or two semesters to help students through the transition period. The recent change in the developmental math sequence is a

good example of this. The math courses that were eliminated and replaced by a new sequence were still offered for several semesters to accommodate students who had already started the old sequence. The Mathematics Department also made a concerted effort to inform all academic advisors about how to advise students during this transition period. A final alternative is the course waiver process, through which department chairs and deans can sign off on appropriate substitute courses when degree requirements change and a course or its designated substitute is no longer available.

BHCC names and plans its certificate and degree programs to establish congruence with similar programs at other institutions. The College is diligent about assuring that program requirements do not exceed the norm for similar programs at other institutions. With this in mind, the Curriculum Committee looks closely at credit requirements for all new or revised programs. Departmental Program Reviews and external review boards also make certain that program offerings fall within commonly accepted practice in terms of length and content. A good example of this policy is BHCC's Nursing Program. The current number of credits in the Nursing Program is closely related to standards and requirements set by its accrediting organization.

### *Quality Assurance*

The College assures the quality of its degree and certificate programs through an institutional process for course and program approval which involves layers of review. When a department proposes a new program, certificate, or course - or a modification to an existing program/certificate/course - the Curriculum Committee conducts an in-depth review of the department's proposal. The Committee examines proposed learning outcomes to make certain that these encompass appropriate academic content. The Committee also verifies that all programs and certificates are designed coherently, progress logically, have adequate breadth and depth, and offer students an opportunity to synthesize learning. In this way, the Curriculum Committee assures that courses that receive college credit have college-level content. If the Curriculum Committee votes to approve a departmental proposal, the Committee publishes its recommendation for the College community which discusses and votes on this recommendation at the College Forum. Finally, the College President either approves or rejects the Forum's recommendation.

A good example of how this process ensures the integrity of credit-bearing courses is the recent successful effort to institutionalize the *Engaged Campus* Learning Community Seminar (LCS). The development of the LCS was a cross-curricular initiative. Since the LCS was not housed in a specific department, the President named an Ad Hoc Committee to study the question of whether this course should become a permanent course, bearing college credit, which first-time, full-time students must take. After studying the issue, the Committee recommended that the LCS be institutionalized in this way. The Ad Hoc Committee sent this recommendation to the *Engaged Campus* Taskforce, as well as to the Academic Affairs Committee and the Curriculum Committee. After lengthy discussion, these two Committees endorsed the Ad Hoc Committee's recommendations.

Next, the Academic Affairs Committee and the Curriculum Committee brought necessary motions related to making the LCS a required, credit-bearing course for all

first-time, full-time students to the College Forum for a vote. The Forum approved the recommendations and the LCS became a permanent Catalog course. This example illustrates how courses that become credit-bearing components of BHCC's academic program are thoroughly reviewed.

All credit-bearing academic offerings involve faculty, departments and/or programs in decisions to award credit. Internships are run through departments or programs. Service learning receives credit only when integrated into a credit-bearing course. Independent studies are supervised by faculty and run through the Contract Learning Program. Study Abroad Programs receive credit if run by BHCC faculty as part of a department or program, or if transfer credit from a foreign institution is approved.

BHCC does not award college-level credit for pre-collegiate work. Developmental courses have course numbers below 100 and are clearly identified in the Catalog as pre-college courses.

### ***Continuous Review of Academic Program***

Once a course or program becomes an established part of the College curriculum, regular Program Reviews ensure continued currency and quality. SLOAP, BHCC's academic assessment program, also provides continuous monitoring of courses and programs. (Program Review and SLOAP are described in detail later in this Chapter.) In addition to these review mechanisms, fourteen career programs have external Advisory Committees who consult with these programs to make certain that curricular content effectively prepares students for work in the field. Each of the College's certificate programs is housed in a regular academic department which further ensures regular review.

### ***Clearly Published Policies***

BHCC students have easy access to necessary information about the existence and nature of the College's programs and courses. The College clearly lists graduation requirements for each degree and learning outcomes for each program in the College Catalog. Certificate programs are also listed with requirements and learning outcomes. In addition, the Catalog includes a listing of all College courses, as well as a description of the General Education requirement and menus. College policies on academic standing, readmission, probation, suspension, and appeals are also clearly published in the Catalog, as well as in the student handbook. The College Catalog is updated annually which assures that information about BHCC's academic program is always current. The degree certification process is run through the Enrollment Services Office.

### ***Award of Credit for External Courses***

The College accepts a maximum of forty-five transfer credits toward the BHCC associate degree. The College also accepts 75% of the total credits required for certificate programs. The College Catalog clearly delineates the process of applying for transfer credit. Transfer counselors work closely with department chairs in instances where there are questions about the equivalency of a course from another institution. In addition, the College has numerous articulation agreements with frequent transfer institutions. The College Catalog lists all current articulation agreements and joint admissions programs.

BHCC also awards college credit for prior learning. The Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) Program is housed in the Center for Self-Directed Learning. Information about this Program is published in the College Catalog. The PLA coordinator consults with department chairs and deans about all decisions relating to prior learning. In 2007, the College awarded 197 credits for prior-learning portfolio activities.

In 2007, BHCC also awarded 695 credits for CLEP testing, ninety-four credits for departmental challenge exams, and 474 credits for the Community Educational Services Program.

### **APPRAISAL**

1. The evidence presented above suggests that BHCC has established governance procedures that ensure effective ownership and oversight of its academic program.
2. BHCC maintains a coherent, high-quality academic program which is continuously reviewed and revised. This academic program is congruent with similar programs at other institutions. The College Catalog attests to this reality.
3. In spring 2009, the BHCC Honors Program was reviewed by the Commonwealth Honors Executive Committee. As a result of this review, this program's membership in the Commonwealth Honors Program was renewed for six years.
4. Policies and procedures that facilitate maintenance of BHCC's academic program are clearly stated and carefully observed. Students can easily inform themselves about BHCC's academic program and policies through the College Catalog or Website.
5. Within the context of faculty collective bargaining agreements, the College also maintains appropriate policies regarding selection, approval, professional development and evaluation of faculty, as described in Chapter Five.
6. BHCC is engaged in sustained efforts to examine and improve its policies on admission, registration, and retention of students, as described in Chapter Six.

Based on these appraisals, no projections about academic infrastructure are necessary.

### **General Education**

#### **DESCRIPTION**

##### ***BHCC's General Education Requirement***

To graduate with an associate degree from BHCC, a student must, in addition to other degree requirements, complete 22 credits of General Education courses. The College's General Education requirement assures that all degree recipients have an introductory knowledge of several basic categories of human knowledge. This requirement guides students to choose electives which create a balanced educational program.

The two core competencies that create the connective tissue for BHCC's six General Education menus are writing and critical thinking. All students must take two college-level writing courses to fulfill the requirements of the first General Education menu. To move from the first writing course to the second writing course, students must pass an exit exam. In addition to these two writing courses, all General Education courses must include a specified emphasis on developing critical thinking and writing skills. The

assumption here is that the best way to ensure that BHCC graduates can write well and think critically is to give students repeated opportunities to practice these skills in different disciplinary contexts.

In addition to the College Writing menu, BHCC has five General Education menu areas: Individual and Society, World View, Quantitative Thought, Science and Technology, and Humanities. The primary means for BHCC degree recipients to satisfy the General Education graduation requirement is to complete one course from each of these five menus in addition to the two College Writing courses that constitute Menu One.

Each menu area has measurable learning outcomes. These learning outcomes provide a common thread which ensures that every course on a specific menu offers exposure to the contexts that qualify the course as a General Education requirement. Thus, each menu course must provide sufficient opportunities for students to achieve not only course-specific learning outcomes but also the menu's General Education learning outcomes. Students can easily access specific descriptions of each General Education menu, along with a listing of courses that satisfy that menu requirement, in a fold-out section at the back of the College Catalog and in electronic format on BHCC's Website.

#### ***General Education Standards Committee***

To oversee and regulate General Education at BHCC, the College established the General Education Standards Committee whose members are elected by the College Forum. The College Governance document describes this Committee's purpose, composition, and authority. The Committee certifies all new General Education courses, using a check list of required criteria for placement on a menu. To meet the Committee's criteria for certification, the syllabus of a prospective General Education course must clearly describe activities that cover both the core competencies of writing and critical thinking and the area-specific competencies.

Every BHCC program has been reviewed to ensure that each degree is "General Education compliant." Any new program, as well as any program that changes its degree requirements, must obtain a sign off from the General Education Standards Committee. This sign-off certifies compliance with General Education requirements.

#### ***General Education Assessment***

##### ***Assessment Summit***

The College is currently focused on identifying effective methods for assessing General Education learning outcomes. For the past three years, BHCC has sponsored annual Assessment Summits for those teaching General Education courses. At these summits, faculty teaching courses on each General Education menu have focused on creating and refining an assessment tool or process that can be applied to all courses on their menu.

##### ***Writing across the Curriculum (WAC)***

The WAC assessment model for General Education menus focuses on assessing the two General Education core competencies. Faculty teaching courses on a specific menu use a generic assignment, a common assignment type designed to promote effective writing

and critical thinking in their courses. Participating faculty then grade student responses to this common assignment using an analytic rubric, generate assessment data, and use these data to modify courses to elicit better student writing/critical thinking.

To date, there has been at least one generic assignment assessment done for each General Education menu. Three of the menus have actually completed this type of assessment project for two consecutive years. WAC workshops are used to close the feedback loop on these generic assignment assessment projects. For example, the “World View” General Education menu conducted a WAC assessment project in spring 2008. The feedback from this assessment project led directly to a History and Social Sciences Department workshop for full-time and adjunct faculty in the fall of 2008. This workshop focused on how to improve written assignments in this discipline.

## **APPRAISAL**

### **Achievements**

1. The College’s assessment of its first General Education Program, established in 1994, is a good example of effective assessment. During a comprehensive review begun in 1999, the College determined that the missing piece in the original system was clearly-stated outcomes. To close the feedback loop on this assessment, the College has integrated clearly defined learning outcomes for all General Education menus. General Education Faculty are now focused on actual assessment of these learning outcomes.
2. BHCC’s current General Education Program encompasses a coherent, well-rounded, and well-considered set of requirements. The collective learning outcomes for this Program represent a comprehensive requirement that “embodies the institution's definition of an educated person and prepares students for the world in which they will live.” Once students complete these requirements, they have been introduced to the fundamental categories of human knowledge.
3. All General Education courses, regardless of menu, must address the core competencies of critical thinking and writing. This requirement, which reflects the College’s priorities, has placed a substantive positive emphasis on these crucial skills. In turn, this emphasis has resulted in increased focus on writing and critical thinking across the General Education menu.
4. The annual General Education Summit meetings, jointly sponsored by SLOAP and the General Education Standards Committee, have successfully encouraged meaningful assessment of General Education learning outcomes. Faculty have responded positively to the opportunity to discuss assessment of menu learning outcomes with their menu colleagues. The SLOAP database contains examples of General Education assessment projects that began at the General Education Summit.
5. The adoption of these core General Education competencies has also raised the profile of the College’s WAC initiative. This initiative has based its work on the assumption that the most fruitful way to develop student writing skills across the curriculum is to focus on written assignments as a way to develop critical thinking skills. Thus, the partnership between General Education and WAC has been a natural one which has resulted in an effective model for assessment of General Education courses. The generic assignment assessment model serves both General Education

goals and WAC goals logically and efficiently. In general, students averaged a low B on papers normed for these generic assignment projects. Faculty often reported that student writing skills were stronger than their critical thinking skills. Final reports identified which specific learning outcomes students were most successful in accomplishing and suggested revisions to teaching based on these results. In most cases, faculty revised both the assignment and the rubric used for the project in response to assessment results. Detailed assessment data and plans to close the feedback loop for each of these projects are found on the SLOAP database.

6. The overall General Education framework has been seamlessly integrated into BHCC's academic program, assuring that all students receive the equivalent of twenty-two credits in their programs, with the very limited exceptions described above.
7. The College has provided a permanent, consistent infrastructure for the General Education Program by establishing the General Education Standards Committee as a standing Forum Committee. As a standing Committee, the Standards Committee reports to the College Forum, raising awareness about General Education for the entire College community. The Committee also serves as the "keeper of the menu," assuring that any new course placed on a General Education menu meets established requirements. The Committee has established clear procedures for evaluating potential new menu courses and has provided a mechanism for verifying "General Education compliance" for new or newly-revised programs. The Curriculum Committee cannot bring new programs or revised programs to the Forum for consideration until the General Education Standards Committee signs off. The Curriculum Committee and General Education Standards Committee have worked together effectively to preserve the integrity of BHCC's General Education Program.

### **Areas of Concern**

1. While General Education Faculty have made encouraging progress in assessing the core General Education learning outcomes (writing and critical thinking), most other menu-specific General Education learning outcomes have yet to be assessed in a meaningful way. Within the next five years, General Education faculty must focus on meaningful assessment of these menu-specific General Education learning outcomes.
2. While College Writing I and College Writing II effectively emphasize information literacy skills in a general context, the General Education learning outcomes do not focus on information literacy within the context of each menu area. Although information literacy needs can vary from discipline to discipline, students taking menu courses are not required to practice information literacy skills across areas.

### **PROJECTIONS**

1. During the fall 2010 semester, the General Education Standards Committee, in collaboration with the SLOAP Taskforce and General Education Faculty, will develop a multi-year plan to accomplish comprehensive assessment of menu-specific General Education competencies. General Education Faculty will begin to implement this plan in spring 2011.

2. Since the last General Education Review took place ten years ago, the College should begin another review of this Program. In spring 2011, the Vice President of Academic Affairs will establish an Ad Hoc General Education Review Committee to conduct a comprehensive assessment of BHCC's General Education model. As part of this review, the Committee will examine the question of increased emphasis on information literacy skills across General Education menus. This Review Committee will report its recommendations by fall 2011.

### **Increasing Access to BHCC's Academic Program**

#### **DESCRIPTION**

##### ***BHCC Online***

BHCC Online has experienced significant growth since the College's last self-study. Ten years ago, the College offered just five online courses, enrolling twenty-five students. By spring 2009, BHCC Online enrolled 1,681 students in 112 different web courses. In addition, the College enrolled another 595 students in hybrid courses.

Students can now complete nine degree programs and nine certificates online. Four additional programs have 80% of their course work available for completion online and all courses are available online. The College has supported this dramatic and continuing expansion with appropriate expansion of technological support. Chapter Eight describes in detail how the technological infrastructure supporting BHCC Online has kept pace with growth of enrollment in this sector. The College Catalog informs students of the technical computing requirements for online courses.

The Dean of BHCC Online and the Weekend College makes initial online course assignments. These assignments are then formally approved by the academic division dean involved. Some department chairs in the Division of Arts and Sciences have actively sought involvement in choice of online faculty and others have shown no interest in such involvement. In cases where the department has offered no input, the Dean of the BHCC Online/Weekend College makes decisions about staffing those courses. Traditionally, full-time faculty get first priority, then current adjuncts, and then outside instructors. In spring 2009, thirty-five full time faculty and approximately forty-seven adjunct faculty taught the College's online courses.

BHCC Online complies with the Massachusetts Community College Council (MCCC) faculty distance learning bargaining agreements that have been in effect since fall 1998. In fall 2004, a new student evaluation form was adopted for full-time faculty teaching online courses as part of their day load. The student evaluation form for non-State-supported courses has remained the same. Management and Union representatives have been negotiating for the past two years to allow for the new form to be administered electronically, without success.

Academic division deans and all students enrolled in distance courses must have access to the information on a course materials checklist specified in the distance learning bargaining agreements. Online faculty are also required to provide students with email

addresses and on-campus phone numbers so that distance students can easily contact faculty. Online adjunct professors are given BHCC email addresses and voice mail accounts to support ease of student access to online faculty.

### ***Home Study***

For students who may not have access to computers, the College still offers courses through the mail. Enrollment in these courses has decreased from 537 students in thirty-seven sections in fall 2003 to 229 students in twenty-three sections in spring 2008. The College continues to offer these courses to serve a particular population that relies on this type of distance course – a portion of them youth offenders living in DYS facilities. Evaluation of home study courses is governed by the MOA described above.

### ***Center for Self-Directed Learning***

In spring 2008, the CSDL enrolled 584 students in thirty-eight self-paced academic courses across a variety of disciplines. The Center offers a learning environment where busy students can take courses on their own schedule. The CSDL provides technological resources for independent study under the supervision of six full-time learning specialists and trained professional tutors. CSDL students direct the pace of their learning and receive progress evaluations on a continuous basis. The Center also provides supplemental tutoring for approximately 500 students in self-paced math courses each year.

The Dean of Academic Support and the CSDL Director work together to ensure that objectives for all CSDL courses match departmental course descriptions. The CSDL does not initiate any new courses without collaborate discussion with the appropriate department chair. Most learning specialists attend department meetings. Students who complete CSDL courses respond to a survey that includes questions regarding both the course and their experience in the CSDL. Center staff use these surveys to produce an annual report on CSDL effectiveness. The CSDL Director evaluates learning specialists annually according to the provisions of the faculty collective bargaining agreement.

### ***Scheduling Options***

In addition to weekday and evening courses, the College offers a variety of scheduling options: eight week mini-sessions, hybrid courses that meet both in-class and online, and traditional sixteen week courses that meet only on Saturday and/or Sunday. In fall 2009, the College is also experimenting with courses offered at midnight to accommodate students who finish work near that time and wish to take courses before returning home. This flexible scheduling allows students with work and family responsibilities more opportunities to find courses that fit their schedules.

### ***Off-Campus Locations***

All satellite courses are held in appropriate facilities. Instructors are assigned to teach at satellites by the appropriate division dean. The evaluation procedures specified in the faculty collective bargaining agreements apply to all satellite courses. If instructors have concerns about these facilities or the support offered there, the appropriate division dean investigates and addresses these concerns. Although the College cannot feasibly offer all

support services at all satellites, students in satellite courses can access the support services on the Charlestown and Chelsea campuses. In addition, tutoring and computing services are available in the evenings and on weekends. Since students taking satellite courses are often also taking courses on either the Chelsea or Charlestown campus, accessing services on these campuses is frequently convenient.

BHCC offers several academic programs that rely partially on off-campus facilities, including the College's health care programs and workforce development efforts like the NSTAR Program. In such cases, the College has appropriate control and clear policies about the off-site facilities.

In health care programs, students must complete clinical requirements for graduation. When suitable sites are identified, the College enters into a contractual agreement for use of the site. These contracts always specify that the College maintains control of the academic program. Generally, the College's agreements with health care sites have guaranteed smooth functioning of student clinical rotations. Students in programs with clinical rotations can find the requirements for off-site clinical work clearly stated in the program grids of the College Catalog.

Workforce Development Programs like the NSTAR Program also rely partially on off-campus facilities. Courses take place both at BHCC and at NSTAR. However, the College has academic oversight of BHCC courses offered at the NSTAR location. The agreements between the College, NSTAR and the UWAU have allowed for smooth functioning of the off-site segment of this Program for the last four years. To gain entrance to this Program, students must apply to both NSTAR and to BHCC, so students are well aware of the off-campus component of this Program.

## **APPRAISAL**

### **Achievements**

1. The College offers a large number of online courses, which can be used to complete entire programs. In fact, in fiscal year 2008, BHCC enrolled 963 students who only registered for web courses. Clearly, BHCC Online has successfully expanded the population that can access the College's academic program to include students who cannot come to the campus because of physical or time constraints. This is especially important for working students. For some learning styles, these online courses also provide a more effective mode of learning than classroom courses can provide.
2. While BHCC's online courses did not initially enjoy high retention and completion rates, over time, students have become acclimated to online learning, faculty have developed more effective online teaching strategies, and the College has put ancillary supports in place. As a result, retention and completion rates in web courses have improved.
3. BHCC has worked hard to provide the necessary bandwidth and other technology required to support the tremendous growth in online courses. This foresight and resource allocation demonstrates the College's determination to support this division.

4. Scheduling courses at times that are convenient for working people clearly serves the needs of BHCC's target population. In FY2008, the College enrolled 445 students who only took courses in the Weekend College. Again, these students presumably could not have enrolled at the College if BHCC did not offer weekend schedules. The College also enrolled 1,566 students who only enrolled in web, hybrid or online courses. Further, both midnight courses offered in fall 2009 filled to capacity.

### **Areas of Concern**

1. The method for choosing online and weekend faculty differs between and within divisions. Some departments collaborate actively with the Dean of BHCC Online on all matters and others do not. Without a firm connection between BHCC Online and all departments, the College has less certainty about congruence between online courses and their classroom counterparts. This problem stems in part from the fact that the administrative Dean of BHCC Online/Weekend College and the Academic Deans share authority for online and weekend courses.
2. As of this writing, the MCCC and the Department of Higher Education (DHE) have still not agreed on a more effective and efficient student evaluation process for faculty teaching online courses as part of their day load. Likewise, distance students do not evaluate faculty at the same rate as other students at the College. Although online students are asked to complete a course evaluation electronically, only about 10% of students do so. Since online students do not constitute a captive audience during a scheduled class time, retrieving an acceptable number of completed online evaluations has proven difficult.
3. CSDL courses do not use the same student evaluation process as classroom courses. Since the evaluation process prescribed in the faculty collective bargaining agreements is incompatible with CSDL course format, the CSDL has developed its own course evaluation method. Although CSDL courses are evaluated consistently, the evaluation process has not had the same scrutiny as is afforded to evaluation procedures in other parts of the College which are governed by external agreements.
4. The process by which CSDL courses are integrated into academic programs is not clearly stated.

### **PROJECTIONS**

1. By fall 2011, the Vice President of Academic Affairs, in collaboration with the Academic Deans and the Dean of BHCC Online/Weekend College, will issue a policy that clearly delineates which responsibilities for online and weekend courses belong to the administrative side of the College and which belong to the academic side. This report will outline a procedure for hiring online faculty that is consistent across departments. In addition, this report will specify a process for guaranteeing congruence of course content between online courses and classroom sections of those courses.
2. By spring 2011, the Dean of BHCC Online and the Weekend College, in collaboration with BHCC Online staff, will complete a plan for obtaining a higher rate of student responses to course evaluations.

