

# Standard One: Mission and Purposes

Overview: Asnuntuck Community College is a comprehensive public two-year college, one of twelve in the state system, in its fourth decade of service to the citizens of north central Connecticut. The mission of Asnuntuck Community College is to offer quality education in an accessible, affordable, and nurturing environment.

## Description

### History of the College

Asnuntuck Community College was established in 1969 by an act of the Connecticut state legislature as the twelfth institution in the Connecticut state community college system. Classes actually began in 1972 with an initial enrollment of 251, and 12 Associate in Science degrees and 20 Associate of Art degrees were awarded to the first graduating class in 1974. The college operated under provisional approval until it was first accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges in 1977. Asnuntuck was subsequently reaccredited after comprehensive reviews in 1980 and 1985; an interim report was submitted to the New England Association in 1990, and accreditation was reaffirmed through 1995. This was followed by a 1995 comprehensive visit and a 2000 interim report that accredited the college to the present.

The college's original goals for its students, as outlined in the 1972 student handbook, were, "to learn to think critically and independently, seeking knowledge needed to learn and develop the capacity to respond to the needs and feelings of others," goals that remain as much a part of our mission today as they were in 1972.

In its infancy, the college was named North Central Connecticut Community College. In 1972, the Board of Trustees officially renamed the college "Asnuntuck," Native American for "fresh water," a reference to the Podunk tribe that once resided in the area, to the nearby Connecticut River and Freshwater Brook, and to a strong interest in the environment and ecology.

The college has had three homes in its relatively brief life. It began in the former North School building in the Thompsonville section of Enfield. In 1974, the college moved to a leased warehouse on Phoenix Avenue but gradually outgrew that location. The college moved to its current home in 1983, the former Kosciuszko Junior High School at 170 Elm Street. The years between 1989 and 1994 saw extensive renovations to improve

classroom and laboratory space, revamp the auditorium, and add an annex to house the Learning Resource Center.

The college has been an autonomous institution throughout most of its existence, with the exception of a period from 1985 to 1989. During those years, it was part of the Capital Region Community College District with Greater Hartford Community College and Tunxis Community College in Farmington.

In 1992, the Connecticut legislature mandated merging the state's community and technical colleges. While there was no area technical college for an Asnuntuck merger, the legislature also required each community college to complement its general education with a technical focus, bringing about several programmatic changes, as well as the change to the name, Asnuntuck Community-Technical College. The technical focus remains, particularly in our recently established Manufacturing Technology (formerly known as Machine Technology) program, but the state community colleges dropped the word "technical" from their names in 1999, returning us to the simpler name, Asnuntuck Community College.

Asnuntuck Community College is located in Enfield, Connecticut, just off Interstate 91, approximately halfway between the metropolitan areas of Springfield, Massachusetts, to the north and Hartford, Connecticut, to the south. Asnuntuck serves the north-central Connecticut communities of East Granby, East Windsor, Ellington, Enfield, Somers, Stafford Springs, Suffield, and Windsor Locks, and also draws students from south-central Massachusetts and the greater Hartford area.

### **Connecticut Community College System Mission**

Asnuntuck is a member of the Connecticut community college system, a centralized authority for all twelve autonomous public community colleges in the state. The combination of being an independent unit and a member of a system provides the college with both flexibility and guidance as it serves the educational needs of our community. The mission statement of the community college system, approved by the Board of Trustees, the system's governing body, provides a general framework for the goals of each institution in the system.

The twelve two-year public colleges that comprise the system of Connecticut Community Colleges share a mission to make educational excellence and the opportunity for lifelong learning affordable and accessible to all Connecticut citizens. The colleges seek to enrich the intellectual, cultural, and social environments of the communities they serve. The colleges support the economic growth of the state and its citizens through programs that supply business and industry with a skilled, well-trained workforce.

## Mission of the College

The college mission statement has been revised periodically during the college's history, including in 1992 when the college became a "community-technical" institution. The 1992 revision was done with the input from a committee representing all areas of the college and was approved at an all-college meeting. Asnuntuck's 1992 mission statement offered a very specific view to the college's purposes:

Asnuntuck Community College offers the first two years of a high-quality, low-cost college education, as well as occupational and career-oriented programs, and a wide variety of community services, to all our students and our community. We endeavor to be the vital link between our students and their aspirations. We strive to be both a provider of academic knowledge and a nurturer of student self-development and involvement in the wider social and cultural community. Asnuntuck works to translate its advocacy for students into academic, vocational, and community programs that are responsive to the uniqueness of our students as well as to the special characteristics of our community. This is as evident in the college's delivery of administrative support services as it is in the classroom or in the counselor's office.