3. By spring 2011, the Dean of Academic Support and College Pathway Programs, in collaboration with the Director of the CSDL, will complete an assessment of evaluation procedures for CSDL courses, issue a report on this assessment, and begin to implement any recommended changes.
4. By spring 2011, the Dean of Academic Support and College Pathway Programs, in collaboration with chairs of academic departments, will publish a clear description of how CSDL courses interface with academic departments.

### **Assessment: Program Review**

#### **DESCRIPTION**

The College has a Program Review policy that ensures that each of its academic divisions follows an established procedure for conducting Program Reviews on a prescribed timetable. In 2007, the College revised the guidelines for conducting Program Reviews, replacing the inflexible format of the 1995 guidelines with a format that allows departments to fashion a review process to fit their program. While these guidelines are flexible, all Program Reviews assess the following: department or program mission, faculty, effectiveness in achieving stated goals, student success, curriculum, organizational and administrative structures, student resources, facilities, and institutional/fiscal resources. Program Reviews within the Nurse Education and Health Professions Division are governed by the standards of external accrediting agencies.

At BHCC, the Program Review process starts at the department level. Departments determine the focus of the review for their areas, conduct the self-study and write an assessment report. Then an external reviewer assesses the self-study. The department closes the feedback loop on the Program Review by implementing necessary changes.

Several examples illustrate how BHCC faculty utilize Program Review to improve programs. The Mathematics Department conducted a self-study in 2005 which identified the pass rate for developmental math students as an area of concern. An external reviewer recommended the development of a math lab to supplement the existing developmental math courses. With administrative support, the Mathematics Department opened the Math Computer Lab in 2006. This lab is currently available seven days a week during posted hours to students taking math courses.

The Early Childhood Education Department completed a self-study in 2008. The external evaluator suggested development of additional courses to meet current workplace demands. The department has been working diligently on creating these courses and plans to submit proposals to the BHCC Curriculum Committee in fall 2009.

#### **APPRAISAL**

##### **Achievements**

1. Before 2007, academic reviews were occurring at BHCC but not on an established cycle, except in the health areas. The College responded effectively to this problem by developing the 2007 *Guidelines for Conducting Academic Reviews* which are currently being institutionalized through systematic use. The 2007 *Guidelines* were

developed through a collaborative process involving faculty and administration. These *Guidelines* achieve an effective balance between comprehensiveness and flexibility.

2. Both faculty and administrators report that the use of outside evaluators has provided beneficial feedback to departmental faculty and resulted in appropriate changes to programs/courses.
3. With adoption of the 2007 *Guidelines*, Program Reviews are occurring as scheduled. Within Arts and Sciences, the following reviews have occurred:
  - The Science Department conducted reviews of the Biology and Chemistry Programs in 2005-2006.
  - The Mathematics Department conducted a Program Review in 2005-2006.
  - The English, English as a Second Language; Psychology and Sociology Departments initiated Program Reviews in 2008-2009.Within the Professional Studies Division, the following reviews have occurred.
  - The Business Administration, Early Childhood Education, and Human Services Departments conducted Program Reviews in 2007-2008.
  - The Computer Information Systems, Computer Information Technology, Computer Science, Criminal Justice, Culinary Arts, Hotel/Restaurant/Travel & Tourism, Paralegal and Web Development Programs conducted Program Reviews in 2008-2009.
4. Outside accreditors have conducted site visits for many of the health programs, including Nurse Education in 2007 and Diagnostic Medical Imaging/ Medical Sonography in 2008.

### **Areas of Concern**

1. Programs that students can complete online do not consistently include the online program in the review process.
2. Some faculty question whether the five-year interval between self studies is the optimal basis for scheduling Program Reviews. This time interval may be too short to allow meaningful discussion and implementation of the external evaluator's recommendations from one Program Review before another review occurs.
3. The College has not identified one person who is clearly responsible for the A.A. General Concentration degree program. Faculty who teach in this Program are assigned to specific academic departments, not to a General Concentration Department. This degree program has no department chair or director who provides oversight. The Dean of the Division of Arts and Science has *de facto* administrative oversight. This organizational reality presented a significant problem when the A.A. General Concentration degree program was reviewed in 2008. The External Evaluator identified a number of important issues related to program identity, academic oversight, advising, degree requirements, and transferability. However, the College currently has no designated person or faculty body to review the evaluator's recommendations.

## PROJECTIONS

1. By spring 2012, an Ad Hoc Committee appointed by the President will complete an assessment of the current process of Program Review to determine its effectiveness in accomplishing its goals. This process will include data collection as to whether the current timeline (every five years) is appropriate for the review process. This Ad Hoc Committee will also examine the extent to which online courses in degree programs are included in reviews of those programs and, if necessary, will make recommendations to ensure that such review is consistent in the future.
2. In fall 2010, the President will assign responsibility for the General Concentration Program. This person will convene an Ad Hoc Committee composed of department chairs and faculty who teach required courses in the General Concentration degree program. This Committee will review the evaluator's report on the A.A. General Concentration Self-Study. By January 2011, the Committee will issue a report addressing each of the Evaluator's comments and suggestions for change. The Vice-President of Academic Affairs will then begin implementing the recommended Program modifications.

### **Assessment: SLOAP and the Grant Initiatives**

#### DESCRIPTION

##### *SLOAP*

While the Program Review process occurs on a cyclical basis and assesses programs holistically, the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Project (SLOAP) imbeds assessment in the teaching and learning process by focusing on how effectively students achieve individual course and program learning outcomes. The SLOAP Taskforce oversees the work of this initiative. This taskforce is composed of a representative from each academic department, led by an Executive Committee of three faculty members.

At the heart of the SLOAP initiative is a conceptual assessment framework that provides an institutional model for all SLOAP projects. This framework articulates the logical process behind effective assessment, moving sequentially through steps for assessing programs and courses to steps for closing the feedback loop. Departments have identified where to focus their assessment efforts through use of the SLOAP survey, based on this SLOAP framework. Then, each department formulated a two-year strategic plan that proposed projects to move the department through the next steps of the framework to closing the feedback loop. Based on these plans, SLOAP representatives work with faculty in their departments to design individual assessment projects. The SLOAP Taskforce reviews proposed departmental projects, makes suggestions for change where appropriate, and approves funding of these projects. In this way, SLOAP assessment projects promote continuous fine tuning of BHCC's academic program.

The SLOAP database also flows from the SLOAP framework. Strategic plans and reports on all SLOAP projects are filed in this database. Faculty can also search the database and run reports. Constructed around the SLOAP framework, the database allows cross-department peer sharing of assessment data and so promotes cross-germination of ideas.

The database also provides access to an inventory of department, program, and course materials that allows the College to take periodic snapshots of the state of its assessment effort and identify logical next steps. Each department has its own space on the database. The database also contains a section for General Education menus and a section for cross-curricular initiatives like Writing across the Curriculum and Learning communities.

### ***Engaged Campus and Achieving the Dream***

Assessment is an integral component of two major student success efforts currently underway at the College: The *Engaged Campus* and *Achieving the Dream*. The *Engaged Campus* initiative, a five-year Title III Strengthening Institutions grant, is establishing learning communities on a foundation of assessment. Toward this end, quantitative and qualitative assessment strategies have been incorporated into the learning communities. The *Engaged Campus* Office and the College's Office of Institutional Effectiveness compile and analyze all learning community assessment data. These data are shared with the College community through College Forum, as well as through *Engaged Campus* professional development activities and meetings. Assessments are stored in the SLOAP database and are also available in the *Engaged Campus* Office and on the Learning Communities Website.

Like SLOAP and the *Engaged Campus*, the *Achieving the Dream* grant initiative strives to build a "culture of evidence." As an *Achieving the Dream* institution, BHCC has focused extensive effort on examining data about student achievement, basing decisions on these data, confronting and addressing achievement gaps, monitoring progress closely, and sharing findings broadly. **Chapter Six provides a detailed look at these data on student achievement. More detailed descriptions, as well as additional appraisals and projections for these grant initiatives, are found in Chapter Six.**

## **APPRAISAL**

### **Achievements**

1. SLOAP is a meaningful presence at BHCC. Besides the activities described above, the SLOAP Taskforce has made other important efforts to institutionalize assessment. Taskforce members have worked with the Curriculum Committee to make learning outcomes necessary to approval of new courses/programs. One Taskforce member also reworked BHCC's Program Review Guidelines to strengthen assessment requirements. SLOAP faculty have also collaborated with the Director of the Title III Engaged Campus grant to infuse the SLOAP assessment framework into new courses and clusters designed under this grant. In fact, the WAC Coordinator and Title III Director ran a joint assessment of writing and critical thinking for Title III courses in June 2009. As a result of the efforts of the SLOAP Taskforce, assessment is on the path to institutionalization at BHCC.
2. The fact that SLOAP is faculty driven, rather than directed by an assessment "expert," has created a learning curve around designing effective assessment projects. However, this is also the reason why the SLOAP initiative has made progress in institutionalizing assessment at BHCC.
3. The SLOAP initiative enjoys unqualified administrative support. The College President has appropriated funds for SLOAP since 2003. Currently, SLOAP funding

- comes through an Action Plan, written by the SLOAP Executive Committee. This Action Plan has consistently been approved by BHCC's administration as written.
4. From its inception, SLOAP has focused on an examination of the national assessment movement. The SLOAP framework flowed from this research and reflects best practices in designing assessment models. SLOAP representatives have attended assessment conferences and presented at these same conferences.
  5. SLOAP-funded assessment projects provide evidence that outcomes are being assessed, assessments are being shared, and changes are being made to programs and departments based on assessment data. For example, the Mathematics Department completed an assessment of their Statistics courses that evaluated the alignment of course objectives and unit test questions and then made changes to the test questions to reflect the data produced by this assessment project. The English as a Second Language department has made multiple changes to its curriculum based on the findings of SLOAP assessment projects. The SLOAP database contains other examples of projects that closed the feedback loop by modifying courses and/or programs based on assessment data.
  6. The task of completing the SLOAP survey allows departmental faculty to identify where their department falls on the assessment spectrum. Completing the survey at intervals encourages departments to track their own progress through the assessment framework and identify where their assessment efforts should be focused next. The Taskforce intends to continue having faculty complete this survey at regular intervals. The fact that the Taskforce consists of representatives from all academic departments allows the SLOAP initiative to accomplish tasks like retrieving completed surveys relatively effectively and efficiently.
  7. By giving visibility and structure to BHCC's assessment efforts, the SLOAP database contributes significantly to institutionalizing assessment at BHCC while providing a vehicle for faculty to learn about effective assessment from each other. This database is aligned with national models for best practices in assessment and provides a mechanism for driving and sustaining assessment efforts at the College. A look at the SLOAP database provides real evidence of a "culture shift." All SLOAP projects in the database that were funded in the last year have focused on assessment activities involving the later steps in the SLOAP assessment framework. As of May 2009, an examination of the SLOAP database revealed the following:
    - All departments have filed some information in the database.
    - Five departments have filed information under each of the eight framework categories.
    - Eighteen departments have filed strategic assessment plans in the database.
  8. The SLOAP strategic plans are a great strength, documenting a vision for the future. These departmental plans are generally comprehensive and reveal an understanding of the assessment process and its potential for improving courses and programs. The strategic plans offer a list of projects and tasks that, once completed, will take BHCC to the next level in terms of outcomes assessment.
  9. WAC spring assessment projects have engaged approximately 140 full-time and part-time faculty in assessment activity over the last six years. These projects have provided significant professional development activity, bringing faculty from virtually every department in the College together to discuss writing and critical

thinking. Several of the later projects established a statistically significant correlation between higher writing scores and effective assignment design. The assignments that produced statistically higher scores included a rubric, a clear format, and a suggested sequence for completing the assignment. This funding led to a series of SLOAP-funded workshops on assignment design.

WAC cross-curricular projects have not yet identified ways to improve critical thinking scores. As a first step to improving these scores, the 2009 WAC spring project focused exclusively on raising awareness in faculty of how to help students develop this skill. This project involved over 60 full-time and adjunct faculty from across the curriculum in three separate scoring sessions. One of these sessions was dedicated to *Engaged Campus* faculty who are teaching Learning Community Seminars or Learning Community Clusters.

The WAC coordinator has conducted professional development activities to close the feedback loop on all of its cross-curricular projects, and SLOAP has funded all of these activities.

10. Assessment is integral to new College initiatives like the *Engaged Campus* and *Achieving the Dream*. By aggressively pursuing these grants, the College has procured substantial resources that have been used to significantly advance the culture of assessment at BHCC. The Directors of these two grants have used funding effectively to generate assessment data and make meaningful modifications to BHCC's academic program. Grant assessment strategies include:
  - faculty assessment of core student learning outcomes to document student performance
  - student surveys that allow students to assess the impact of the learning community on their learning
  - student self-assessments and reflection essays
  - faculty surveys and faculty-to-faculty interviews that enable instructors to reflect on their experiences teaching in learning communities and offer concrete solutions to challenges faced
  - longitudinal assessment of course completion, retention, persistence, and program completion for students enrolled in learning communities
11. Although the healthcare programs have the least assessment data in the SLOAP database, these programs are compelled by their accrediting organizations to assess learning outcomes and collect assessment data on a regular basis. Thus, a culture of evidence already exists in these programs.

### **Areas of Concern**

1. The SLOAP Database reveals that, while some departments have made significant progress in assessing student learning outcomes, others have a longer way to go. As of summer 2009, all departments had filed assessment information in the SLOAP database, and many had conducted Department/Course assessments. However, only five departments in the Arts and Sciences and Professional Studies Divisions had posted data under the last framework category that identifies actual improvements to courses/programs, based on assessment data. The WAC initiative had also posted

such data. Additional departments, including health care programs, have such data, but this data had not yet been posted in the database.

2. The SLOAP database reveals that there are inconsistencies among departments in how learning objectives/competencies/outcomes are stated and how assessment is reported. The Taskforce should address these inconsistencies in the next year.
3. Assessment involves an increased time commitment for faculty. At BHCC, faculty teach five courses, spend significant time mentoring students, and are often heavily involved in grant and committee work. In this labor-intensive environment, much of the work of driving the assessment effort has fallen on department chairs and department SLOAP representatives who also have teaching loads and other administrative duties. Administrative funding has underwritten this increased workload for faculty leading the SLOAP effort. To completely institutionalize assessment over the long-term, involved faculty will need to continue carving time out of busy schedules.
4. The Taskforce needs more consistent help with data analysis. Presently, faculty are not milking data for all the information it contains. Although College researchers are extremely supportive of the SLOAP effort, their time is stretched across many College initiatives. BHCC's acquisition of ZogoTech may lessen the data analysis problem once faculty learn how to use this tool.
5. Since adjunct faculty teach so many of BHCC's courses, much of the curriculum will remain untouched by SLOAP if adjuncts do not participate in assessment efforts. Currently departments have encouraged adjuncts to participate in SLOAP projects through the use of stipends. If adjunct faculty are to continue participating in the institutionalization of SLOAP, the College will need to continue offering incentives.

## **PROJECTIONS**

1. By fall 2011, the SLOAP Taskforce will oversee completion of projects that use assessment data to improve student learning outcomes in all academic departments. Between fall 2009 and fall 2011, the SLOAP Taskforce will develop effective models for closing the feedback loop and SLOAP representatives will carry these models back to their departments.
2. By fall 2010, the SLOAP Taskforce will oversee completion of language alignment for learning outcomes across all BHCC departments.
3. By spring 2010, the Executive Staff will consider a plan for institutionalizing SLOAP funding and recommending appropriate course releases to ensure that this faculty-driven project continues to make assessment intrinsic to education at BHCC.
4. By spring 2010, the Executive Dean of Institutional Effectiveness will assess how best to ensure that SLOAP faculty have sufficient access to the College's data analysis resources, so that faculty can maximize use of assessment data to close the feedback loop on SLOAP projects.
5. By spring 2010, the SLOAP Taskforce will formalize the current informal policy of encouraging inclusion of adjuncts in all assessment projects and data-sharing sessions.

### **Institutional Effectiveness**

Together, the development of the 2007 *Guidelines for Conducting Academic Review*, the SLOAP initiative, and the two major grant initiatives have moved the College significantly closer to an academic culture of assessment. All departments are participating in the SLOAP initiative and have developed learning outcomes and ways to measure student success. Faculty are beginning to use the data they are collecting to improve student achievement of learning outcomes. The *Engaged Campus* and *Achieving the Dream* grant initiatives maintain a clear focus on assessment that has increased assessment activity across the curriculum and raised awareness of the importance of assessment to improving student success.

## **ADDENDUM TO STANDARD FOUR: UPDATES**

### **Area of Concern #1 - General Education**

“While General Education Faculty have made encouraging progress in assessing the core General Education learning outcomes (writing and critical thinking), most other menu-specific General Education learning outcomes have yet to be assessed in a meaningful way. Within the next five years, General Education faculty must focus on meaningful assessment of these menu-specific General Education learning outcomes.”

#### **Update**

At the General Education summit in February 2010, faculty teaching in each General Education menu area worked on strategic plans for achieving comprehensive assessment of menu competencies, including projects to use assessment data to make specific improvements in General Education menu courses. General Education faculty will complete these projects during spring/summer 2010 and results should be posted in the SLOAP database by Fall 2010.

### **Areas of Concern #2 – Increasing Access to BHCC’s Academic Program**

“As of this writing, the MCCC and the Department of Higher Education (DHE) have still not agreed on a more effective and efficient student evaluation process for faculty teaching online courses as part of their day load.”

#### **Update**

The Dean of BHCCOnline and Weekend College is still working as part of a statewide management/labor committee that will recommend a more effective process to administer the distance learning student evaluation survey.

### **Areas of Concern #3– Increasing Access to BHCC’s Academic Program**

“CSDL courses do not use the same student evaluation process as classroom courses. Since the evaluation process prescribed in the faculty collective bargaining agreements is incompatible with CSDL course format, the CSDL has developed its own course

evaluation method. Although CSDL courses are evaluated consistently, the evaluation process has not had the same scrutiny as is afforded to evaluation procedures in other parts of the College which are governed by external agreements.

### **Update**

The Dean of Academic Support and College Pathways Programs has drafted a preliminary document outlining new procedures for evaluating CSDL courses.

### **Area of Concern #4 – Increasing Access to BHCC’s Academic Program**

“The process by which CSDL courses are integrated into academic programs is not clearly stated.”

### **Update**

The Center for Self-Directed Learning has a long history of collaboration with the Academic Departments, albeit one that has not been formally stated. The Director of the CSDL and the Interim Dean of Academic Support and College Pathway Programs are initiating meetings with Department Chairs to draft a document outlining how CSDL courses are integrated within academic departments.

### **Area of Concern #1 – Assessment**

“The SLOAP Database reveals that, while some departments have made significant progress in assessing student learning outcomes, others have a longer way to go. As of summer 2009, all departments had filed assessment information in the SLOAP database, and many had conducted Department/Course assessments. However, only five departments in the Arts and Sciences and Professional Studies Divisions had posted data under the last framework category that identifies actual improvements to courses/programs, based on assessment data. The WAC initiative had also posted such data. Additional departments, including health care programs, have such data, but this data had not yet been posted in the database.”

### **Update**

In January 2010, a look at the SLOAP database reveals a significant increase in assessment activity. In the three academic divisions, nine departments have now posted data for the last framework category, identifying actual improvements made. This is almost double the number as of summer 2009, reflecting the reality that many SLOAP reports get written in the summer and posted in the fall. In addition, such information has now been posted for three General Education menus, as well as for the Learning Communities initiative and the Writing Across the Curriculum initiative. Likewise, seventeen departments and three General Education menus have now posted data about

completed course/program assessments. The Learning Communities and WAC initiatives have also posted data about assessment projects.

SLOAP Taskforce representatives have a February target date for posting all currently available assessment information, so these numbers may rise again before the NEASC Team visit in March.

### **Area of Concern #5 – Assessment**

“Since adjunct faculty teach so many of BHCC’s courses, much of the curriculum will remain untouched by SLOAP if adjuncts do not participate in assessment efforts. Currently departments have encouraged adjuncts to participate in SLOAP projects through the use of stipends. If adjunct faculty are to continue participating in the institutionalization of SLOAP, the College will need to continue offering incentives.”

### **Update**

The SLOAP Taskforce is currently addressing this issue.

## STANDARD FIVE: FACULTY

### Introduction

The College has a qualified faculty whose work proves their dedication to fulfilling the mission of the College. The range of age, ethnicity and cultural background within the faculty evidences BHCC's institutional commitment to diversity. BHCC does not control faculty workload or compensation. These working conditions are set by collective bargaining between the Massachusetts Community College Council (MCCC) and the Department of Higher Education (DHE). Faculty workload has increased since BHCC's last self-study. Faculty compensation has also increased but is still relatively low in comparison to salaries at peer institutions in similarly-situated states. Nevertheless, faculty remain deeply committed to BHCC students, as the breadth of initiatives described in this chapter illustrates. In fact, evidence reveals that BHCC's faculty is, in fact, a major strength of the institution.

### DESCRIPTION

#### BHCC's Faculty

In 2008, BHCC had 132 full-time faculty and 257 adjunct faculty to educate 5,281 matriculated full-time students and a total student population of 9,497. Since 2006, the number of full-time faculty has increased from 118 to 132, while the number of adjunct faculty has remained stable at an average of 258. Approximately 60% of full-time faculty are female, 40% are male, and 23% belong to a minority group. Since almost all BHCC students are required to take a number of General Education courses, these students are continuously exposed to the wide range of teaching styles, expertise, and cultural backgrounds which characterize the faculty.

BHCC's faculty is also experienced. Sixty-two percent of full-time faculty are full professors. Many have been teaching at the College for over ten years or came to the College with extensive teaching experience. Fifteen percent of full-time faculty are associate professors, and the balance of 23% are assistant professors.

Of the 132 full-time faculty in fall 2008, thirty had doctoral degrees, ninety-two had master's degrees and ten had bachelor's degrees. As senior faculty retire and new faculty are hired, the number of earned doctorates has increased from twenty-four in 2006 to thirty in 2009. Faculty with bachelor's degrees tend to teach in fields such as culinary arts, allied health, or computer science, where experience or licensure is often more important than academic degrees.

The College continues to rely heavily on adjunct faculty. According to 2009 data, about 44% of BHCC faculty are full-time and 56% are adjunct. These percentages vary from program to program. Professional programs such as Nursing have a higher percentage of full-time faculty. On the other hand, departments such as English or Mathematics, which have a large number of sections to staff, have higher percentages of adjunct faculty. In the English Department, adjuncts teach 64% of the sections, and, in Math, adjuncts teach 58% of the sections.

## ***Working Conditions***

### ***How Faculty Are Hired***

The College has a specific eight-step hiring process that is consistent with its collective bargaining agreements. Search Committees are appointed by an Executive Staff member. Hiring guidelines do not limit the number of members on a given Search Committee, nor do they specify that a specific number of faculty from the affected discipline should serve on these Committees.

To ensure that the hiring process is fair and that every interested and qualified applicant has an equal opportunity to be interviewed, the Director of Diversity and Inclusion certifies the Committee membership, the interview questions, the pool of candidates, the narrowed list of candidates selected for interviews, and the finalists. This process guarantees that each search complies with State and Federal guidelines.

New faculty are given a written contract that states explicitly the terms of their employment, the rank at which they are being hired, and conditions that must be met in order to be reappointed at the end of the current contract.

### ***Faculty Workload***

Important working conditions are determined for faculty at all 15 Massachusetts community colleges by the collective bargaining agreements between the DHE and the MCCC. This contract specifies the workload for full-time faculty. Faculty workload consists of an instructional component (teaching, instructional preparation, and assessment of student performance) and a non-instructional component (advising, office hours, college service, community service, and professional development). The standard full-time instructional workload comprises a minimum of 29 instructional hours per week and a maximum of 35 hours per week, with no more than three preparations per semester and five preparations per year. This contractual workload translates to a five-course per semester workload for most full-time faculty, an increase from the four-course load which was the norm during the last self-study. Although the course load has increased for full-time faculty, the collective bargaining agreement does not stipulate a simultaneous decrease in non-instructional duties.

### ***Faculty Compensation***

The collective bargaining agreement specifies faculty compensation. Full-time faculty have received a significant pay increase since the last self-study, along with the increased workload described above. This salary increase resulted from the DHE's classification study, conducted to develop a fair and equitable salary system for the 15 Massachusetts community colleges. The DHE surveyed public, two-year colleges in ten similarly-situated states to determine the average compensation rate at these colleges, with the intent of benchmarking faculty compensation at the 75th percentile. As a result of this study, all full-time faculty were classified based on academic credentials, academic rank, experience, and seniority, and most BHCC faculty received substantial salary increases. However, the DHE has not maintained salaries at the promised 75<sup>th</sup> percentile.

### Other Work-Related Issues

The collective bargaining agreement also clearly defines other important work-related issues. This agreement includes, among other policies, specific guidelines for appointment and reappointment, evaluation, promotion or change in rank, tenure, post-tenure review, termination from the College, and faculty grievances. Faculty can easily access information about all work-related issues in the collective bargaining agreement which is available online. In addition, as illustrated in the above discussion of hiring process, BHCC spells out College-specific policies that are congruent with the union contract. These policies are published in the *Policies and Procedures* manual. College-specific policies are reviewed each time the contract expires and is renegotiated.

### **Faculty Evaluation**

The faculty collective bargaining contract specifies how the College must evaluate full-time faculty. Faculty are evaluated by both students and Academic Deans on a regular schedule. Before receiving tenure, full-time faculty are evaluated yearly. Continued employment for non-tenured faculty and adjuncts depends on continued satisfactory evaluations. After tenure, full-time faculty are evaluated every three years. If a tenured faculty member does not receive a satisfactory evaluation, the relevant Academic Dean initiates a post-tenure review. The purpose of such reviews is to offer professional development that will improve both teaching and student learning.

### **Adjuncts at BHCC**

BHCC's adjuncts work under a separate Department of Continuing Education (DCE) contract. Adjunct compensation is based on a four-step pay scale. New adjunct faculty are typically hired at the first step and progress over a period of eight years to the fourth step. As with full-time faculty, the adjunct salary scale is adjusted through the collective bargaining process. The DCE agreement specifies that adjuncts be regularly evaluated, both by Academic Deans and by students. The College provides adjuncts with an *Adjunct Faculty Resource Handbook* which includes information about teaching at BHCC.

Since adjuncts teach a significant number of courses, BHCC has made efforts to integrate these faculty members into the College at the institutional level, as evidenced below:

- Adjuncts are provided with BHCC email addresses, a mail box, phone extensions and a furnished adjunct room on campus, equipped with computers and a copier.
- Adjuncts are included on department mailing lists and are invited to department meetings.
- Newly-hired adjuncts get a copy of the MCCC/DCE Contract.
- Adjuncts receive an updated copy of the *Adjunct Handbook* each year.
- The College holds an annual fall professional development session for adjuncts.
- Adjuncts are encouraged to participate in other professional development opportunities at the College and are sometimes compensated for in-house as well as off-campus conferences and workshops.
- Adjuncts are encouraged to submit mini-grant proposals.

- For the past several years, the College has selected an adjunct to receive a NISOD teaching award and, along with full-time faculty awardees, this adjunct attends the spring NISOD conference.

### **Teaching**

Teaching at BHCC is best described as dynamic, as seen by examples throughout this Chapter. In the last five years, the College has increased its focus on student learning through a series of initiatives. Currently, a critical mass of faculty are working on these initiatives, revising courses to include clear learning outcomes, active-learning strategies, and effective integration of critical reading, writing, and thinking. Perhaps most significantly, faculty are also building a culture of assessment, collecting assessment data, and adjusting teaching based on what students are actually learning.

BHCC's Administration has actively supported faculty efforts to continuously improve teaching. Since 2000, the College has provided stipends for both full-time and adjunct faculty to create the faculty-driven Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Project (SLOAP). The College has also procured grants from, among others, the U.S. Department of Education, the Lumina Foundation, the Met-Life Foundation and the Ford Foundation. Through these grants, the Administration has provided course releases and stipends to allow faculty to upgrade curriculum while teaching a five-course load.

### **Professional Development**

BHCC offers many professional development opportunities for both full-time and adjunct faculty. The College actively informs faculty about these professional development opportunities via the College Calendar and the Today Page on BHCC's intranet, as well as via email and posters. In the spring 2009 survey, 82.9% of faculty agreed that they were adequately informed of professional development opportunities at the College.

### **Advising**

The faculty collective bargaining agreement specifies that full-time faculty advise 18 students each semester. Faculty post advising hours on office doors and often contact advisees via phone, email, or letter. Full-time faculty assist students in course selection for registration and meet with students throughout the semester as issues arise. Advisors must sign off on add/drop forms and course withdrawal forms.

The College attempts whenever possible to match advisors with students in their disciplines. Five academic departments currently advise all students in their majors, individually or in groups. However, due to the ratio of students to faculty, some faculty advise students outside of their discipline. Faculty and professional staff outside of the advising center advise approximately 2000 matriculated students each semester. Faculty teaching *Engaged Campus Learning Community Seminars* collectively advise approximately 400 students enrolled in their Seminars.

### **Intellectual Honesty and Ethical Behavior**

The *Policies and Procedures* Manual explains the role of faculty in establishing academic integrity. Faculty are expected to establish an academic environment that “fosters pluralism, mutual respect, appreciation of divergent views, and awareness of the importance of individual rights.” This statement underscores BHCC’s commitment to flexible, open-minded thinking and respect for the rights of others. Chapter Eleven describes in detail how BHCC establishes an environment characterized by ethical behavior and respect for the rights of others. These values are so intrinsic to the College mission that “integrity” is an institutional value and multiple College documents stress commitment to ethical behavior. In the spring 2009 NEASC survey, 79.3% of faculty respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that mutual respect and cooperation do, in fact, exist among members of the College community.

### **Academic Freedom**

The collective bargaining contract stresses that academic freedom is crucial for teaching and learning. Faculty are free to present multiple views of their subject matter and are not evaluated on the basis of content presented, as long as that content is related to the course being taught. The College encourages academic freedom across the curriculum. In fact, in the spring 2009 NEASC survey, 44.6% of full-time faculty strongly agreed and 37% agreed that they are free to express views in the classroom. In addition, 53.8% strongly agreed and 27.5% agreed that they were free to choose their own texts, instructional materials, teaching methodology and grading policy. These survey results suggest that academic freedom is a reality at BHCC.

### **Scholarship**

The central role of BHCC faculty is to teach and advise students. Publishing scholarly research is not central to the College’s mission. However, since 1999, a BHCC faculty member has overseen publication of six issues of *Teaching for Our Times*, a journal which includes articles by BHCC faculty and by faculty from other colleges. Over the years, 73 BHCC faculty have contributed articles to this journal. In addition, faculty regularly access and use the research of others to improve teaching and learning at the College. Faculty have also made numerous presentations at national conferences, like the *Achieving the Dream* Strategy Sessions, the NISOD conference, and the League for Innovation Conference, as well as at local conferences like the Massachusetts Community College Conference.

## **APPRAISAL**

### **Achievements**

1. BHCC faculty are enthusiastic, collegial, and hard-working. In these difficult economic times, despite an increased workload and salaries dipping far below the negotiated level, large numbers of BHCC faculty continue to contribute beyond contractual demands, with student success their primary goal. Through hard work and ongoing professional development, faculty have incorporated, at the course and program levels, innovations in curriculum, assessment, technology, and cultural awareness, contributing significantly to the College’s growth over the past ten years.

That the College values effective teaching is evidenced by the fact that BHCC makes awards specifically for teaching each year: the NISOD Excellence in Teaching Medal and the Online Course of Distinction Award. The NISOD medal is actually awarded to several faculty each year.

2. Students appear to appreciate the quality of BHCC faculty. Since 2004, the College has surveyed students with various nationally recognized instruments. In these surveys, students generally give faculty high scores. For example, students rated faculty highly on the "institutional effectiveness" vector in the 2004 Noel- Levitz survey. Again, in the 2007 CCSSE report, students characterized BHCC faculty as "available, helpful, sympathetic." These survey results are likely to be confirmed through random surveys of students walking the halls of BHCC.
3. Since the last self-study, the College has increased the percentage of faculty who are people of color. The number of faculty at BHCC who are members of under-represented groups compares favorably with the availability pool of such candidates with the requisite skills. Twenty-three per cent of BHCC's faculty are people of color. The 2000 Census showed that this number exceeds the availability of individuals in this group with the advanced degrees required for faculty positions at the College.
4. The College conducts nationwide searches for tenure-track faculty positions and uses a hiring process that conforms to Federal guidelines for ensuring diversity. All candidates for faculty positions have a uniform experience during the appraisal phase of the hiring process, which allows candidates to assess the College as the College assesses them.
5. BHCC works to ensure that all courses and programs receive the same standard of classroom instruction and laboratory/field experience, whether they are taught by full-time or adjunct faculty. The College attempts to hire the best-qualified adjuncts, although last -minute staffing sometimes results in less thorough process than the process used when more lead time is available. Continued adjunct employment at BHCC depends on continued successful evaluations. Adjunct faculty receive seniority status only after a three-year probationary period, during which they have been repeatedly evaluated. At present, the College has 361 adjuncts in the seniority pool. Adjunct staffing favors faculty in the seniority pool, who tend to teach continuously at BHCC. These adjuncts often acquire the familiarity with BHCC's students and the institution which typically characterizes full-time faculty.
6. The College has made progress in integrating adjuncts more fully into College operations. BHCC has improved communication lines for adjuncts and provided paths for professional recognition. Perhaps most significantly, the College has invited adjuncts to participate in professional development and has awarded adjuncts stipends for projects sponsored by the *Engaged Campus*, *Achieving the Dream* and SLOAP. As of spring 2008, 21% of the faculty/staff participants in the *Engaged Campus* initiative were adjuncts. Some have attended one or more professional development or informational events, while others are designing and piloting grant-sponsored Learning Community Seminars or Learning Community Clusters. As the *Engaged Campus* continues to expand the learning community offerings, the Director plans on increasing the number of adjuncts involved at all levels. SLOAP also encourages adjunct faculty to participate in assessment projects. The Behavioral Science, Early Childhood Education, Business Administration, Legal Studies and Public Safety,

History and Social Science, and Foreign Language Departments have all conducted SLOAP projects involving adjuncts. Through SLOAP, the *Writing across the Curriculum* initiative has sponsored assignment design and critical thinking workshops specifically for adjuncts. Adjunct faculty participation in WAC Workshops has grown steadily: in 2005, a total of ten adjuncts participated in the workshops, and, by 2008, the number had risen to 84. In total, adjuncts have participated in 101 SLOAP assessment projects.

7. Within the last three years, the College has procured two major grants aimed at supporting at-risk students: the *Engaged Campus* grant, funded by Title III, and the *Achieving the Dream* grant, funded by the Lumina Foundation. Together, these grants have provided professional development opportunities and stipend support to enable faculty to develop learning communities. Faculty have made good use of this grant support. In total, 154 faculty and staff have been involved in some way in the *Engaged Campus* and *Achieving the Dream* initiatives. Of these, ninety-two were full-time faculty and sixty-two were adjuncts. Involved faculty have immersed themselves in learning community theory about how to increase student engagement, persistence, and retention and have taught fifty-two *Engaged Campus* Learning Communities based on this theory. Faculty have also served on *Achieving the Dream's* Core Team, Data Team and Engaged Team, helping to design student support programs and to integrate these support services into the learning communities they teach. In addition, both full-time and adjunct faculty worked with students in *Achieving the Dream* focus groups in fall 2008. Through these focus groups, involved faculty helped students to identify both key impediments to student success and ways to overcome these impediments.
8. BHCC faculty have developed teaching and advising models that are sensitive to issues relating to diversity. In this context, faculty recently took advantage of the Ford Foundation *Difficult Dialogues* grant to enhance the ways in which their courses address such issues. Thirty-two faculty attended training sponsored by the *Difficult Dialogues* grant and then developed course units that initiated discussion of sensitive questions involving social class, religion, race, and gender. For example, one Literature professor invited a Pakistani student, who trained to become a Cultural Ambassador through the *Difficult Dialogues* grant, to lead class discussion of a short story involving gender and religion in Iran.
9. Faculty have also begun to institutionalize SLOAP, as described in detail in Chapters Two and Four. Faculty participation in SLOAP activities has been increasing. In fall 2007, fifty-one faculty members participated in twelve separate SLOAP projects. In spring 2008, those numbers increased to 100 faculty members participating in fifteen projects.
10. College faculty have made good use of the opportunities BHCC provides to offer courses online. Thirty-five full-time faculty and 47 adjunct faculty teach web courses. Faculty also report extensive use of Smart Room technology. During the 2008-2009 academic year, eighty-two faculty participated in Smart Room training offered by the Teaching, Learning and Instructional Technology Center (TLiTC). In the spring 2009 NEASC survey, approximately 82% of faculty respondents reported attending workshops on technology use in the classroom.

11. Faculty have also led efforts to facilitate transfer to competitive four-year colleges through a program that brings admissions officers from Columbia, Dartmouth, and other selective colleges to campus to interview BHCC students. This effort has resulted in successful transfers to these colleges by many accomplished BHCC students. In addition, faculty have negotiated articulation agreements with top transfer schools, including, among others, the University of Massachusetts.
12. Career program faculty at BHCC are constantly updating their programs of study based on input from their Industry Advisory Boards, internship partners and outside accrediting agencies. The Computer Information Technology Department, Science and Engineering Department, Legal Studies and Public Safety Department, Medical Imaging Department, and Nursing Department have all responded to workforce needs with new degree programs. These programs include A.S. Degrees in Biomedical Engineering, Criminal Justice, Medical Imaging, and Nurse Education. The A.S. degree in Medical Imaging offers four full-time options.
13. BHCC faculty have engaged in many other efforts to enrich learning for students. A few examples suggest the range of these faculty efforts. In the 2008-2009 academic year, twenty-eight faculty from forty-five courses in thirteen departments involved 268 students in Service Learning projects. Other faculty have mentored students in internship programs like VITA, which allows accounting students to assist in free tax preparation for the surrounding community. The Director of the Art Gallery, an adjunct faculty member, mentors students who exhibit work in the College Art Gallery. Environmental Science faculty organize and teach yearly field courses in Costa Rica. English faculty recommend skilled writing students for a three-credit *Advanced Composition* seminar and then mentor these students as they tutor in the Writing Place.
14. The spring 2009 survey revealed that, in the past three years, 42.3% of faculty have attended workshops at BHCC, 49.3% have attended local or regional conferences, 55.6% have attended national conferences, and 8.2% have attended international conferences. Funds from both the *Engaged Campus* and the *Achieving the Dream* grants have sent faculty to conferences around the country, most notably the Evergreen Learning Community Conference in Washington State and *Achieving the Dream* Strategy Sessions in Atlanta and San Francisco. Every year, the College also sends faculty to the NISOD Conference in Austin, as well as to the Massachusetts Colleges Online Conference and the Massachusetts Community College Conference.
15. BHCC's technical faculty have acquired grant support from the National Science Foundation (NSF). Through the NSF, faculty have participated in summer institutes and workshops at the Boston Area Advanced Technological Education Connections Center. NSF has also funded faculty attendance at national forums like the National Workforce Conference, Synergy and the ATEPI conference. Faculty in the Computer Information Technology Department and the Legal Studies and Public Safety Department have also received training in computer forensics through the NSF's Computer Forensics Advanced Technology Education Project.
16. For the last several years, the College has sponsored participants in the Community College Leadership Academy, a program created and sponsored by the presidents of the fifteen Massachusetts community colleges. This Academy holds eight rigorous monthly leadership training workshops for selected faculty and staff participants.

17. Professional development opportunities have increased significantly since BHCC's last self-study due to the College's creation of several new initiatives. BHCC's Professional Development Committee, the *Engaged Campus* and *Achieving the Dream initiatives*, The Office of Diversity and Inclusion, and SLOAP all sponsor regular professional development opportunities for faculty.
18. BHCC has provided ample support for faculty research. Since 2003, faculty have regularly used SLOAP stipends to conduct research on the effectiveness of courses and programs. In addition, from spring 2007 to spring 2009, the College spent \$57,588 to fund thirty-three mini-grants that also focused on course and program-related research. From fall 1999 to spring 2009, forty-three faculty members were awarded sabbaticals. The College administration actively supports these faculty efforts. In fact, each year at Fall Convocation, the President reads the record of faculty/staff achievements which are printed in the Convocation Program. Not surprisingly, faculty polled in the spring 2009 survey strongly agreed that the College "recognizes and rewards faculty's scholarly achievements."
19. Through *Achieving the Dream* and the *Engaged Campus* grants, the College has experimented with several models for improving the advising system. Five academic departments now advise all students in their majors, individually or in groups. Learning Community Seminar Faculty advise their own students within the class structure. The grant initiatives have also funded training in a new advising model. In fact, twenty-five advisors have already been trained to build more intensive, holistic, intrusive relationships with advisees, rather than simply scheduling courses.

### **Areas of Concern**

1. The College relies on a high percentage of adjunct faculty and needs to address several challenges involving adjuncts. The hiring process is not as closely regulated for adjunct faculty as for full-time faculty, in spite of College efforts in this area. The College must often add course sections at the last minute, and the time pressure to staff these last-minute sections sometimes necessitates that the College hire adjuncts without the same review that occurs when more time is available. Time pressure sometimes precludes completion of transcript and reference checks until after these adjuncts are hired. Likewise, the number of adjuncts makes effective evaluation of all adjuncts difficult. Adjuncts currently have no private places to meet with students which compromises the support they can provide for their students.
2. Due to lack of sufficient State funding, the DHE has not maintained its commitment to keep faculty salaries at the 75th percentile of comparison states in exchange for the increased five-course workload. Yet, faculty continue to teach a fifth course.
3. In the spring 2009 NEASC survey, full-time faculty were asked the extent to which the five-course load impacted their ability to carry out non-teaching responsibilities. Faculty respondents reported the following impacts:
  - 43.6% - a negative impact on mentoring students
  - 38.5% - a negative impact on ability to perform non-teaching job functions
  - 28.2% - a strong negative impact on mentoring students
  - 26.9% - a strong negative impact on ability to perform committee work
  - 38.5 % - a negative impact on ability to perform committee work

- 37.2 % - a strong negative impact on pursuing creative and scholarly activities
4. While BHCC's hiring process is uniform and fair, some faculty and professional staff report that a disconnect exists between what BHCC's hiring guidelines require and what actually occurs in the process of faculty searches. For example, while guidelines do not specifically limit the number of department members who can serve on searches for new department faculty, the Standard Five Committee felt that Search Committees do not routinely include enough faculty members from affected departments. Again, while the hiring guidelines do not prohibit faculty from asking candidates logical follow-up questions, several Search Committee members reported that these hiring guidelines are often interpreted as prohibiting follow-up questions. In these cases, faculty have found the interview process to be overly rigid. Again, in some cases, faculty searches start too late. Such late starts, together with the length of the hiring process, have led to some faculty being hired just before the semester starts. This timing may cause the College to lose strong candidates.
  5. The College does not currently have an up-to-date handbook for full-time faculty. As a result, BHCC cannot provide new hires with a handbook that includes necessary information to aid their integration into the life of the College. Likewise, there is currently no formal orientation or mentoring process for these faculty hires. In the spring 2009 NEASC survey, only about 31% of faculty hired within the last five years were satisfied with their orientation to the College.
  6. The current five-course workload limits the number of hours available for advising which increases the likelihood that heavily-scheduled students will not be able to see their assigned advisors. The CCSSE special focus questions support this reality. Responding to these questions, only 28% of new BHCC students reported meeting with an advisor to discuss educational goals, as opposed to 38% at other survey colleges. Again, responding to questions about the best source of academic advising, only 14% of new BHCC students identified their academic advisors. Responding to the spring 2009 NEASC survey, faculty also identified advising at BHCC as a problem. Of faculty respondents, 36% disagreed and 30% strongly disagreed that advising is effective at the College. When asked if they had access to information needed to adequately advise assigned students, 28.8 % agreed that they had adequate information, 26.3% were neutral, and 23.8% disagreed that they had adequate information. Faculty seem aware that they are not effectively advising students.
  7. Despite scheduled trainings, not all faculty are familiar with the functions of WebAdvisor and so cannot use this tool to make advising sessions more efficient and effective. Likewise, faculty are not always fully informed about issues that affect the way in which they advise students, particularly when advisees are not majoring in the faculty member's discipline.

## **PROJECTIONS**

1. By spring 2010, Academic Deans will recommend a more effective process for hiring adjuncts that anticipates increases in enrollment before they actually occur.
2. Due to the number of adjuncts, Academic Deans cannot effectively evaluate all College adjuncts teaching at night and on the weekends. By fall 2010, Executive Staff

will consult with legal counsel to identify available options for evaluating these adjunct faculty under the provisions of the Statewide collective bargaining agreement.

3. By spring 2010, the Associate Academic Dean will investigate all possibilities for creating private areas on the Charlestown campus for adjuncts to meet with students. If no private space can currently be created, the Executive Staff will incorporate such space into all relevant future plans.
4. By fall 2011, the Office of Human Resources and the Office of Diversity and Inclusion will assess the effectiveness of the current hiring process and make any necessary changes. The assessment should examine the entire hiring process in light of issues raised in this chapter.
5. By fall 2010, the Academic Affairs staff will issue a faculty handbook and have in place a process for keeping this handbook current and easily available.
6. By fall 2010, the Vice President of Academic Affairs will institute a mentoring process for new faculty that will be available anytime new faculty are hired. This process will pair experienced faculty with new faculty for two semesters. Faculty mentors should count mentoring as contractually-required college service.
7. By fall 2010, the Teaching, Learning and Instructional Technology Center staff, in collaboration with the Academic Affairs staff, will develop an orientation to the College for new faculty in a format that can be easily accessed at any time.
8. By spring 2010, the Director of Advising and Counseling will issue a Faculty Advising Guide and put in place a process for updating this guide annually. Within this time frame, the Director will also examine and adjust the process of assigning advisees to faculty to maximize the number of advisors who advise students within their own discipline or in a closely related field.
9. By spring 2010, the Teaching, Learning and Instructional Technology Center staff, in collaboration with Advising staff, will develop a WebAdvisor training program in a format that faculty can access easily at any time.

### **Institutional Effectiveness**

Both full-time and adjunct faculty are evaluated regularly, using the process articulated in the College's collective bargaining agreements. Faculty are informed of problems and offered support to improve teaching. Even tenured faculty are subject to post-tenure review. If such reviews are unsatisfactory, the involved faculty receive mentoring and professional development. A critical mass of College faculty work effectively to improve student learning and support student success. The College aggressively supports these faculty efforts. The most significant conclusion about BHCC faculty is that they have created a unique and dynamic learning environment that constantly evolves in response to assessment data. As stated at the start of this Chapter, faculty represent a central strength of the College.

## **ADDENDUM TO STANDARD FIVE: UPDATE**

### **Area of Concern #1**

“The College relies on a high percentage of adjunct faculty and needs to address several challenges involving adjuncts. The hiring process is not as closely regulated for adjunct

faculty as for full-time faculty, in spite of College efforts in this area. The College must often add course sections at the last minute, and the time pressure to staff these last-minute sections sometimes necessitates that the College hire adjuncts without the same review that occurs when more time is available. Time pressure sometimes precludes completion of transcript and reference checks until after these adjuncts are hired.”

### **Update**

To increase the number of full-time faculty teaching courses at BHCC, the College has hired eight full-time, temporary faculty for the spring 2010 semester. Three are teaching in the Professional Studies Division and five in the Arts and Sciences Division.

To compensate for the necessity of hiring adjuncts at the last minute when enrollments surpass predictions, in fall 2009 the College set aside funds to enable department chairs to work with deans early in the semester to hire new faculty. Through this process, the College has been able to conduct interviews and reference checks for potential adjuncts, as well as forwarding information on these adjuncts to the payroll department. As a result, when last-minute courses are added, the College has a “ready-to-go” list of adjuncts who can be quickly enlisted to teach.

Several department chairs participated in this program this year. The Arts and Science Division, for example, was able to add sixty new adjunct faculty to its “ready-to-go” list and thus was able to cope with a huge increase in enrollment for the fall 2009 and spring 2010 semesters.

### **Area of Concern # 4**

“While BHCC’s hiring process is uniform and fair, some faculty and professional staff report that a disconnect exists between what BHCC’s hiring guidelines require and what actually occurs in the process of faculty searches. For example, while guidelines do not specifically limit the number of department members who can serve on searches for new department faculty, the Standard Five Committee felt that Search Committees do not routinely include enough faculty members from affected departments. Again, while the hiring guidelines do not prohibit faculty from asking candidates logical follow-up questions, several Search Committee members reported that these hiring guidelines are often interpreted as prohibiting follow-up discussions...Again, in some cases, faculty searches start too late...”

### **Update**

The College will clarify what the hiring guidelines say about questioning candidates. This clarification will emphasize that, while compliance and fairness require that all interviewees be asked the same questions, screening committee members may ask follow-up questions which ask for logical clarification of the original question. However, no interviewee can be asked additional questions not asked of all.

## STANDARD SIX: STUDENTS

### Introduction

Bunker Hill Community College provides open access for a broadly diverse student population. Facilitating student success is at the heart of BHCC's mission. The College recognizes that many of its students do not, at entrance, have the necessary skills for success in college. Frequently these students also face significant external barriers to success. The College provides a variety of academic support services to address these problems. In addition, for the past three years, BHCC has engaged in two College-wide grant initiatives to increase student success rates: the *Engaged Campus* and *Achieving the Dream*. These initiatives focus on using data to identify and address the educational and personal issues that interfere with student success.

The College also offers a wide range of non-academic student activities. These activities, often multicultural in nature, are continuously visible and well-attended. Although BHCC is a commuter College, its students have created a vibrant student life on campus which clearly reflects the diverse character of the College's student population.

### DESCRIPTION

#### Admissions

The College's admissions policy conforms with the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education's "open door" policy and State laws pertaining to equal access. BHCC posts admissions policies in the Catalog, on the Website, and on large posters near the Enrollment Services Office. The College admits applicants who have graduated from approved secondary schools, possess state-issued General Equivalency Diplomas, or have successfully completed an approved Ability to Benefit option. These applicants are admitted on a rolling, first-come, first-served basis. However, this "open door" admission policy does not apply to the College's selective health professions programs. These programs have specific prerequisites which are detailed in the College Catalog. In addition, international students must meet specific admissions and deadline requirements.

College staff aggressively advertise the opportunities BHCC offers for its urban population. The College sponsors a high-visibility print and media campaign, *Imagine the Possibilities*, which emphasizes the value of studying at BHCC. BHCC also conducts mass community mailings, via traditional mail and email. College personnel also engage in "live" recruitment efforts. A recruitment counselor visits high schools and attends college fairs. During these visits, high school seniors are offered "on the spot" acceptance, contingent on verification of high school graduation. The College also conducts weekly on-campus information sessions and tours, including an Open House for prospective students, hosted by BHCC's department chairs. International Center staff have regularly attended international college fairs and distributed recruitment materials to approximately 450 overseas advising centers.

## **BHCC's Students**

Through these recruitment efforts, together with “word of mouth” advertising, BHCC enrolls a richly diverse student population that broadly represents the greater Boston community and also includes international students from more than 100 countries who speak over 75 native languages. In fall 2007, the largest block of students came from Boston, primarily from the inner-city neighborhoods of Dorchester, East Boston, and Roxbury. BHCC students are non-traditional:

- 58% belonged to a minority group.
- Only 28% were younger than twenty-two years of age while 72% were older.
- 26% were not seeking degrees at BHCC.
- 52% received financial aid.
- 69% were part-time students.
- 9% reported college-educated fathers.
- 10% reported college-educated mothers.
- 43% worked more than twenty-one hours per week.
- 56% reported work as the greatest personal demand on time.
- A significant number of students come to the College with serious academic and/or economic obstacles to success, as detailed specifically in BHCC's Fact Books.

While this non-traditional student body brings great strengths to the College, the barriers to College success suggested by these demographics often cause students to leave before achieving their goals. A 2006 internal study identified some reasons for premature withdrawal. This study surveyed BHCC's fall 2005 cohort of first-time, full-time students who, upon entering the College, reported intent to receive degrees or certificates. Of these, half continued full-time in spring 2006, a quarter continued part-time, and another quarter did not re-enroll. The study identified significant barriers that caused students to leave the college or drop from full-time to part-time status after one semester.

Of this cohort, 19% changed their status due to financial reasons, 14% due to job responsibilities, and 11% due to family responsibilities. Again, of those who did not return in spring 2006, 44% had reported working full-time in fall 2005. Another 14% transferred to another college. In addition, about half the students in the cohort indicated that, in spite of declaring an intention to graduate from BHCC, their plan was always to earn credits for transfer to another institution. Students who changed from full-time to part-time status cited the same reasons that led students to leave the College. Despite their enrollment decisions, however, the students in this cohort reported high levels of satisfaction with their BHCC experiences.

## **Academic Barriers**

As mentioned above, BHCC students often begin their studies unprepared for college work. To determine each student's academic readiness, BHCC tests all incoming certificate or degree-seeking students for English, math and ESL levels. The College uses the College Board's Accuplacer CPT to place these students into the appropriate English,

reading, and math courses. Additionally, non-matriculated students who wish to take math, English or ESL courses - or any course with math or language prerequisites - must take the same Accuplacer tests. ESL students also take tests in reading, vocabulary, and writing to determine the level at which they should begin study. Before taking the CPT, students answer 20 background questions in Accuplacer to increase the information their advisors have when developing educational plans. Recent analysis of Accuplacer data for a fall 2003 student cohort, numbering 928 students, showed the following:

- 8% of incoming students were college-ready.
- 14% of incoming students had heavy developmental needs, testing into the first developmental level of math, reading, and English.
- 38% had medium-heavy developmental needs, testing into developmental math and either developmental reading or English.
- 35% had medium-light developmental needs, needing only developmental math.
- 5% had light developmental needs, needing only developmental reading or English.

College-ready BHCC students can enroll in college-level courses. Those who qualify can enter BHCC's Honors Program. For students who do not test as college-ready in all areas, the College offers a series of courses tailored to their developmental level. BHCC offers two levels of developmental reading and writing and three levels of developmental math. The College mandates that students enroll in the developmental courses prescribed by their Accuplacer test results. These developmental courses carry credit but these credits cannot be applied towards the required graduation credits.

In addition, students can place into three levels of ESL courses, designed to develop necessary English language skills. Again, these courses carry college credit, but not graduation credit. The College also offers a series of non-credit Basic Language Literacy courses, designed to allow adults to function in an English-speaking society.

### **Student Success**

Since BHCC students often confront significant barriers to success, first-time, full-time students who intend to graduate too often abandon their studies, in many cases before they finish the required developmental courses and begin college-level work. In the last three years, the College has initiated two major College-wide, grant-supported efforts to increase persistence and graduation rates among these students: the *Engaged Campus* initiative and the *Achieving the Dream* initiative. Faculty and staff have used the combined funds from these two grants to design Learning Community Seminars and to integrate the content of two or more courses to form Learning Community Clusters. Data suggest that such curricular changes will increase the rate at which students, particularly students of color and low-income students, earn degrees, complete certificates or transfer to other institutions. The goal of these initiatives is to expand and institutionalize BHCC's learning communities, while integrating student support services into the very structure of these courses. In addition, the grants support the addition of Success Coaches who provide intensive advising for at-risk students during their early college experiences.

The College is continuously assessing and refining this curricular model through analysis of data on student success in BHCC's learning communities. Through these changes in curriculum and student support services, the College intends, by 2011, to increase the fall-to-spring persistence rate for first-time, full time degree seeking students by 15%, the fall-to-fall retention rate by 10%, and the graduation rate by 5%.

### **Advising**

Upon completion of placement testing, newly accepted students are invited to attend a registration session. In this session, academic counselors review student placement test results and help new students to plan an appropriate educational program. During this advising process, advisors help the students to gain access to their online service account, WebAdvisor. Advisors introduce students to the features of WebAdvisor and help them to register through their online accounts. Students leave the registration session with their class schedule and a working knowledge of online services.

Transfer students who have successfully completed college-level math and English are not required to take the placement test at BHCC. These students meet with either an admission and transfer counselor or an academic counselor to discuss their transition into a BHCC degree or certificate program. Transfer students are also instructed in the use of their WebAdvisor accounts.

During their first semester, matriculated students are assigned to a faculty member, professional staff member, or to the Advising/Counseling Center for academic advising. Students are notified of their advisor assignment by mail. Although the College assigns as many students as possible to faculty advisors in their major discipline, this is not uniformly possible since there are more students enrolled in some academic programs than there are faculty members available to advise them. First-time students who enroll in a Learning Community Seminar are advised during their first semester by their seminar instructor or, in some cases, by a Success Coach Advisor. When needed, the Success Coach Advisor intervenes to assist new students in their transition to the College. At the end of their first semester, these students are added to the general pool of students and assigned to a faculty/professional staff advisor or to the Advising/Counseling Center. Students whose schedules prevent meeting their advisors in person can contact advisors via telephone, email, or through WebAdvisor.

Non-matriculated students receive registration assistance from advising staff at the Enrollment and Information Service Desk and are provided with access to a WebAdvisor account. In addition, online advising is available to both current and prospective students through an email account serviced by an Academic Counselor on an on-going basis.

Several of BHCC's academic counselors are also licensed to provide other counseling services, including short-term personal counseling and referrals to external resources. With the Dean of Student Affairs, these counselors also provide crisis intervention.

## **Student Support Services**

The College offers an appropriate array of student support services. To provide a coherent approach to these services, the College designs support services around a set of core principles. Support services at BHCC are available to all students and are designed to empower students to use their individual strengths and diverse backgrounds to articulate and achieve their goals. These services are provided in a supportive and culturally sensitive environment that promotes student-centered learning and personal development. When appropriate, support services are offered confidentially. This student support services philosophy is published in the Student Handbook and on the Website. Additionally, in its conduct of all student services, the College uniformly observes its own ethical standards, stated clearly in the Catalog, the Student Handbook, and on the Website. These standards include guidelines about affirmative action, inclusion, and sexual harassment. Likewise, the College expects its students to observe these ethical guidelines whenever they use support services. To help students who need more support than BHCC can provide internally, the College has compiled an extensive list of community resources and identified specific contact people at many of the listed agencies. The Community Resource Directory is published on the BHCC Website. The dean of Student Affairs and the academic counselors assist students to access these community resources.

## **Academic Support Services**

### ***Academic Support Labs***

The College offers a variety of programs to support student success. Several programs specifically support students who test into developmental courses. Developmental math students can access academic support both in the Math Lab, in the Tutoring and Academic Support Center (TASC). Developmental reading and writing students have access to the College Connection, the Writing Place, TASC and the Multi-Purpose, Multi-Media Language Lab. ESL Students can also find support in the Language Lab. These services are detailed in the Catalog and student handbook. In addition, the Center for Self-Directed Learning provides supplemental instruction for students enrolled in math courses offered in the 2+1 format. These math courses require one hour of supplemental instruction each week in the center.

### ***The Office for Student Disabilities***

The Office for Students with Disabilities serves students who self-disclose learning disabilities during the placement process. Students with appropriate documentation are provided accommodations that comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Counselors assess the learning needs of these students and provide appropriate support through accommodations, counseling, and assistive technology. Other disabilities services include tutoring, note taking, scribe services, counseling, and a support group for students with disabilities. The staff in the Disabilities Office also works closely with faculty members to advocate for students and assess the success of accommodations provided.

### ***Student Success Program***

The Student Success Program, funded by a Trio grant, provides support services for students who fall into certain categories: first generation college students, low-income students, or students with a documented disability. The Student Success Program provides its students with a learning community environment, and the Program office serves as a home base for students. Program staff provide individually-tailored learning strategy counseling, as well as mentoring in life-management skills. In addition, peer tutoring and mentoring is available for students in the Success Program. To solidify the community-aspect of this Program, students attend cultural enrichment events and career planning workshops together.

### ***Steps to Success***

The Student Activities Office offers a series of free “Steps to Success” workshops to assist students in their transition to college. The program has offered more than 109 workshops for day, evening, and weekend students enrolled at the Charlestown and Chelsea campuses.

### ***The Welcome Back Center***

BHCC opened its Boston Welcome Back Center (WBC) in 2005. The WBC’s mission is to assist nurses trained and credentialed in other countries to obtain nursing licenses in Massachusetts. The WBC helps students with the application process for credential evaluation and with obtaining documents and credentials from their home countries. Once a student’s credentials are evaluated, the WBC refers students to the necessary nursing, language, and computer literacy courses. Finally, the WBC helps students prepare for the Licensure exam and transition to the nursing workforce.

### ***Financial Supports***

Students are informed about available financial aid and deadlines for application, as well as about the Book Voucher Program, through the Catalog, the BHCC Website, the student handbook, and the registration sessions. To receive financial aid, students complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). To assist students in completing this application, the Financial Aid Office offers workshops and drop-in application assistance to new and returning students. Once students have completed the FAFSA application, the Financial Aid Office determines aid awards, using the Datatel financial aid module. Staff also use Datatel’s auto-packaging function to ensure that all student awards are accurate and fair. During the 2007-2008 academic year, the Financial Aid Office processed \$12,673,472 in Federal and State funds for student grants. The following table shows the types and amounts of awards in the 2007-2008 academic year.

<b>Sources</b>	<b>Amounts</b>	<b>#Recipients</b>
<b>Federal Grants</b>		
Pell Grant	\$7,431,365	3,197
SEOG	\$282,369	9025
<b>Federal Loans</b>		
Stafford Loan	\$916,475	376
Unsub. Stafford Loan	\$990,933	370

PLUS Loan	\$47,261	11
<b>State Grants</b>		
MA Cash Grant	\$1,660,156	2279
MA State Grant	\$339,221	600
MA Part-time Grant	\$159,000	564
MA Tuition Waiver	\$433,909	1522
<b>Private Grants</b>		
Private Scholarships	\$133,972	154
College Work Study	\$278,451	146

The College also offers a Book Voucher Program to qualified financial aid applicants. This Program assists low-income students in obtaining books prior to the start of classes. To augment the Book Voucher Plan identified above, the Student Activities Program runs the Textbook Assistance Program which loaned 1941 books to students in FY09.

In spring 2009, the College launched an Emergency Assistance Fund to help students with unexpected, time-limited financial barriers that might force them to leave the College. The genesis of this fund was a MetLife Foundation Grant aimed at helping students to overcome external barriers to success. This fund is intended for students who have planned their educational finances prior to the academic year but, during the time of their enrollment, are confronted with an emergency or with unanticipated financial circumstances. The MetLife Foundation provided \$45,000 for this fund, and the Student Government Association added another \$10,000. By May 2009, the College had allocated all of this money. The President then authorized the use of College funds to continue making financial awards to students through the end of May 2009. In total, during the 2008-2009 academic year, BHCC awarded \$62,831.56 to eighty-six students. These awards averaged \$737 per student. The retention rate for recipients of these funds was 15% higher than the retention rate for the student body at large. For the 2009-2010 academic year, \$137,000 has been allocated for student emergency assistance, funded from the College's budget - with support from the Student Government Association and the College Foundation.

### ***Probation Policies***

The College has clear policies regarding good academic standing which are published in the College Catalog and the student handbook, both of which can be accessed off the BHCC Website. In keeping with its focus on student success, the College sees the probation process both as a means to uphold academic standards and a means to help at-risk students achieve academic success. Students on probation must meet with a designated academic counselor to develop an effective strategy for improving academic performance.

### **Other Support Services**

#### ***New Student Orientation***

The new student orientation relies on returning students to orient newly-accepted students. These returning students have to apply and be interviewed to work as mentors.

Once accepted, mentors attend two three-day training sessions that prepare them to effectively run the Orientation workshops. Training sessions are facilitated off-campus by national trainers in student development. Mentors also receive on-going on-campus follow-up training. After each Orientation session, student mentors continue to assist staff in supporting new students with their transition to the College. Orientation sessions are offered prior to the beginning of classes, as well as during the first few weeks of the fall and spring semesters. Postcard invitations are sent to all newly-accepted students. Peer Mentors also telephone new students to welcome them to the College and invite them to participate in one of the Orientation sessions. During the actual Orientation sessions, Peer Mentors meet in small groups with new students and use an interactive format to share their own stories about adjusting to college life.

### ***Career Services***

The College has been moving toward front-loading career services. The *Engaged Campus Learning Community Seminar Faculty* integrate career exploration into each Seminar. The Career Center visits Seminar classes and schedules follow-up visits with interested students. Since first-time, full-time students are required to take these Seminars within their first two semesters at the College, these students are exposed to the process of investigating careers soon after their arrival at BHCC. The Career Center also offers all BHCC students support for career exploration, jobs/internship searches, and resume-writing. Each spring, the Center runs a Job Fair which brings local employers to campus.

### ***Health Services***

The Coordinator of Health Services provides services for students in a private, culturally sensitive manner. The Coordinator administers emergency first aid, treats minor injuries/common illnesses and is also available to discuss students' non-acute health needs. When appropriate, the Coordinator refers students to external resources and helps them access medical services by explaining their health insurance and/or finding community-based services and programs.

### ***Service Learning***

The Office of Community Engagement houses a variety of service-learning initiatives, including volunteer opportunities, fund-raising opportunities, and service-learning internships. Many faculty members actually build service-learning components into courses. The Engaged Campus Learning Community Seminars regularly include service-learning components. For example, students in the *Exploring Boston Neighborhoods* seminar volunteered in a neighborhood nursing home. Outside of class, students have participated in a project to clean up the banks of the Charles River and in a 2008 Canstruction exhibit that led to 40,000 meals being donated to area families. BHCC hosts an annual Service Learning Fair to expose students to volunteer opportunities.

### **Informing Students about Support Services**

The College publicizes available student support services through New Student Orientations and Student Services Fairs held each semester. Student support services are also listed in the College Catalog, the student handbook, and a publication called "Your

Guide to Student Services.” Again, faculty teaching Learning Community Seminars integrate student services into the seminars, creating course-related reasons for students to visit BHCC’s various student support areas and utilize their services. College personnel who provide student services at BHCC have appropriate formal training, work experience, and licenses where necessary. Credentials for professional staff in student services areas are listed in the Catalog and documented in employee personnel files.

### **Extracurricular Activities**

The College offers a variety of extracurricular activities which provide students with opportunities to develop leadership skills, intellectual skills and cross-cultural understanding, while actively engaging in social interaction. BHCC students can participate in approximately 24 academic, cultural, or special-interest clubs and organizations. These student activities represent the rich diversity and varied interests of BHCC’s student population. BHCC’s Athletic Department sponsors varsity level sports in men’s and women’s basketball, men’s and women’s soccer, men’s baseball, women’s softball and co-ed golf. The College is a member of the National Junior College Athletic Association, Division III, and the Massachusetts Community College Athletic Conference, Division II. BHCC also sponsors intramural teams.

To complement the activities of BHCC’s clubs and athletic teams, the Student Activities Office offers more than 400 educational, social and cultural programs at the Charlestown and Chelsea campuses, during the day, evening, and weekends. These include cultural festivals, speakers, musical concerts, dance presentations, and special events that mark the change of seasons and celebrate holidays throughout the calendar year. These activities sustain a continuous atmosphere of colorful diversity at the College.

### **Developing Student Leaders**

To give student leaders an opportunity to develop leadership skills, the Student Activities Office presents a three-day Leadership Retreat twice during each academic year. These retreats, held off-campus, feature workshops presented by nationally recognized student-development trainers. In addition, the Student Government Association (SGA) sponsors ongoing student participation in regional and national leadership conferences. BHCC’s students have many opportunities to practice the leadership skills they develop. In addition to leading clubs, students are integrated into the governance and planning structures of the College. Students occupy positions on several College Governance Committees, the SGA President informs faculty of student activities at College Forum meetings, and the Board of Trustees meets with SGA Officers and Student Club Leaders twice a year. Students also participate in goal-setting at the College-wide planning sessions. Nearly 30 students participated in the 2006 College-wide planning session.

### **Student Rights and Responsibilities**

BHCC’s student handbook contains information about student rights and responsibilities, as well as about student disciplinary procedures. These policies and procedures conform to guidelines for all Massachusetts community colleges.

### **Student Privacy**

BHCC publishes clear policies about student privacy in both the Catalog and the student handbook, as well as on the Website. The College clearly details the information designated as “directory information” that may be released to third parties without consent. The College also outlines the process by which a student may prevent release of directory information - unless State or Federal law mandates such release. BHCC also adheres to all Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act guidelines.

### **Student Safety**

The College provides 24- hour contract security on the Charlestown campus seven days a week. In addition, seven full-time campus police officers are highly visible both in College buildings and on College grounds, and BHCC has installed a security camera network on the Charlestown campus. The Chelsea campus has two full-time campus police officers. The Chelsea campus is patrolled from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. The College also owns two defibrillators for medical emergencies. The Director of Public Safety has procedures in place for dealing with campus-wide emergencies.

## **APPRAISAL**

### **Achievements**

1. The College admits the students it seeks to serve. BHCC effectively recruits a diverse population that comes predominantly from urban Boston. The College’s advertising campaign has reached a wide audience and BHCC’s student population continues to rise. Within the last three years, fall full-time equivalent enrollment has increased by 11.8%. The College has collected demographic data that accurately describe its students and the external and academic barriers they face and has used these data to design more effective student supports.
2. BHCC accurately identifies the academic needs of entering students and places students into appropriate developmental courses when needed. BHCC’s institutional researchers, together with the Directors of the *Engaged Campus* and *Achieving the Dream* initiatives, have collected data that allow classification of students into five categories of developmental needs, ranging from light to heavy. This has allowed a more accurate analysis of data about the success of developmental students. For example, by analyzing the success of students in these different categories, the fact that students who need developmental math succeed at significantly lower rates has become clear. This knowledge allows the College to take more effective action to increase the success of developmental students.
3. BHCC has made significant efforts to improve the advising and enrollment process during the last two years. The College has reconfigured space to create a central location, near the B-building entrance, where admissions, advising, registration, financial aid, and student payment services are located. BHCC recently hired a Director of Admissions to simplify and automate the admissions process. Staff are now cross-trained in all areas of enrollment services to maximize their ability to help students quickly and effectively. Staff also manage registration lines more efficiently to better direct students to specific services. The *Engaged Campus* and *Achieving the Dream* initiatives have worked to develop alternative advising models, including

group advising /registration sessions and the hiring of two Success Coach Advisors to work with newly admitted students. These changes have improved student intake.

One example of BHCC's expedited registration was the College's collaboration with four Boston-area high schools and the Boston Adult Learning Center in spring 2008. BHCC enrolled 300 seniors through an expedited registration process. These students were accepted on the spot and then attended an advising/registration session where they were introduced to WebAdvisor. They left the session enrolled for their first semester at the College.

4. The College offers a constellation of support services for its developmental students. The Math, English and ESL Departments all run labs where both tutoring and instructional software are available for developmental students. The TASC Center offers academic support across disciplines on both campuses. The Tutor Trac system automatically tracks students who use instructional software and notifies instructors of what software students are using and when. The Disabilities Office has acquired significant assistive aids for students who require accommodations. Other support services are also available at the College.
5. The number of students seeking support for disabilities has been increasing steadily. In the academic year 2007-2008, the Disabilities Office served 436 students. All of the students receiving services in fall 2007 returned to receive services in spring 2008. In addition, in fall 2007, the Disabilities Office saw 40% more students than the previous fall; in spring 2008, the increase was 49% over the previous year. This increase is likely the result of two factors: a larger student body and more student awareness of the support the Disabilities Office provides. Students report significant satisfaction with Disabilities Office services. In a recent survey, which represented a 28% sample, students rated services "4.5" or above on a five-point scale.
6. By 2008, the Welcome Back Center (WBC) had advised 505 internationally-educated nurses and seen 76 students through to U.S. licensure. Of these, 53 are employed at substantially higher salaries than the salaries they commanded when they entered WBC. In addition, nine students are continuing their education.
7. Peer mentors have transformed the New Student Orientation Program into an effective means for providing a successful transition to the College for new students. These well-trained students understand what new students need to know and communicate this information in a way that students hear. This orientation model also provides an opportunity for peer mentors to develop leadership skills. Because the College has increased the frequency with which orientations are offered to new students, more new students actually attend these orientations.
8. BHCC provides many opportunities for students to develop as leaders. In fact, in 2008, five of the College's student leaders were recognized by national, regional, and State organizations for both their leadership and academic accomplishments.
9. Over the last three years, fall-to-fall persistence has increased 3.1 percentage points. In 2007-2008, fall to spring retention was 66%. This rate has remained relatively stable over the last three years. BHCC's course completion rate for FY2008 was 76.2%, above the Board of Higher Education's target rate of 75%.
10. Using the IPEDS success measure, the graduation rate for first-time, full-time BHCC students has ranged from 10% to 13% over the last four years. However, since this

measure - graduation within three years - does not match the goals or life conditions of many BHCC students, the College has constructed a success measure that more accurately matches student goals. This new measure tallies students who have earned a degree/certificate, transferred to another institution, earned 30 or more credits, or are still enrolled after four years and uses this tally to determine the College's success rate. Using this measure of success, 65.8% of BHCC's fall 2003 cohort has succeeded. Of these, 24.3% earned a degree or certificate at the College, 17.9% transferred, 21.8% earned 30 credits and 1.8% were still enrolled at the College in fall 2007. The College plans to continue tracking these outcomes over four, five, and six years for successive student cohorts.

11. BHCC has made excellent use of the grant support it has received in the last three years. The College has used *Engaged Campus* funds to institute first-year seminars and Learning Community Clusters because data suggest that such courses increase student engagement, persistence, and retention. As of fall 2008, 604 students had enrolled in these learning communities. BHCC has also used *Achieving the Dream* funds to integrate student services into Learning Community Seminars and initiate the Success Coach model for supporting at-risk students. Finally, the College used MetLife funds to seed an Emergency Assistance Fund that helps students overcome short-term financial barriers to success. The retention rate for recipients of these funds was 15% higher than the retention rate for the student body at large.
12. The College has established an active Service Learning Program to support student development. A total of 1064 students have participated in service learning projects at BHCC. The College has been selected for the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll.
13. BHCC has a large and diverse collection of student activities that mirror the diverse needs of the student population. These activities, together with the cultural events sponsored by the Student Activities Office, create a constantly vibrant and active atmosphere for students. In addition, student leaders have opportunities to gain leadership training and become involved in College governance and planning. All students can now attend home games for their athletic teams in the new gymnasium. Together, these elements turn a commuter college, whose students often have work and family responsibilities, into a busy and interesting place.

### **Areas of Concern**

1. Many students who start their education at BHCC in developmental courses do not finish these courses and progress to college-level courses. In a 2003 cohort of students, only 20% of students finished required developmental courses within two years. Predictably, only 30% of students with heavy developmental needs finished 15 college-level credits within three years, while 73% of students classified with light developmental needs were able to do so. Only 0.8% of students who entered the College with heavy developmental needs graduated within four years.
2. While BHCC offers many academic support services, the College does not consistently assess these services. The number of student visits is tracked in most cases, but efforts to establish a connection between use of tutoring services and increased student success are few.

3. The College understands that its advising process needs improvement. In the 2007 CCSSE survey, only 14% of BHCC students identified their advisors as the best source of academic advising. Only 28% reported meeting with an advisor to discuss educational goals, as opposed to 38% at other survey colleges. The Directors of the *Engaged Campus* and *Achieving the Dream* grant initiatives, together with the Director of Advising and Counseling, have made major changes in the advising process since the 2007 survey and continue to make adjustments to increase the number of students who receive effective advising. For example, Learning Community Seminar Faculty have experienced success advising new first-time, full-time seminar students. However, this model cannot be expanded beyond the semester in which a student is taking the Seminar, and so the Seminar model is not one that can be used to advise all students.

The problem of advising returning students remains. Consistent and effective advising over their careers at BHCC will encourage students to continue successful academic study. However, students are not, at present, regularly assigned to the same advisor each year. Likewise, numbers dictate that the College cannot assign all students to faculty within the student's discipline. The problem of heavily-scheduled faculty and students will continue to militate against optimal faculty advising of the same advisees on an ongoing basis.

4. While the College makes a significant effort to inform students about its academic support services, students do not use all of these services as often as they should. The model established by Learning Community Seminar Faculty, which incorporates use of student support services into course assignments, provides a good model for encouraging students to use these services.

## PROJECTIONS

1. Over the remaining life of the *Engaged Campus* and *Achieving the Dream* grants, the grant Directors will continue working to institutionalize Learning Communities that integrate student support services. The Directors will also continue to use assessment data to refine this learning community model. When the grants end, the Vice President of Academic Affairs will oversee seamless institutionalization of grant initiatives, including continuation of data-driven assessment of the Learning Community/integrated student services model.
2. By spring 2011, the Arts and Sciences Division dean, together with the Chairs of the Mathematics, English and ESL Departments, will institute regular assessment of departmental labs that provide academic support. These assessments will begin to measure the correlation between student visits and improved academic success.
3. By spring 2011, the Associate Academic Dean will complete the review, already begun, of the methods used to support BHCC students who are put on probation and will formulate a method for assessing these support services. This review will identify which interventions most effectively help at-risk students to succeed academically, while establishing a process for constantly modifying support services on the basis of assessment data.

4. Over the course of the *Engaged Campus* and *Achieving the Dream* grants, the Director of Advising and Counseling, together with the Directors of the grants, will increase the number of first-time, full-time students who see advisors and the quality of advising these students receive. By the end of these grants, the College will have in place a more effective system for advising first-time, full-time students, as well as an assessment method for continually appraising and modifying this system.
5. By spring 2011, an Ad Hoc Committee, headed by the Director of Advising and Counseling, will issue a report that recommends a system for more effectively advising returning students over the course of their studies at BHCC. This system will provide better matching between advisees and faculty and allow students to retain the same advisor each year. By fall 2011, the College will begin to implement the recommended system.

### **Institutional Effectiveness**

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness continuously assesses the College's success in admitting and retaining students and presents the results of this comprehensive assessment in BHCC's annual Fact Book. BHCC makes concerted efforts to use the data about student success to create new academic programs and student services and to modify existing programs and services in ways that will increase student success. This use of assessment data to more effectively support students is an ongoing and pervasive effort at BHCC. However, for a few academic support functions, assessment data focus more on usage rates than on effectiveness of services in increasing student success. The College should move toward creating more meaningful assessment of these functions.

## **ADDENDUM TO STANDARD SIX: UPDATE**

### **Area of Concern #1**

“Many students who start their education at BHCC in developmental courses do not finish these courses and progress to college-level courses. In a 2003 cohort of students, only 20% of students finished required developmental courses within two years.”

### **Update**

The *Engaged Campus* and *Achieving the Dream* grants have focused on improving student success by offering Learning Community Seminars and Clusters with integrated support services. Many of the students who enroll in these Seminars and Clusters are developmental students. Assessment data and spring 2009 CCSSE results have shown that BHCC Learning Communities are having an impact on student retention and learning. Students participating in BHCC Learning Communities had a fall-to-spring retention rate of 78%, compared to a 69% fall-to-spring retention rate for all BHCC students. In addition, students in BHCC Learning Communities scored above BHCC students as a whole on all five CCSSE benchmarks. CCSSE data revealed that students in BHCC Learning Communities are reading and writing more, engaging in more critical thinking, and working more with other students in and out of class. These students also

report feeling more supported and receiving more help with non-academic issues. In fall 2009, close to 1,200 students participated in forty-five Learning Communities.

### **Area of Concern #3**

“The College understands that its advising process needs improvement. In the 2007 CCSSE survey, only 14% of BHCC students identified their advisors as the best source of academic advising. Only 28% reported meeting with an advisor to discuss educational goals, as opposed to 38% at other survey colleges. The Directors of the *Engaged Campus* and *Achieving the Dream* grant initiatives, together with the Director of Advising and Counseling, have made major changes in the advising process since the 2007 survey and continue to make adjustments to increase the number of students who receive effective advising. The Directors of the *Engaged Campus* and *Achieving the Dream* grant initiatives, together with the Director of Advising and Counseling have made major changes in the advising process since the 2007 survey and continue to make adjustments to increase the number of students who receive effective advising. For example, Learning Community Seminar faculty have experienced success advising new first-time, full-time Seminar students. However, this model cannot be expanded beyond the semester in which a student is taking the Seminar, and so the Seminar model is not one that can be used to advise all students.

The problem of advising returning students remains. Consistent and effective advising over their careers at BHCC will encourage students to continue successful academic study. However, students are not, at present, regularly assigned to the same advisor each year. Likewise, numbers dictate that the College cannot assign all students to faculty within the student’s discipline. The problem of heavily-scheduled faculty and students will continue to militate against optimal faculty advising of the same advisees on an ongoing basis.”

### **Update**

The College has continued to implement multiple strategies to improve advising. An external program evaluation indicated that advising students within the Learning Community Seminars, as described in the self-study, was effective. As a result, all first-time, full-time students enrolled in a Seminar are now advised by their Seminar instructor for their first semester, and advising outcomes have been embedded into the Seminar curriculum. As of fall 2010, the Seminar is required for first-time, full-time, degree seeking students.

To maximize the number of students assigned to advisors in their disciplines, especially in career programs, a number of Departments in the Division of Professional Studies volunteered to participate in a pilot advising program in fall 2009. For this pilot, full-time members of the participating departments assumed responsibility for advising all students matriculated into their departments. The departments which participated in this pilot include Office Information Management, Computer Information Technology, Computer Media Technology, Legal Studies and Public Safety, and Hospitality. These departments

experimented with various ways to accomplish Departmental advising, including the use of group advising, both in person and online.

#### **Area of Concern #4**

“While the College makes a significant effort to inform students about its academic support services, students do not use all of these services as often as they should. The model established by Learning Community Seminar Faculty, which incorporates use of student support services into course assignments, provides a good model for encouraging students to use these services.”

#### **Update**

Assessment data and spring 2009 CCSSE results show that BHCC students in Learning Communities have a better understanding of the importance of, more use of, and somewhat more satisfaction with support services, including advising, career counseling, tutoring, skill labs, and financial aid advising.

## **STANDARD SEVEN: LIBRARY AND OTHER INFORMATION RESOURCES**

### **Introduction**

During the last ten years, BHCC's Library and Learning Commons has incorporated technology into all of its operations. The Library is busy and responsive to student needs. Library staff actively engage with faculty and students to increase student success in attaining information literacy skills.

The College has also dramatically increased the use of information and instructional technology since the last self-study. BHCC Online is a thriving part of the College curriculum. The College has steadily transformed traditional classrooms into Smart Classrooms. BHCC's tutoring centers have appropriate instructional technology. To support the use of this technology, the Teaching, Learning and Instructional Technology Center and the Audio-Visual Department provide training and other services.

BHCC has achieved this radical transformation of information services and instructional technology through strategic, operational, and financial planning, as described in Chapters Eight and Nine.

### **DESCRIPTION**

#### **BHCC Library and Learning Commons**

All students, faculty, and staff, including evening and weekend students, have access to BHCC's Library and Learning Commons. The larger surrounding community is also welcome to use the Library collections and technological resources. The Library is open 86 hours per week during the fall and spring semesters and 65 hours per week during the summer sessions. When no classes are in session, the Library maintains reduced hours. To facilitate access to the Library's electronic resources for distance students, the BHCC Library enables these students to obtain an access card through the Library Website.

#### ***Space Utilization***

BHCC's Library and Learning Commons has 9,643 square feet of floor space devoted to tables, shelving, and the public workstation area. The remaining space is used for the lending services area, staff workrooms, three staff offices, a dedicated Digital Library workroom, a Smart Classroom, and storage rooms. The Library provides quiet work areas for students, as well as individual carrels. In 2006, the Library created a new Learning Commons work space where students can study in groups. The E-319 Smart Classroom is used for Information Literacy Workshops and for assisting students with disabilities. The Library space also houses faculty offices for the Mathematics and Hospitality Departments.

#### ***Resources***

As of 2009, the ground Library collection numbered 73,903, including books, AV materials, magazines, newspapers, and journals. This on-site collection is supplemented by print material available to the BHCC community through the Library's membership in the North of Boston Library Exchange (NOBLE), the New England Library Network, the Boston Regional Library System, and the Online Computer Library Center. The College

also provides an extensive electronic subscription database, in consortium with NOBLE. In 2009, BHCC's online collection numbered approximately 47,736 items, including full-text magazines, journals, and books. This online collection assures that distance and non-traditional learners have access to significant research opportunities.

Currently, the BHCC Library has thirty public work stations. Of these work stations, twenty-three have internet access, four have internet access plus Microsoft word, and three have the full MS Office Suite. The Library also has wireless internet connectivity throughout the facility and offers adaptive technology that makes resources accessible to disabled users. This adaptive equipment and software is housed in the E319 classroom.

The Library Website provides an access point for books, electronic databases, and instructional support materials. The Website also includes a comprehensive guide to Library services, a clear statement of Library guidelines and policies, and a "Meet the Staff" link. In addition to serving Library users, this Website includes professional development tools for both Library staff and faculty. To promote faculty/staff efforts to augment information literacy skills, the Library Website includes a password-protected area where Library staff can access training materials and a faculty area that includes both a guide to workshops and a series of professional presentations on information literacy.

### ***Information Literacy Workshops***

The Library staff is committed to teaching information literacy skills within the context of actual courses. To accomplish this goal, the staff works with faculty to develop individualized Information Literacy Workshops for their courses. Library staff also utilize social web tools to engage students in co-creation of content in many of these workshop sessions. After presenting a workshop to students, the staff provides access to this workshop on the Website. Library staff also conduct an online information literacy session for distance learners, using software that enables real-time learning. For increased support of distance learners, the Website's instructional support files include podcasts. Library staff also offer Information Literacy Workshops for new staff.

To solicit feedback on the effectiveness of Information Literacy Workshops, the Library staff has provided a link to evaluation forms on the Website. In addition, staff contact faculty after the due date of a workshop-related assignment, requesting feedback about the workshop's impact on student performance. Library instructors also receive frequent informal feedback from faculty.

## **APPRAISAL**

### **Achievements**

1. The BHCC community makes good use of the College Library. Between FY06 and FY08, the Library gate counts have averaged 187,671 per year. The 2008 Fact Book estimates that patrons checked out material from the Library's ground collection 18,766 times. Hits to the Library Website increased from 1.27 million in FY07 to 1.79 million in FY08, suggesting that users are accessing this online collection frequently. The number of users viewing Library web pages has also increased from

- 490,471 in 2005 to 587,300 in 2007, a 20% increase. In addition, use sessions, which most likely represent detailed time spent with instructional material on the Library Website, have increased from 106,335 in 2005 to 193,891 in 2007. On average, 1648 students have borrowed print materials from Library partners over the last three years.
2. In 2001, the College created a new entrance to the Library from the central E-building staircase. This new entrance increased ease of access to the Library.
  3. The Library has responded to recent student feedback by assuring that a full-time librarian is visible to assist students in the Library during all hours of operation. Again, the Library responded to student requests for an area where they could study in groups by creating the current Learning Commons area. This area contains furniture that can be easily reconfigured and so provides an appropriate venue for study groups of different sizes, as well as for panel discussions and presentations. Both of these adjustments indicate that the Library is flexible about adjusting its services to meet evolving student needs.
  4. Since BHCC's last self-study, the Library has effectively incorporated state of the art technology into its operations. The staff has created and augmented a full-service Website and has identified and made accessible to the BHCC community new tools for making research more efficient.
  5. Data indicate that the Library has been steadily increasing the number of Information Literacy Workshops offered, from 152 workshops in FY 06 to 227 workshops in FY 08. This represents a 23% increase in workshops over two years. In 2008, 3502 BHCC students attended Information Literacy Workshops. The areas requesting the most workshops, according to 2008 data, include English, ESL and Learning Community Seminars. The Library staff has also posted a series of instructional support files on the Website. These files contain course-specific search strategies from all course levels across the curriculum, including workshops for developmental students and for honors students.
  6. The Library staff has also provided Information Literacy Workshops for distance students. Using *Elluminate*, staff members have offered live online chat sessions for distance students to increase their ease of access to BHCC's online databases.
  7. In spring 2009, Library staff field-tested a new assessment tool that generates more systematic data from faculty whose students attend Library workshops. For this project, instructors whose students attended an Information Literacy Workshop were asked to assess with an analytic rubric the level of information literacy skill seen in subsequent student work. This pilot project demonstrates that the Library staff is working to upgrade its workshop assessment strategy and integrate this strategy with assessment methods used in other areas of the curriculum.
  8. The Library staff has conducted two recent assessments. In 2007, staff collected LibQual surveys of Library services from 657 users. These responders highlighted the Library's strength in providing consistent service which rated above the mean. In FY2007 and FY2008, the Library also conducted the WorldCat Analysis to assess its collection. The WorldCat Report cited well-developed collections in History; Language, Linguistics, and Literature; and Philosophy and Religion.

### **Areas of Concern**

1. The BHCC Library has experienced a persistent shortage of staff, as well as a high turnover rate.
2. The Library staff needs to train student workers more effectively to achieve more efficient operation of the Lending Services desk, as well as better information control.
3. The Library needs to put more effective noise control methods in place to ensure that group study areas like the Learning Commons do not intrude too significantly on quiet study areas. Since the objectives of these two distinct Library functions are in conflict, the Library will have to engage in creative problem-solving to achieve acceptable noise levels. More space would provide the best solution to this problem. Unfortunately, current space limitations on the Charlestown campus do not allow for an increase in space.
4. The Library needs to procure more computers for student use.
5. The WorldCat Analysis suggests that the Library collection is skewed more heavily towards the arts than toward mathematics and science. Staff need to develop BHCC's collection in Mathematics, Education, Psychology, Computer Science, Chemistry, and Medicine.
6. Prior to writing of this report, the Library had not participated in the College-wide assessment process for non-academic units, nor had the Library conducted an alternate overall assessment. However, the Library is participating in the current non-academic unit assessment process which will be completed in fall 2009.

### **PROJECTIONS**

1. By spring 2010, the Library Director will develop a plan reducing turnover in Library staff.
2. By fall 2010, the Library Director will design and implement a training program for student Library workers that targets the ability of these students to effectively staff the circulation desk and control inventory.
3. Since the Charlestown campus currently has no extra space for Library functions, the Library Director will investigate currently available methods for reducing the noise level in the Library, while maintaining group study areas. The Library Director will implement the most promising methods by spring 2011.
4. By spring 2010, the Library Director will determine how best to accommodate the need for more Library computers for student use, in view of the current space problem on the Charlestown campus.
5. By spring 2011, the Library Director, in collaboration with Library staff, will devise a systematic plan for upgrading the Library's Math and Science collection, as funds become available.
6. Beginning with the current assessment cycle for non-academic units, the Library Director will use the non-academic unit assessment protocol to assess the Library.

## **Information and Instructional Technology**

### **DESCRIPTION**

#### ***Technological Infrastructure***

As explained in more detail in Chapter Eight, BHCC has a technological infrastructure that allows the College to use information technology effectively to conduct College business. The College uses Datatel for administrative functions and Raiser's Edge for fundraising activities. BHCC has an effective email system, desktop computing system, and student information system (Datatel). In addition, WebAdvisor provides online advising and registration tools for both students and faculty. WebAdvisor also allows faculty to access class rosters and submit grades electronically. Institutional research personnel have been using SPSS and Query Builder to create custom reports for the College community and outside agencies. Recently, the College has purchased ZogoTech software to help with institutional research. Other College offices, like the Budget Office and the Financial Aid Office, have appropriate technology to allow personnel to effectively execute their functions within the College. BHCC's makes appropriate use of information technology to successfully plan, administer and evaluate its services. The College's Network Usage Policy clearly defines what constitutes appropriate use of its technology systems and resources. BHCC employees acknowledge annually via email that they have read and understood this Policy.

#### ***Classrooms***

Since 2000, the College has modified classroom space to allow faculty to infuse instructional technology into courses. Every classroom and meeting space now has a network drop. The thirty-four Smart Classrooms for general use are equipped with integrated computer, DVD, VCR, document reader, and Smart Board systems. The Charlestown campus has thirty-one general-use Smart Classrooms and the Chelsea campus has three general-use Smart Classrooms.

#### ***Technology-Based Courses***

The College offers technology-based courses in the Center for Self-Directed Learning (CSDL) and through BHCC Online. The CSDL offers thirty-eight courses that are delivered through instructional software in the center. In spring 2008, the CSDL enrolled 584 students in its courses. This center also offers supplemental instruction to more than 3300 students. BHCC Online offers a wide array of courses across the curriculum. In spring 2009, BHCC Online offered 132 course sections. During this semester, the College also enrolled 595 students in hybrid courses that split course time between the classroom and the web. Another 1,500 students are enrolled in courses that are "web enhanced" to include some online component. In total, more than 100 faculty have incorporated some form of online instruction into their courses, and twenty more are scheduled to receive training in online instruction this year. Visual and Media Arts (VMA) students also take technology-based courses using a suite of up-to-date technological resources.

### ***Tutoring Centers***

As explained in Chapters Six and Eight, BHCC makes use of instructional technology in several student tutoring centers.

- The Math Lab offers mathematics software for students in mathematics courses.
- The Writing Place has three computers which have writing software programs for use by students in English courses.
- The Tutoring and Academic Support Center (TASC) has eighteen computers with tutoring software installed.
- The Language Lab has computers with self-study software programs that assist students in language skills.

### ***Academic Computing Center***

In addition to providing computers for academic use, the Academic Computing Center (ACC) affords access to *My Math Lab* which students use to take quizzes and tests for math courses. The ACC also hosts *My IT Lab* which provides part of the curriculum for online students in Computer Information Technology and Forensics courses. The ACC also has a branch on the Chelsea campus.

### ***Training and Support for Use of Instructional Technology***

#### ***TLiTC***

The Teaching, Learning and Instructional Technology Center (TLiTC) provides group and individual training, for faculty, staff, and students, in designing and teaching online courses, as well as in the use of other instructional technology. TLiTC also prepares podcasts on integrating technology into courses. For students, TLiTC provides workshops that teach how to use instructional technology required by their courses.

#### ***Audio/Visual Department***

The Audio/Visual Department (AV) offers technical support to faculty who use technology in classrooms that have not yet been upgraded to Smart Classrooms. This department delivers state-of-the-art equipment to classrooms on request. In addition to delivering equipment to classes, the AV Department services all campus-wide events, including graduation, sporting events and Art Gallery openings.

## **APPRAISAL**

### **Achievements**

1. BHCC Online has established a successful course delivery system. This online segment of the College has experienced continuous growth since its inception in 2001. In the last eight years of growth, the College has upgraded both the Learning Management System (LMS) platform and the LMS hosting services for BHCC Online. The College has moved from the *Top Class LMS* to *Intralearn* to *Blackboard* to take advantage of evolving technology and a larger collaborative network. Likewise, BHCC moved from hosting its own online LMS to utilizing UMass Online's hosting service, which is housed in a secure, well-staffed facility. UMass Online provides 24/7 coverage for online courses and has allowed BHCC Online to function with minimal downtime. Over the years, BHCC Online has also enhanced

online learning with a variety of technological enhancements, including *iTunesU*, *IlluminateLive*, and a streaming media server.

2. BHCC students, whether in traditional or technology-based courses, have access to *Smarthinking*, an online tutoring service that provides synchronous and asynchronous feedback for students in writing, math, chemistry, accounting, and business courses.
3. The VMA technology suite offers state-of-the-art technology for VMA students in graphic design, web page design, video and audio production, animation, and design of multimedia programs. This lab also provides technology for other courses on an ad hoc basis. For example, the Computer Department teaches a Maya 3D Animation class in the VMA lab. VMA students also use lab technology to produce posters for BHCC events, videotape student plays, archive video interviews for the Library and produce DVD's for Orientation activities.
4. The College has refurbished TLiTC to create an environment conducive to effective training in use of instructional technology. In March 2009, TLiTC acquired seven new state-of-the-art, dual-core iMac computers that run both Macintosh and Windows XP operating systems. TLiTC also houses a digital video converter, which allows staff to convert instructional content to video format for use in courses, as well as two electronic Smart Boards for training purposes. TLiTC has designed an internal database tracking system to monitor faculty and staff use and effectively assess customer service. The TLiTC Website, available off the BHCC Website, provides detailed information about services provided by this Center.
5. The AV Department reports that every day approximately 55 faculty order AV equipment. The College has recently upgraded its Smart Carts, the most frequently-ordered AV equipment, with Crestron touch-screen panels that enable faculty to change media easily. AV now has hours on weekends and on holidays to increase access to its services. The AV Website provides information on services offered.

### **Area of Concern**

Although TLiTC offers impressive training capacity, the actual number of user visits has decreased from 309 in fall 2007 to 183 for fall 2008. This equals a 28% decrease between fall 2007 and spring 2008 and a 17% decrease between spring 2008 and fall 2008. This decrease may have resulted from the success of prior TLiTC training. If faculty are more comfortable with using instructional technology, they may not seek more training. However, this decrease might also result from insufficient advertising of workshops. Although TLiTC does advertise its training sessions on the TLiTC Website and in the College Calendar, as well as through the BHCC Online Office, many faculty remain unaware of scheduled workshops.

### **PROJECTION**

By fall 2010, the Director of TLiTC will complete an assessment of the level of awareness of TLiTC services among all segments of the College. The Director will then implement, by spring 2011, an aggressive marketing campaign targeting groups who have little awareness of the training provided by TLiTC.

### **Institutional Effectiveness**

Evidence shows that BHCC students are exposed to appropriate and sufficient informational and instructional technology. The College needs to oversee implementation of regularly scheduled and comprehensive assessments of the Library, TLiTC and AV. These assessments should focus on whether faculty, students, and staff are effectively using these resources to improve student learning. BHCC Online appears to be effectively assessing its performance and making needed changes, but the system by which such assessment occurs should be formalized.

## **ADDENDUM TO STANDARD SEVEN: LIBRARY**

### **Area of Concern # 4**

“The library needs to procure more computers for student use.”

### **Update**

The Library is at its maximum capacity for PCs. However, the College has installed three wireless points and electrical outlets that have resulted in the heavy use of laptops in the Library. At any given time, there may be ten to fifteen students using their personal laptops in the Library. Staff continually monitors library equipment use to ensure academic activities take priority over recreational use of PCs and to document the actual need of computers for academic purposes.

### **Area of Concern #6**

“Prior to the writing of this report, the Library had not participated in the College-wide assessment process for non-academic units, nor had the Library conducted an alternate overall assessment. However, the Library will participate in the current non-academic unit assessment process which will be completed in fall 2009.”

### **Update**

Library staff are now using the non-academic unit assessment protocol.

## **ADDENDUM TO STANDARD SEVEN: INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY**

### **Area of Concern**

“Although the TLiTC offers impressive training capacity, the actual number of user visits has decreased from 309 in fall 2007 to 183 for fall 2008.

### **Update**

The TLiTC has developed an array of self-instructional tutorials that are available online at [www.bhcc.mass.edu/TLiTC](http://www.bhcc.mass.edu/TLiTC) . Smart classroom training and a series of tutorials for

using the features in BlackBoard Vista 4 are some of the popular training modules. The array of online training may explain some of the decreases in visits to TLiTC.

In fact, the number of user visits has increased since the fall 08 semester and now equals the numbers during the fall 07 semester. There were 305 user visits to the TLiTC during the spring 09 semester and 310 during the fall 09 semester. In addition, TLiTC will begin two new initiatives in spring 2010: training for Elluminate and training for ePortfolio.

## STANDARD EIGHT: PHYSICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES

### **Introduction**

BHCC has made significant improvements to its physical and technological resources since the last self-study. The College has reconfigured space throughout its facilities and has upgraded maintenance services. These actions have created a more physically pleasant and efficient space. BHCC has recently completed construction of its first new building since 1979. Although current physical resources are effectively used, BHCC's burgeoning student population has pushed the College to the limit of its physical capacity.

Along with upgrades in physical facilities, BHCC has substantially upgraded its technological resources. As a result of these upgrades, the College provides a more effective learning environment for its students than it did ten years ago.

### **Physical Resources**

#### DESCRIPTION

##### *Charlestown Campus*

The College has two full-service campuses, in Charlestown and Chelsea, and three satellite campuses. The Charlestown campus consists of six permanent buildings and one modular building. The site also includes landscaped areas, roadways, parking lots and playing fields. The College has 600 student parking spaces and 319 staff parking spaces. Twenty spaces are reserved for handicapped parking and seven for visitor parking. In addition, the College reserves three spaces for fifteen minute parking.

The Charlestown campus also houses many offices that support student learning and several tutoring centers. Other student service offices on the Charlestown campus include the Student Activities Office, Health services, Bookstore, Cafeteria, Auditorium and Art Gallery, as well as the new athletic and health care program facilities described below. The Welcome Back Center and Workforce Development Center are also located in Charlestown. In addition, the Charlestown campus houses support services for faculty. The entire BHCC community, including surrounding neighborhoods, has access to the Childcare Center on the Charlestown campus.

The College is currently finishing construction of its first permanent building on the Charlestown campus since 1979, the 48,000-square-foot Health and Wellness Center. This building was designed to meet requirements for LEED Gold certification, and the College will apply for such certification. The Health & Wellness Center houses several important additions to the College, a gymnasium, a fitness center, and a number of state-of-the-art facilities for health care programs. These health care components include an acute respiratory skills unit, an ultrasound unit, an x-ray room, medical imaging computer and resource rooms, and a basic skills and acute critical care unit, designed to simulate a hospital ICU. This new building also includes athletic and faculty offices, as well as two general-use classrooms.

### *Chelsea Campus*

Since spring 1998, BHCC has operated a second full-service campus on the site of the former Chelsea Post Office. This building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Chelsea campus consists of a single three-floor building, comprising 28,000 square feet of space, with twenty-four parking spaces for general use and two handicapped spaces. Campus facilities include seven conventional classrooms, four science and health labs, a computer lab, three faculty offices, a faculty lounge, a student lounge, and an auditorium. Chelsea students have access to several academic support services, including a tutoring center, an academic computing center, and an advising center. In addition, a childcare center is located on-site. Students can use four reserved computers and study space at the Chelsea Public Library. Chelsea also houses the Education Resources Institute (TERI), an information resource for the Chelsea community.

The Chelsea campus is ADA compliant, with ramps at main entrances, automatic door openers, and restrooms with ADA accessible stalls.

BHCC runs a shuttle between the Charlestown and Chelsea campuses several times a day for students. This shuttle runs on a regular schedule during hours when the College is open. The shuttle schedule is available in the main lobbies of both the Charlestown and Chelsea campuses, and on the College intranet. The shuttle also carries mail between the two campuses.

### *Satellites*

BHCC also offers classes at three satellite locations: East Boston, Malden, and Boston's South End. Each satellite offers a range of courses and student support services. The South End satellite is a Pathway Technology Campus (PTC), launched through a FIPSE grant. This satellite is located at Villa Victoria, a largely Latino public housing community. The PTC offers classes, advising, and academic support services to Villa Victoria residents.

## **APPRAISAL**

### **Achievements**

1. BHCC has signed the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC). As a signatory, the College receives support and resources in its efforts to achieve climate neutrality, as well as access to a strong network of peer institutions. In fall 2009, the College further affirmed its commitment to "go green" by submitting a Climate Action Plan to the ACUPCC. This Plan commits the College over the next five years to offset 100% of purchased electricity with Renewable Energy Credits. This effort will reduce the College's carbon footprint by 61.2%. Another initiative included in the Climate Action Plan is the Culinary Arts Department's project, "The Living Campus at Bunker Hill Community College." For this project, BHCC will conduct a feasibility study with Top Sprouts, a company dedicated to building and efficiently operating roof-top

greenhouses. In FY2010, the College anticipates construction of a roof-top greenhouse at BHCC. Ultimately, the College will offer classes and programs to educate the students and community about the benefits derived from local, sustainable agriculture. As a centerpiece of the Living Campus, BHCC will create a seasonal Farmer's Market that will be open to all students and Boston residents.

To oversee completion of the College's Climate Action Plan, the President has established a Climate Commitment Committee at BHCC. This Committee has already helped to create environmental consciousness on both the Charlestown and Chelsea campuses. Recycling bins are abundant and easy to identify. The vending machines are energy efficient and the restrooms have auto flushers. The College uses judicious set points for heating and cooling systems and has installed variable speed computer drives to lessen power usage.

2. The Charlestown campus, built in the 1970s, meets ADA compliance standards. In spring 2008, the College prepared a Transition Plan as part of the construction of the Health & Wellness Center. The College uses this Plan to better assess and schedule improvements to serve BHCC's growing and diverse student population. Currently, all main entrances are handicapped accessible, all bathrooms have accessible door openers and stalls, and all internal signage is ADA compliant. The College keeps hallway doors on the Charlestown campus open to facilitate passage for students with disabilities.
3. The Chelsea campus, remodeled in 1998, is ADA compliant. All signage is ADA compliant and the bathrooms have accessible stalls. The campus has an accessible ramp and automatic door opener, as well as TTY communication for students with speech and hearing impairment. As on the Charlestown campus, hallway doors are kept open in Chelsea to ease passage for students with disabilities.
4. The College regularly plans, in conjunction with relevant State agencies, for the maintenance and expansion of its physical resources. BHCC's Regional Master Plan and Space Utilization Study allow the College to assess the condition and effectiveness of its physical resources and then plan improvements.
5. BHCC has attractive and well-maintained campuses. In FY2009, the College spent 1.5 million dollars on deferred maintenance projects, exceeding the State mandate for funding these projects. The Charlestown campus is filled with artwork that represents the diverse origins of the student population. Despite the austere 1970s architecture, the College has a bright and warm feeling. Most respondents to the spring 2009 NEASC survey reported that college facilities are clean and presentable and that facilities personnel respond to building concerns in a timely fashion.
6. The Chelsea campus is located in the middle of Chelsea's downtown area. Hence, this campus is physically connected to the community and has contributed to the revitalization of downtown Chelsea.
7. The College has optimized use of the Charlestown campus space, creating private faculty offices for full-time faculty and reconfiguring space to house student service functions such as the TASC Center and the International Center. To facilitate access to the College Library and Learning Commons, the College added an entrance on the third floor off the highly visible central staircase in the E Building. In addition, tables and chairs now fill what was once a large, empty main lobby on the second floor of

- the B Building. By opening a small branch of the cafeteria right off this lobby, the College created a gathering spot for students and staff at a convenient point of access.
8. The new Health & Wellness Center provides a much-needed venue for BHCC's athletic teams and for students and staff seeking access to fitness equipment.
  9. The Health & Wellness Center's state-of-the art training areas for health care programs represent a significant upgrade that will allow BHCC students to enter the workforce with the best possible training.
  10. The College has relocated offices for enrollment services so that all services are available in one highly visible area of the College. BHCC completed this relocation ahead of the scheduled FY2010 date. The College has also instituted other changes to streamline the enrollment process, including group advisement and a series of logistical changes.
  11. Campus police regularly monitor parking areas to prevent illegal parking and keep parking areas safe.
  12. Police and security presence on the Charlestown campus is visible and effective. The Charlestown campus receives 24/7 coverage from contract security. In addition, seven full-time police officers are highly visible both in College buildings and on College grounds. The Chelsea campus has two full-time Campus police officers. Each campus has a defibrillator and a security camera network. The College also has "Emergency Procedures Guidelines" which are posted on the Today Page on BHCC's intranet. Most respondents in the spring 2009 survey reported that there were sufficient police on campus.

### **Areas of Concern**

1. The current student population numbers approximately 11,000, more than four times larger than when BHCC first opened in 1973. Conversely, the College is functioning with much less space than was originally envisioned. In fact, the original master plan for BHCC proposed that the College be built in two phases. Each phase would contain 375,000 gross square feet (GSF) and accommodate 2,500 full-time equivalent students. Although the first phase was completed and occupied in September 1973, the second phase was never built. A 6,000 GSF modular building was added to the Charlestown campus in 1990, and the College secured 28,000 GSF with the opening of the Chelsea campus in 1998. Even with the recent addition of the Health & Wellness Center, the College is still smaller than its original plan by 293,000 GSF. While the College has located additional space in the nearby Schrafft Center to accommodate the recent surge in student enrollments, more physical space will be needed to sustain the current rate of increase in student enrollments.
2. Although the parking capacity on the Charlestown campus has increased since 2000, the College is again facing a parking shortage due to the increased number of students and faculty using the campus.
3. The Charlestown campus does not have a dedicated Student Center. However, students have carved out social spaces around the campus, such as the A-lobby, the B-lobby, the C-pit, the D-lounge, and the E-cafeteria.

## PROJECTIONS

1. On an ongoing basis, the Academic Vice President and the Academic Deans will locate additional classroom space as needed until new classroom space can be constructed.
2. On an ongoing basis, the Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer will monitor the availability of parking spaces and seek methods to alleviate any parking problems which can be remedied within current space and financial limitations.
3. The Executive Vice President and CFO, together with the Director of Facilities Management, will oversee the building of a Learning Resource Center that centralizes the Library and Student Activities Center adjacent to the new main campus entrance. (**Note:** Projection three comes from BHCC'S Regional Master Plan and Space Utilization Study and is contingent on the availability of funds.)

### **Technological Resources**

#### *Academic Systems*

Over the last ten years, the College has made major investments in technological resources. Currently, BHCC has 784 computers available for academic use. BHCC uses a five-year replacement cycle for computers. The College refreshes 200 workstations per year which equates to a complete refresh every five years.

The Center for Self-Directed Learning has seventy-five workstations. The Academic Computing Center (ACC) is equipped with sixty-two workstations and four scanners. In addition, BHCC students have access to the specialized labs listed below:

- the Math Lab, Language Lab, and Writing Place, which provide academic support
- the video editing lab, graphic arts lab, and audio editing labs for graphic arts students
- the nursing and medical imaging labs for health care students
- the general science labs and physics, biology, and chemistry lab for science students.

Every classroom and meeting space has a network drop. The thirty-four Smart Classrooms for general use are equipped with integrated computer, DVD, VCR, document reader, and smart board projection systems. The Charlestown campus has thirty-one general-use Smart Classrooms and the Chelsea campus has three general-use Smart Classrooms. In addition, thirty-one academic computing classrooms, graphic arts rooms, and health and science labs have been provided with Smart Room equipment as requested by the departments involved. Twenty-seven of these rooms are at the Charlestown campus and four are at the Chelsea campus. The College also maintains four Kiosk workstations on the Charlestown campus and one on the Chelsea campus. These kiosks allow students to access their BHCC records. On the Charlestown campus, students also have access to ten adaptive workstations for online services.

The “my BHCC” portal is being pilot tested. This portal will provide students with a single entry point to BHCC for easy access to their academic records, payment information, Catalog and registration information, email, advising, and Library resources.

The College also provides approximately 650 computers to faculty and staff. All full-time faculty have desktop computers which were updated between fall 2005 and spring 2006. Faculty and staff have access to academic records and advising functions through WebAdvisor, the web-based interface to Datatel. All students, faculty, and staff have College email accounts which are accessed through *Microsoft Outlook*.

Wired internet speed on the Charlestown campus has increased from under 10 Mbps in 2004 to approximately 70 Mbps in 2009. In fall 2008, the College upgraded bandwidth at the Chelsea campus from 1.5 Mbps to 10+Mbps. BHCC has recently implemented wireless networking technology at its Charlestown campus in three auditorium areas, the main cafeteria, the B Lobby “Café,” and the Library. Smart Classrooms on the Charlestown campus are scheduled to have wireless connectivity in FY 2009.

The College hosts a wide range of web courses through *Blackboard Learning Systems Vista 4*. UMassonline (UMOL) provides 24/7 support services for web-based courses.

#### ***Administrative Systems***

The College uses *Datatel* for administrative functions and *Raiser’s Edge* for fundraising activities. Institutional research personnel use *Query Builder* to create custom reports for the College community and outside agencies. To increase the speed with which IR can generate data reports, the College is currently implementing *ZogoTech* software.

#### ***Security and Privacy***

The College layers security measures across different platforms and equipment to protect BHCC’s confidential student and employee information, as well as sensitive administrative and financial data. The Charlestown campus acquired a new Cisco firewall solution in 2005. The Charlestown campus had a firewall upgrade in 2006 and Chelsea’s firewall was upgraded in 2008. The Information Services (IS) staff periodically reviews security logs for both threat analysis and refinement of login credentials. All essential files and records generated by *Datatel* are backed up on tape every night and secured in a fireproof safe on the Charlestown campus. As an added security measure, files are also backed up on tape on a weekly basis and moved to the Chelsea campus.

#### ***Disaster Recovery***

The College has developed a disaster recovery plan to prevent permanent loss of information critical to its continued functioning. The Chelsea campus is the recovery site where BHCC would resume business if the main computer center is disabled or destroyed. The College has upgraded the Chelsea network to accommodate 10 Mbps Internet and intra-campus connectivity. The College replicates data between the campuses, and the Chelsea site is a “hot swap” capable site. Virtualization at the Chelsea campus will provide full and instant recovery of virtualized servers.

## APPRAISAL

### Achievements

1. As with physical resources, the College regularly plans for maintenance and upgrading of its technological resources. The College's Technology Tactical Plan (TTP) ensures that BHCC constantly reappraises its technological resources. The Chief Information Officer, in consultation with the IS staff and other affected parts of the institution, oversees the continuous revision of this planning document. Each revision is circulated to College personnel for budget review and general assessment. Thus, at any given point, the TTP serves as an accurate assessment of BHCC's technological resources and a projection plan for maintaining and improving these resources.
2. Students report, through various surveys, that BHCC's technological resources adequately support student learning. A spring 2007 CCSSE survey reveals:
  - Students report using BHCC's computing facilities at a rate that was "notably above" average both for all community colleges in Massachusetts and for all colleges in the survey.
  - 81% reported that they were "very" or "somewhat" satisfied with the College's computer lab facilities.
  - 44% of BHCC students identified the College as the place where they were "most likely to access a computer with an internet connection to do school work," compared to a 24% average for other State community colleges.
  - 92% reported that they used the internet or Instant Messaging for completing assignments, higher than the averages for other survey colleges.
  - 93% indicated that they used email to communicate with an instructor, again higher than the average for survey colleges.
  - 42% responded that the College emphasized using computers in academic work "very much," while another 42% responded "quite a bit" to this question. Again, this was higher than the average for survey colleges.
3. Faculty also report that BHCC's technological resources meet their needs. Of faculty respondents to the spring 2009 NEASC survey:
  - Approximately 70% agreed that hardware and software technology resources currently available for classroom and lab use are adequate for their needs.
  - 82% agreed that help for technology-related issues is readily available/effective.
  - 77% agreed that, in the last ten years, the use of new digital technology has significantly changed the way they teach.
4. The College completed major upgrades to the Teaching, Learning and Instructional Technology Center (TLiTC) during the past two years. PCs have been replaced with MACs. These new machines provide state-of-the-art software.
5. BHCC Online constantly updates its own technological resources to support development of web courses. In 2009, the College is upgrading *Elluminate*, a voice-over IP with document-sharing capabilities. Membership in *iTunesU* now provides infrastructure for podcasting, while BHCC-TV provides infrastructure for streaming media. BHCC Online is currently developing a plan to use these technologies to provide podcasting and streaming media capabilities for all online programs.

6. The staff in Technical Support Services (TSS) successfully installs and maintains over 1,300 computers at the College. TSS tracks satisfaction with its services through random surveys of College personnel who open calls with the Help Desk. Since fall 2006, among 344 respondents, TSS maintains a satisfaction level of 98%.
7. Network Support Services (NSS) successfully ensures the performance of the network infrastructure. NSS has tools in place that allow support staff to monitor network performance in real time. As a result, BHCC's network regularly achieves 100% uptime.
8. The College's plan to maintain equipment with a five-year replacement cycle works well. In fall 2008, BHCC replaced 338 workstations at a cost of \$200,000 and simultaneous savings of \$100,000 on service contracts. This resulted in a net cost of \$100,000 for 338 stations.
9. The College has a viable disaster recovery plan. BHCC has begun to implement this plan by establishing the Chelsea campus as the designated disaster recovery site. To make the Chelsea campus a warm standby site for periodically updating the College's critical databases, the College has also improved connectivity between the main campus and Chelsea, installed necessary hardware and tested replication software.
10. BHCC's has security policies for its internet and intranet that are compliant with Payment Card Industry (PCI) standards. These policies cover rights of computer access, copyright infringement, use of confidential information, improper accessing of pornography, and non-job-related use of College machines.

### **Areas of Concern**

BHCC's Technology Tactical Plan mentioned above identifies the following "next step" modifications to BHCC's technological resources:

#### ***Academic Systems***

- greater scanning capability in the computer lab area
- a possible upgrade of the Mac computers in the visual media area to the Leopard OS
- an upgrade of Smart Classrooms with more recent, improved equipment
- an increase in the number of Smart Classrooms (When these classrooms were first introduced, they were underused until faculty were trained. Now demand has begun to outstrip supply.)
- continued weighing of the advantages and disadvantages of a school-wide migration to Windows Vista or Windows 7.0 from WindowsXP

#### ***Administrative Systems***

- document imaging capability in various office settings
- a second WebAdvisor server to provide for failover and redundancy backup for the primary server
- more *Datatel* licenses
- support for the Career Center as it implements *Experience*
- remote access capability for Help Desk staff to allow desktop problems to be resolved more quickly

- standardization of remote access devices used by staff for mobile computing and communicating with desktops – possibly moving away from the use of PDAs, cell phones, and pagers to Blackberry-type devices
- investigation of an expanded student login system which allows faculty to receive automated emails that detail student attendance and usage in all academic support labs.

## **PROJECTIONS**

1. As resources permit, the Chief Information Officer will oversee completion of modifications identified in BHCC’s Technology Tactical Plan.
2. Over a three-year period, TLiTC will equip most classrooms with Smart Classroom technology, while upgrading technology in “old” Smart Classrooms.
3. On an ongoing basis, the Chief Information Officer will oversee continued implementation and testing of the College’s Comprehensive Disaster Recovery Plan.
4. On an ongoing basis, Information Services staff will monitor bandwidth on both campuses to maintain adequate internet connection and ensure continuity of College functions.

### **Institutional Effectiveness**

Ongoing planning and assessment guide the development of physical resources at BHCC. The College has made optimal use of its current physical resources and has completed a new building which provides needed services for students. As with physical resources, the College has effectively planned and assessed its technological resources and so has increased these resources exponentially over the last ten years. Students and faculty report significant satisfaction with these resources.

## **ADDENDUM TO STANDARD EIGHT: UPDATE** **Areas of Concern/Technological Resources**

### **Area of Concern #1**

“greater scanning capability in the computer lab area “

### **Update**

Nine new scanners will be in place for the start of spring semester 2010.

### **Area of Concern #2**

“a possible upgrade of the Mac computers in the Visual Media area to the Leopard OS”

### **Update**

New Macs have been purchased and installed in the Visual Media Arts area.

### **Area of Concern # 3**

“an upgrade of Smart Classrooms with more recent, improved equipment”

#### **Update**

The current Smart rooms in Charlestown were upgraded in fall 2009.

### **Area of Concern #4**

“an increase in the number of Smart Classrooms”

#### **Update**

Seventeen new Smart rooms are scheduled for implementation during spring 2010.

### **Area of Concern # 5**

“continued weighing of the advantages and disadvantages of a school-wide migration to Windows Vista or Windows 7.0 from WindowsXP”

#### **Update**

The College has made a decision to forego any upgrade to Vista in favor of reviewing the Windows 7 Operating System. Current plans call for a gradual migration to Windows 7.0 as new workstations are purchased. The College will support XP for a period of time while transitioning to Windows 7.

### **Area of Concern #6**

“document imaging capability in various office settings”

#### **Update**

Document imaging has been implemented for the Registrar and the Admissions Office.

### **Area of Concern #7**

“remote access capability for Help Desk staff to allow desktop problems to be resolved more quickly”

#### **Update**

The Help Desk now uses the Deep Freeze Console to help resolve remote desktop problems.

## STANDARD NINE: FINANCIAL RESOURCES

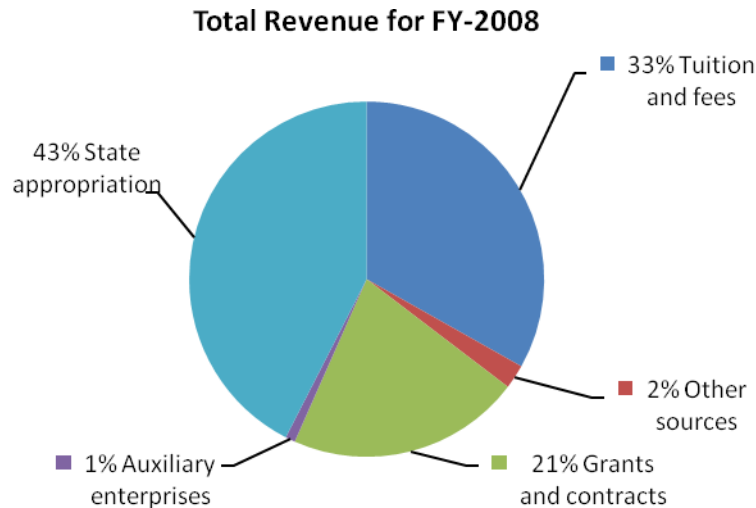
### Introduction

Over the past ten years, the College has deliberately and consistently identified funding sources to augment yearly State appropriations. As a result, BHCC has experienced an increase in total net assets over this time period. Allocation of financial resources is tied directly to the College's mission and strategic goals. Multiple internal and external controls ensure financial integrity. BHCC's financial stability is an important reason for the significant growth and improvement of the College since BHCC's last self-study.

### DESCRIPTION

#### Sources of Revenue

The College receives its funding from four main sources: State appropriations, tuition and fees, grants and contracts, and miscellaneous sources. **Table 1** below graphs the proportion of funding the College receives from each of these sources:



#### *State Appropriations*

State appropriations are BHCC's major funding source. This State funding includes a general appropriation, plus the cost of fringe benefits provided for faculty and staff. Before calculating BHCC's actual appropriation, however, the State deducts from the total the tuition the College is required to remit to the State. The actual State appropriation varies from year to year as the State's revenue level and spending priorities vary. Recently, a general decline in State revenues and competing demands for limited financial resources have negatively impacted State funding levels. However, over the past years, BHCC has successfully compensated for this by augmenting funds received from other sources. For the ten-year period prior to NEASC's last visit, the College received, on average, over 66% of its total revenue from State funds. In contrast, during the past ten years, only 46%, on average, of total annual revenue came from the State. In the past five years, the percentage of funding the College received from the State has declined still further, to 41.6%, on average. BHCC has successfully compensated for this

significant reduction in State funding through efficient management and successful identification of other funding sources.

### ***Tuition and Fees***

Tuition and fees constitute 33% of College funding, the second largest source. While the College remits to the State tuition for courses taught by full-time faculty as part of their contractual load, the College retains tuition from “overload” courses taught by full-time faculty and from all courses taught by adjuncts. Tuition is set by the Department of Higher Education and has not changed since FY2002. The College retains all student fees, which are set by the Board of Trustees.

The College has experienced a significant increase in students over the last ten years. This increase has brought increased tuition and fees to the College. The Board has carefully raised student fees, while keeping fees the lowest of the State community colleges. Together with the increased amount of retained tuition, these increased fees have helped to offset the decrease, in real terms, in State funding.

### ***Other Revenue Sources***

BHCC also participates in a variety of Federal grant and loan programs and in several State, local and private grant programs. For FY2008, grants and contracts constituted 21% of total revenue. Other sources of operating revenue, during FY2008, constitute 2% of total revenue. These sources include receipts from commissions, overhead for grants, revenue from the ACT Center and the Welcome Back Center, payment plan fees, parking fees and fines, and application fees. Revenue from auxiliary enterprises (credit, non-credit courses, and training provided by Workforce Development) constituted 1% of total revenue in FY2008.

### ***Bunker Hill Community College Foundation, Inc.***

Located on the Charlestown campus, the Bunker Hill Community College Foundation (“the Foundation”) is a not-for-profit corporation established in July 1986. The Foundation was established to promote and support the educational and cultural mission of the College. The Foundation’s FY2008 Audited Financial Statements emphasize that “the Foundation is a legally separate, tax exempt component unit of the College and acts primarily as a fund-raising organization to supplement the resources that are available to the College in support of its programs.” The Foundation’s income has been presented discretely in BHCC’s financial statements since FY2004. During FY2007 and FY2008, the Foundation distributed \$67,424 and \$113,531, respectively, to BHCC for both restricted and unrestricted purposes. The College does not control the amount of receipts from the Foundation or the timing of those receipts, and resources received or held by the Foundation are restricted to use by the College to further its mission. The Foundation’s Board, which is independent from BHCC’s Board, consists of business and civic leaders in the Greater Boston area. The Foundation’s Board ensures transparency and accountability in dispensing donations in accordance with the wishes of donors. For the past ten years, the Foundation’s financial statements have been audited by a firm that is independent from BHCC’s auditors.

### **Asset Growth**

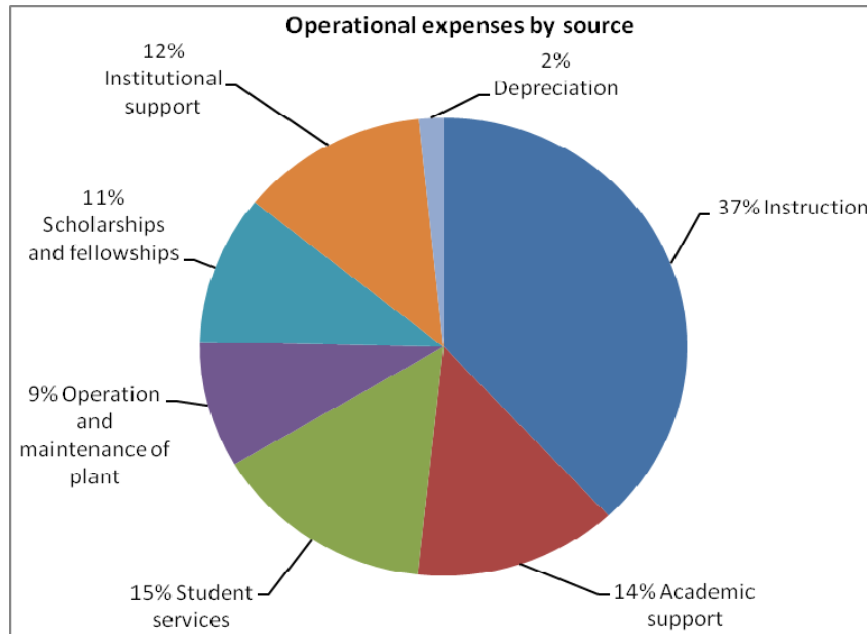
Despite the decline in State funding, in real terms, over the last ten years, the College has enjoyed significant improvement in its financial resources. A ten-year trend analysis shows a significant increase in capital assets from \$1.1 million in FY1999 to \$12.1 million in FY2008, an indication that BHCC's financial position is stronger now than it was in 1999. This strong financial position has allowed the College to embark on a planned program of capital improvements. In FY2000, the College acquired the new Chelsea campus. Since then, BHCC has continued to make capital improvements on both campuses. The College has converted conventional classrooms to Smart Classrooms, built new laboratories, created new faculty offices, increased/upgraded technology College-wide, and will soon complete construction of the Health & Wellness Center. All of these capital improvements have upgraded the educational environment for students and, in turn, supported their success.

The College's unrestricted net assets increased from \$1.2 million in FY1999 to a high of \$8.7 million in FY2004. As of June 30, 2008, the College's unrestricted net assets were \$5.3 million. In addition to supporting capital improvements, this substantial growth in unrestricted reserves has allowed the College to develop new programs and to maintain competitively low student fees, while retaining the ability to respond effectively to financial emergencies and unforeseen circumstances without compromising its academic programs.

Finally, BHCC's total net assets have grown from \$2.8 million in FY1999 to \$17.4 million in FY2008, indicating that the College can sustain itself financially for the foreseeable future.

### **Allocation of Financial Resources**

The connection between BHCC's student-centered mission and resource allocation is clear in **Table 2** below. This connection flows logically from the link between BHCC's strategic planning process and the budget, described in detail in Chapter Two. In FY2008, 77% of the College's total operating expenditure related to instruction, academic support, student services, and scholarships/fellowships. The cost of instruction, at 37%, was the single largest operational expense. The College's Audited Financial Statements, over the past ten years, show that, on average, only 12% of BHCC's total operating expenditure went towards institutional support. Although the Department of Higher Education has mandated that colleges spend a minimum of 5% of the annual State appropriation, retained tuition, and general course fees on capital renewal and adaptation, BHCC has actually been able to exceed that target.



## **Financial Integrity**

### ***Internal Controls***

Financial integrity is at the core BHCC's multi-year financial planning and operations. The College ensures this integrity through clearly defined policies and procedures. These procedures include a reliable system of internal controls over purchasing, student accounts, accounts payable, financial aid, budget administration, cash management, and the general ledger. College personnel regularly prepare financial reports for internal review by the Executive Vice President/Chief Financial Officer. These reports include monthly cash flow reports, annual statements of financial costs, accounts receivable aging reports, Workforce Development Center contract performance reports, and liquidity/ratio analyses. Together, these reports enable the College to make informed decisions, based on reliable financial data. In addition, the Board of Trustees reviews financial management reports every month.

### ***External Controls***

The College also ensures the integrity of its financial operations through regular external reporting. As a component unit of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, BHCC is bound by law to submit financial data whenever required by the Department of Higher Education in whatever form the department mandates. Massachusetts General Laws also mandate periodic reporting of revenues and expenditures through the Massachusetts, Management Accounting Reporting System (MMARS). To comply with these external mandates, the College regularly submits the following financial documents to external agencies:

- Audited Financial Statements are submitted to the Office of the State Comptroller, the State Auditor, the Department of Higher Education and the College's bankers.
- Financial Ratios and Performance Measurements are submitted to BHCC's bankers and to the Department of Higher Education.

- Six monthly Draft Interim Financial Statements are submitted to loan and bond creditors.
- A number of other reports are submitted to the U.S. Department of Education and the Commonwealth Department of Higher Education.

### ***Annual Financial Statements***

BHCC prepares its financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles for colleges and universities, including:

- a Statement of Net Assets that presents information on all of the College's assets and liabilities, with the difference between the two reported as net assets
- a Statement of Revenues, Expenses, and Changes in Net Assets that shows how the College's net assets have changed during a given fiscal year
- a Statement of Cash Flows that uses the method required by the Government Accounting Standards Board

### ***Annual Audits***

The financial statements of the College have been audited yearly by an independent auditing firm, KPMG, in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. Audit reports and management letters are presented to the Board of Trustees for review and subsequent action, if necessary. In addition to this annual financial audit, the College has also been audited periodically by the Office of the State Auditor. These State audits were primarily compliance audits and covered student financial aid programs, technology controls, cash management, year-end operations, and financial operations. In all cases, the College has implemented the recommendations of the auditors where necessary.

## **APPRAISAL**

### **Achievements**

1. BHCC's financial position is significantly stronger now than ten years ago. BHCC has focused consistently and effectively on managing its financial resources and has aggressively sought and received grants to compensate for decreases in State funding. In addition, BHCC has seen a consistent growth in the number of students wishing to study at the College. This has led to an increase in the amount of tuition the College has retained. The BHCC Foundation has also contributed to the College's improved financial position. The result has been an increase in BHCC's total net assets, unrestricted net assets and capital assets.
2. BHCC has linked preparation of the annual operating and capital budgets to the multi-year strategic planning cycle, as explained in Chapter Two. This link ensures that the budget incorporates money to fund projects that are related to accomplishing the College's strategic goals. As a result, in FY2008, the College spent 77% of its financial resources on instruction, academic support, student services, and scholarships/fellowships.
3. The College has retained qualified, competent managers to oversee its financial resources. In the past ten years, there has been no turnover in personnel directly responsible for day-to-day financial management. The College has also instituted strong internal controls to ensure financial integrity, as well as complying regularly with external reporting mandates. These actions have ensured that BHCC's use of its

financial resources is transparent. Since the Board of Trustees reviews monthly financial reports, as well as all audit reports, the Trustees maintain appropriate oversight and approval over the College's financial resources.

4. The Board of Trustees has responded flexibly to key financial indicators by setting BHCC student fees at a level that helps to compensate for shortfalls in State funding, while still keeping these fees competitively low.

### **Areas of Concern**

1. In 2000, the State was contributing an average of 66% of the College's funds. During the last five years, the State has contributed only 41.6%, on average, of BHCC's funds. This represents a steady and significant decline in State funding. Given the State's current fiscal crisis, decreases in State funding are unlikely to abate in the next few years.
2. The College does not have the physical space on the Charlestown campus to accommodate continued significant growth in student enrollment. Yet, this growth has provided some of the financial resources that BHCC has been using to compensate for the decrease in State funding.

### **PROJECTIONS**

The College is currently in sound financial condition. No changes to BHCC's system of budgeting and allocating financial resources seem necessary. BHCC has done an excellent job of compensating for unpredictable State funding over the last ten years. However, if State funding continues to decrease for several years, the College will need to find additional ways to compensate for this shortfall. These projections identify other avenues the College might pursue to offset further loss of State revenue in the next ten years.

1. The College's Office of Institutional Advancement and the College Foundation are coordinating a capital campaign, while simultaneously seeking capital funding from the State, so that the College can construct new facilities to accommodate continued increases in its student body. While additional funds will contribute to BHCC's continued financial health, more classrooms will allow the College to pursue the important mission of serving its target population. In fact, the only reason for working to maintain BHCC's current fiscal health is to allow the College to continue performing its mission.
2. Over the next five years, the Board of Trustees and the Executive Staff will identify and implement strategies for encouraging the State to adopt a predictable, reliable, and consistent funding model for community colleges. The College will also advocate for levels of funding comparable to the State colleges and the University of Massachusetts.
3. Over the next five years, the Board of Trustees and the Executive Staff will identify ways to effectively encourage the Department of Higher Education to develop a strategic planning framework for community colleges that will allow multi-year financial planning for budgeting and resource allocation. Although BHCC already engages in multi-year financial planning, such a change in State practice will make

multi-year planning more efficient. Even if the State's financial situation does not improve, a State strategic planning framework will allow the College to plan ahead to mitigate somewhat the effects of uncertain State funding. Clearly, BHCC cannot force the changes suggested in projections 2 and 3. However, the College should make concerted efforts, in collaboration with other community college administrators, to educate the Department of Higher Education, the Office of the Governor, and the Legislature about the benefits of such changes.

4. Over the next ten years, the Director of Grants Development and the Director of Institutional Advancement will continue to aggressively seek other sources of funding that the College can use to increase student success.
5. Over the next ten years, the BHCC Foundation will identify new ways to raise funds for the College to compensate for possible decreased State funding.

### **Institutional Effectiveness**

Bunker Hill Community College has significantly improved its financial position over the past ten years. In fact, sound financial management has been a central factor in the College's growth during this period. The College continually assesses its finances and makes adjustments as necessary. Since BHCC's budget process is integrated with institutional strategic planning, financial resources are automatically channeled toward projects that help the College to achieve its mission. Both internal and external controls attest to complete financial integrity at BHCC and allow for continuous assessment of the College's financial resources. This, in turn, allows for appropriate allocation of resources.

## STANDARD TEN: PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

### **Introduction**

Although the College has grown across all areas in the last decade, achievements in the area of public disclosure have been truly extraordinary. For example, ten years ago, the College had virtually no web or internet presence. Marketing at BHCC was virtually nonexistent except for the College's signage, which was woefully inadequate. In short, Bunker Hill Community College published very little in the public domain that provided accurate and up-to-date information about who we are and what we do. Today, BHCC has increased its presence and visibility throughout the Greater Boston area in a variety of ways. BHCC's public disclosures are uniformly consistent and portray accurately the image of an excellent, mission-driven institution.

### **DESCRIPTION**

The mission of the College states in part: "Bunker Hill Community College seeks to enhance its position as a primary educational and economic asset for the Commonwealth through cooperative planning and program implementation involving neighboring institutions of higher education, the public schools, community organizations, and area businesses and industries." To meet this aspect of the College mission, these various constituencies must know who we are and what we do. The College now makes effective use of a variety of methods for providing this information to its various constituencies.

#### ***College Catalog***

The College Catalog effectively and comprehensively conveys necessary information about the College to the public. The 2009-2010 Catalog is the result of a well-designed process that solicits input from a variety of individuals across all areas of the College community. This process ensures that the information the Catalog provides to the public is accurate. The Associate Dean of Academic Affairs usually coordinates publication of the Catalog. The associate dean, in turn, consults with managers of the different College offices. Each office gathers and revises information pertaining to its function.

The most recent BHCC Catalog provides sufficient information for the public to form accurate conclusions about the College. This Catalog includes the College's mission and institutional goals, as well as details about enrollment services, academic information, academic support services, academic policy, and student services. In addition, the Catalog provides comprehensive information about all of the College's programs of study, including a complete list of courses offered and an outline of the General Education menus. The Catalog also includes a list of important community resources. BHCC publishes updated versions of the Catalog each summer.

#### ***BHCC Website***

BHCC's Website, which was launched in 2004, is becoming an increasingly important source of public information about the College. This Website provides information that parallels the information in the College Catalog. The public can find here current,

specific, and accurate information on the admissions process, registration, financial aid, academic programs, graduation requirements, career outlooks, course offerings, and available student activities and support services. The Website is very visual, including pictures of current students and of the BHCC facility. Current events at the College are updated regularly by the Webmaster. BHCC's Website also has links to the PDF version of the most recent Catalog, BHCC Fact Books, the Student Handbook, and a course schedule for the upcoming semester. The public can find information about any aspect of the College by navigating the links provided on this Website.

To ensure the accuracy of public disclosure on BHCC's Website, the Webmaster works closely with those who prepare the College Catalog. No Catalog-related information is authorized for inclusion on the Website until and unless this information is included, or has been authorized to be included, in the Catalog. The College also has a policy for regularly updating and adding new information to the College Website.

### ***Print and Broadcast Media***

Over the past several years, the College has effectively used print and broadcast media to further define who we are and what we do. Through the *Compelling Conversations* speaker series, the College has brought national figures to the campus to address the College community, neighbors in Charlestown, and the Greater Boston community. Speakers have included prominent journalist Bob Woodward and actor/activist Richard Dreyfus, among others. These presentations are advertised in local newspapers and on the College marquee, enhancing BHCC's profile as a source of culture in the community.

Both local and national print and broadcast media often report on BHCC events, further highlighting the College's contributions to the community. When BHCC offered new midnight course offerings in fall 2009 to meet rising enrollment demands, these midnight classes attracted widespread attention in the media. In turn, the media coverage effectively publicized the College's determination to meet student demand for flexible scheduling. The *New York Times*, the *Boston Globe*, and the *Boston Business Journal* all ran front-page stories on BHCC's midnight classes. The AP news wire sent a reporter to the first midnight class, and this story was then picked up both locally, in *The Boston Herald*, and in leading newspapers across the country. The broadcast media, Fox News National, CNN's Headline News, Channel 5 (local affiliate of CBS), New England Cable News and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, also covered the story extensively. National Public Radio ran two stories on the midnight courses, and a number of local and regional radio stations ran either news items or interviews with College staff and faculty. The higher education press also covered this story, including stories in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Inside Higher Ed*, *Community College Times* and *University Business*. In addition, *Newsweek's* Website ran a photo of one of BHCC's midnight classes. This story was even published abroad in the United Arab Emirates and translated into Vietnamese. In this case, media coverage of BHCC's innovative approach to scheduling contributed significantly to the College's efforts to reach more students.

Another effective way BHCC makes itself and its mission known is by sponsoring public service announcements (PSAs) in local broadcast media. The College sponsors spots that highlight significant events or people during Black History Month and Women's History Month. At the end of the PSA, the College is prominently mentioned as a sponsor. This increases public awareness of BHCC's commitment to diversity.

One of the newest examples of communication with the public is the *BHCC Magazine*. This magazine covers a wide variety of subjects about the College. The editorial board consists of College administrators, faculty, and professional staff. Competing against publications at all levels of higher education, *BHCC Magazine* recently received prestigious national and a regional awards. Such high-quality publications clearly enhance the image of the College as an institution committed to excellence.

### ***Teaching for Our Times***

The College delivers its message of teaching excellence to other institutions of higher learning through publication of *Teaching for Our Times*. A BHCC faculty member edits this journal which is currently in its seventh edition. Since *Teaching for Our Times* is distributed to other national and international educational institutions, this journal effectively disseminates information about the College's involvement in research on teaching and learning.

### ***The ArtMobile***

On a more local level, the BHCC ArtMobile serves as a moving and highly visible image of the College. This vehicle brings art to the elderly and other community organizations in BHCC's service area. The ArtMobile clearly allows BHCC staff to perform valuable mission-related outreach. In addition, as it moves through the city, the ArtMobile also advertises the College as an institution interested in the arts.

## **APPRAISAL**

### **Achievements**

1. Overall, the College publications have a look and feel that is reflective of BHCC's commitment to high-level performance. The College Catalog is complete, easily understood, and accurate. In the last several years, the Catalog has won several national awards for its design. The College Website, although relatively new, is comprehensive, accurate, and consistent with other College publications. The *BHCC Magazine* has also received two major awards.
2. The Office of Communications and Marketing maintains the College's reputation for involvement with the community and academic excellence through accurate, regular press releases, PSAs, and other techniques.
3. The College has a procedure in place for ensuring the accuracy of major printed materials. BHCC has both a formal and informal procedure in place to ensure that major publications are reviewed for accuracy, consistency and conformity of style at many points before the publication reaches the President for final approval.

### **Areas of Concern**

1. Although the College Website is very comprehensive and includes all information necessary for current and prospective students to make informed decisions about the College, some of the information on the Website can be difficult to access.
2. The College does not currently provide all required information for some current faculty, especially adjunct faculty. The College Catalog generally provides only names and affiliated departments for adjunct faculty.
3. Since the updated College Catalog becomes available in the summer, students who register for fall courses during the preceding spring semester do not have access to the relevant updates when they register.
4. Although the fact book does include information about the availability of financial aid and the typical length of time a student spends at BHCC, the College does not publish information about student debt upon graduation. This information does not appear on the College Website either. This omission does not seem particularly significant since BHCC is a public institution with the lowest cost for students of all higher education institutions in Massachusetts. In addition, many BHCC students qualify for financial aid, and cost is not a specific concern for these students.
5. The College has a process in place for ensuring the accuracy of material at the time the material is published. However, College personnel occasionally neglect to inform appropriate staff in timely fashion of needed updates to publications.

### **PROJECTIONS**

1. By spring 2011, the Manager of Web and E-marketing will identify and implement ways to make Website content more readily accessible.
2. Beginning with the 2010-2011 Catalog, the College Catalog, and the corresponding section of the College Website, will include the same information for adjunct faculty in the seniority pool as is provided for full-time faculty.
3. By spring 2010, the College will publish an updated version of the Catalog by the start of spring registration.
3. By spring 2010, the Director of Financial Aid will develop an information sheet that includes the cost and anticipated debt for students who attend BHCC.
4. By August 2011, the College will include on its Website a net-price calculator that will provide an estimate of tuition and fees. This calculator will be fully compliant with the requirements of the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008.
5. Beginning in fall 2010, the Executive Director of Marketing and Communication will review all of the College's public disclosures for accuracy at the start of each fall semester.

### **Institutional Effectiveness**

Bunker Hill Community College discloses accurate and sufficient information in various venues to provide the public with a clear view of the College and its mission. BHCC's publications are of excellent quality, as is the College Website. The College has very specific procedures for ensuring the accuracy of all public disclosures at the time they are made. No policy exists for regularly assessing all public disclosures for continuing accuracy.

## STANDARD ELEVEN: INTEGRITY

### **Introduction**

This self-study begins with an examination of BHCC's Mission Statement and ends with an analysis of whether the College pursues its mission with integrity. Evidence in the preceding chapters suggests that BHCC holds itself to standards of integrity in all of its operations. In fact, BHCC's Board of Trustees chose "integrity" as one of five institutional values that should characterize all College activity. This Chapter will examine how the College establishes institutional integrity in the Mission-driven policies which govern all eleven NEASC standards.

### DESCRIPTION

#### **Fundamental Governing Principles**

##### ***Board of Trustees***

The College grants degrees and certificates with authority conferred by Massachusetts law. The Board of Trustees defines ethical standards for the College which conform to the State Code of Conduct that governs all Massachusetts institutions and to the College's collective bargaining agreements. The College President oversees implementation of these ethical standards.

The BHCC Board of Trustees models the openness and inclusiveness which form the basis for integrity at the College. Every month, the Board holds two meetings which are advertised and open to the public. The Trustees regularly post meeting agendas on BHCC's Today page and put minutes on reserve in the College Library. Any person attending a Board meeting receives a hard copy of the minutes. In addition, College personnel can direct questions about Board business to the Executive Director of Human Resources who has been appointed by the Board to act as its Assistant Secretary. A clear example of the Board's determination to solicit input from the BHCC community involves the Board's identification of institutional values for the College. Before finally identifying "integrity," and four other values, the Board invited faculty and staff to offer input at two meetings. This willingness to hear the opinions of members of the BHCC community creates an atmosphere of integrity, while mirroring the openness to different views contained in the College Mission/Vision Statements.

##### ***College Forum***

Openness and inclusiveness are also central features of BHCC's governance structure. As described in Chapter Three, the College Forum includes representatives from administration, faculty, professional staff and support staff. Policy recommendations are made by Forum Committees, whose members are elected by the Forum. Once the Forum Committees agree on policy recommendations, these Committees publish their recommendations prior to a Forum vote on the policy in question. In this way, Forum members are given ample opportunity to formulate dissenting opinions. All official College policies are published appropriately. This process ensures institutional integrity in policy-making.

### **Other Examples of College Integrity**

BHCC also ensures open communication in other ways. The College President holds open forums once a month where all College personnel can voice concerns and advance new policy ideas directly to the College President. The College Administration also maintains an open atmosphere by updating the community about ongoing issues via the weekly *Faculty & Staff Newsletter*. The newsletter includes minutes of all of the President's Executive Staff meetings.

The College unions and the College administration maintain good relationships. MCCC Union Officers and members of BHCC's Executive Staff meet monthly through the Management/Association Committee on Employee Relations. This continuing open communication allows many problems to be settled before they become serious enough to impede College operations. In fact, when asked about the number of union grievances filed, the President of the BHCC full-time faculty union noted that most potential grievances are settled before they actually reach the formal grievance process. The AFSCME steward reports that this union also has regular labor-management meetings which often resolve problems informally.

### **Congruence between Outside Mandates and Institutional Values**

The preceding section outlines the transparent process which allows the College to create integrity in its internal policies. The College also maintains integrity in establishing policies which are mandated externally. BHCC's approach to integrity around issues like equal treatment, academic honesty, and privacy, consistently involves the following steps:

- The College establishes equitable policies which conform to relevant external mandates. Generally, these external mandates are congruent with BHCC's mission and institutional values.
- The College articulates these policies clearly and publicly.
- The College provides mechanisms for addressing violations of these policies.

### ***Integrity in Maintaining Respect for Diversity***

Respect for diversity is a defining characteristic of the College, evidenced in the Mission/Vision Statements and the affirmation of the Inclusion Statement, authored by the American Association of Community Colleges. To insure compliance with Federal and State anti-discrimination laws, BHCC articulates anti-discrimination policies prominently on all recruiting and hiring documents, in the College Catalog, in the student handbook, and on the College Website. The College also has a process for addressing violations of anti-discrimination laws. Students, faculty, or staff members who believe they have suffered discrimination can initiate an informal complaint process or a formal grievance process with the Director of Diversity and Inclusion, one of whose functions is to monitor compliance with anti-discrimination statutes. The Statewide collective bargaining agreements also stipulate a process for grieving discriminatory actions.

BHCC uses the same approach to respect for differences resulting from disabilities. The College is committed, by its institutional values, to providing equal access to a quality education for students with physical or learning disabilities. The College is also required

to provide such access by law. Since 2000, BHCC has established a Disabilities Office to provide required services to students who self-disclose disabilities specified by State and Federal laws. Information about disabilities services is published in the College Catalog and the student handbook. Students with disabilities who feel they are not receiving adequate services can engage in informal discussions with Disabilities Office staff or appropriate deans. Students can also initiate a formal complaint through the grievance process in the Student Handbook.

### ***Integrity in Academic Matters***

At BHCC, both students and faculty are expected to observe standards of integrity in academic matters. The faculty collective bargaining agreements and the student handbook both outline standards of academic integrity that conform to national standards. The BHCC community has easy access to the mandates of BHCC's collective bargaining agreements which are published both online and in hard copy. Students receive the student handbook at orientation. The handbook is also available on BHCC's Website.

If BHCC violates a faculty member's contractual right to academic freedom, that faculty member has a right to institute a grievance under a clearly delineated grievance procedure provided in the collective bargaining agreement. Conversely, if the College finds that a faculty member violates the mandate for intellectual honesty, the College can initiate action against that faculty member under a comprehensive process of progressive discipline specified in the collective bargaining agreement. The faculty member, in turn, can initiate a grievance if he or she feels the accusation is unwarranted.

If a faculty member suspects a student has violated his/her obligation to academic honesty, through plagiarism for example, the faculty member can impose academic penalties. If the student disagrees with the faculty member's actions, the student can speak with the Academic Division dean who will seek to facilitate discussion between the faculty member and the student. If this informal discussion does not result in the student's satisfaction, that student has the right to access the grievance procedure which is clearly articulated in the student handbook.

### ***Integrity in Preserving Privacy Rights***

To conduct itself with integrity, the College must respect the privacy rights of its students. To maintain integrity in this area, BHCC complies with the multiple Federal and State statutes which outline the right to privacy. The major areas covered in these statutes involve student educational records, health services, and confidential conversations between students and counselors, faculty, or staff. BHCC follows FERPA guidelines to maintain the privacy of student educational records, as detailed in Chapter Six. The College also protects the privacy of students when they utilize College health and counseling services, except when the student is a danger to self or others. BHCC publishes notice of student privacy rights in the College Catalog and student handbook and students can address perceived violations of these rights through the informal complaint process and/or formal grievance process described in the Student Handbook.

## APPRAISAL

### Achievements

1. The College observes the conditions of its collective bargaining agreements. Members of the Executive Staff maintain regular discussion with union officers through the Management/Association Committee on Employee Relations and the College has been able to avoid many official grievances through informal dispute resolution.
2. The Board of Trustees has established “integrity” as one of five institutional values, evidencing its commitment to conducting its business transparently and inclusively.
3. The Board of Trustees maintains openness by publishing its minutes and agendas to keep the College community informed about issues being discussed and the ultimate disposition of these issues. The Board invites the participation of the College community on issues which should be decided by the community, as the selection of institutional values.
4. The College has established a governance system which is open and inclusive. All members of the College community – administrators, faculty, professional staff and support staff – participate in public discussion and voting that leads to policy recommendations to the President. College employees are kept abreast of agendas and Committee decisions via College email.
5. The College ties its policies to all relevant Federal and State statutes, articulates these policies clearly, and provides appropriate avenues for addressing violations of these policies. The fact that statutes mandating respect for diversity, academic freedom, and privacy actually mirror BHCC’s institutional values suggests, in itself, that the College possesses institutional integrity.
6. The Director of Diversity and Inclusion regularly sponsors programs to support and expand respect for diversity at BHCC. These programs, like *Days of Dialogue*, are described in detail in other Chapters of this self-study. Another example of this commitment to diversity is BHCC’s recent affiliation with the National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI). The College has sent several faculty and staff members to NCBI to be trained to facilitate understanding across diverse groups. The goal is for these faculty and staff to train others at the College. While BHCC has already established an atmosphere of mutual acceptance among the diverse groups on campus, affiliating with NCBI gives the College access to resources which can push the respect for diversity on campus beyond acceptance to understanding and appreciation for different views. This mirrors the purpose of the *Difficult Dialogues* initiative described in earlier chapters.
7. One recent example illustrates how BHCC’s inclusive, open governing process revealed the College community’s mutual agreement on maintaining a respectful work environment. Several College employees were concerned about a few incidents where individuals were not behaving with respect for each other. These employees voiced their concern, generated community discussion, formulated a Civility Policy, put discussion of this Policy on the College Forum agenda, and watched the proposed policy be discussed, amended, and adopted.

### **Area of Concern**

BHCC has an Affirmative Action Plan which outlines procedures for pursuing complaints about discrimination. College publications state that BHCC does not tolerate discrimination. These publications also direct anyone who believes he/she has suffered discrimination to contact the Director of Diversity and Inclusion, one of whose functions is to act as the College's compliance officer. However, BHCC's publications do not include the complete process for pursuing a complaint about perceived discrimination.

### **PROJECTION**

By fall 2010, the Director of Diversity and Inclusion, in her capacity as College Compliance Officer, will make certain that the process for pursuing complaints of discrimination is explicitly stated in the College Catalog and in the Student Handbook.

### **Institutional Effectiveness**

Bunker Hill Community College conducts its business with integrity. College policies uniformly express BHCC's institutional values. The College abides by its collective bargaining agreements and union-management relationships are characterized by ongoing, constructive communication. BHCC's governance structure is open and inclusive. In addition to reflecting College values, BHCC's policies conform to relevant Federal and State statutes, are clearly published, and include processes for addressing policy violations. Together, these facts establish an atmosphere of integrity at the College. The College assesses its integrity by regularly assessing the components, stated above, which contribute to this integrity.

### **ADDENDUM TO STANDARD ELEVEN: UPDATE**

#### **Area of Concern**

"BHCC has an Affirmative Action Plan which outlines procedures for pursuing complaints about discrimination. College publications state that BHCC does not tolerate discrimination. These publications also direct anyone who believes he/she has suffered discrimination to contact the Director of Diversity and Inclusion, one of whose functions is to act as the College's compliance officer. However, BHCC's publications do not include the complete process for pursuing a complaint about perceived discrimination."

#### **Update**

The complete process for filing a complaint of discrimination is contained in the College's "Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Policy." There is a link to this Policy on the BHCC Website. A determined grievant could find out how to press a complaint of discrimination by calling the Director of Diversity and Inclusion or searching for and reading the affirmative action plan. The appraisal in this chapter, however, suggests that perhaps the complaint process should be easier to access.