Asnuntuck dedicates itself to providing access to students whose opportunities may have been limited by responsibilities to work and family, or by race, gender, age, or disability. We recognize and welcome the diversity of our student population. The college community will do all it can to treat people with respect and compassion, to promote self-esteem in the individual, and to emphasize the process of learning while it provides programs for academic transfer, developmental and remedial education, community service, and vocational and technical skill development.

To meet the academic needs of its students, Asnuntuck Community College offers programs of study leading to associate's degrees and certificates in the liberal arts and in business-related and technical fields. New curricula are developed in response to student and community needs. The academic goals for our students include:

- an ability to use the English language and to communicate clearly and effectively;
- an understanding of, and ability to apply, quantitative relationships;
- an appreciation of the humanities and the arts, especially for their significance in the development of a global awareness; a sense of personal responsibility to the larger community; and an understanding of self-reflective, as well as analytic and critical thinking skills;
- an understanding of the influences and the usefulness of science and technology in all our activities;
- the development of the skills necessary for vocational and professional competence, and the recognition that those skills are a foundation of our connections to the world community and of our responsibilities to society and ourselves; and
- the development of life-long library and learning skills.

We value our role in fostering human respect and compassion by instilling confidence in the individual and emphasizing the belief that learning is a never-ending process.

### **Re-evaluation of the College Mission**

In the spring of 2003, the college re-evaluated its mission statement. In a process facilitated by Rickes Associates, an area educational consulting firm, the college revised its mission statement, making it shorter and more focused.

The Mission Review Team consisted of college employees, as well as members of the larger Asnuntuck community. The following individuals were members of the team:

Bruce Barmak, Assistant Principal, Enfield High School  
 Tim Hurlock, Dean of Administration  
 Karen Jarmoc, Asnuntuck Foundation  
 Nick Lefakis, Professor of Accounting  
 Qing Mack, Director of Institutional Research  
 Allyn S. Matthews, Adjunct Instructor of Business  
 Martha McLeod, President  
 Mike Moran, Director of the Learning Resource Center  
 Vincent Motto, Professor of Computer Information Systems and Director of Instruction  
 Laurie Rosner, Rockville Bank  
 Donna Shaw, Director of Admissions  
 Shawn Stevens, Enfield citizen  
 Mary Lou Strom, Enfield citizen  
 Paul Susen, Acting Chief Academic Officer, Community-Technical College System Office

The revised mission statement was approved at an all-college meeting May 7, 2003. The new college mission statement is as follows:

The mission of Asnuntuck Community College is to offer quality education in an accessible, affordable, and nurturing environment.

The college fulfills its mission by

- Offering associate's degree and certificate programs for transfer opportunities, career preparation and enhancement, and lifelong learning.
- Providing individualized support services to develop critical thinking skills, strengthen self-confidence, and foster personal growth.
- Supporting community and workforce development with business, industry, and community partnerships.

Individual areas of the college look to the college mission statement to guide all departmental activities. The former mission statement provided departmental guidance because of its comprehensive nature, especially guiding the academic and student services areas.

## **Appraisal**

### **Strengths**

- The system mission statement provides guidance and context to inform the college mission.
- The process by which the mission statement was revised actively sought out and received input from throughout the college and local community.
- The new mission statement is much more clear and concise than the former one.
- The new mission statement is easier to tie into college marketing efforts than the former one.
- The former mission statement is still available as a comprehensive guide to the college's objectives.

### **Concerns**

- Despite concerted efforts at disseminating information, some employees and, especially, students are not aware of the updated mission statement.

## **Projection**

- Every five years beginning in 2010, the President will appoint a committee to revisit the mission statement to ensure its currency and appropriateness among the entire college community.
- The college will expand current efforts to disseminate the new mission statement (for example, broadcasting it on the network of television monitors set up in the college hallways and printing it on the back of employee business cards).

# Standard Two: Planning and Evaluation

Overview: Planning and evaluation take place at the system-wide, college-wide, and department/area levels at Asnuntuck. Since the last comprehensive accreditation, the college created the Office of Institutional Research, which has provided more data and expertise for planning and evaluation than at any time in the college's history.

## Description

### Connecticut Community College System-Wide Planning and Evaluation

Connecticut Community College Strategic Goals, 2004-2009: In December 2003, the state community college Council of Presidents finalized a set of goals, objectives, and strategies for the upcoming five-year period. These system-wide strategic goals are as follows:

- System Goal 1: Enhance academic best practices/excellence and co-curricular experiences to facilitate the attainment of student goals and the advancement of student development and other constituent interests.

System Priorities:

- Collection of student goals/reasons for entering the learning community
- Assessment of student learning and development
- Evaluation and analysis of transfer articulation
- Graduate survey analysis
- Analysis of information from the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)

- System Goal 2: Become the leader in providing workforce training and lifelong learning for Connecticut.

System Priorities:

- Partnerships and collaborations with businesses; K-16; community-based organizations; and government agencies.

- System Goal 3: Enhance teaching and learning through the management of human resources, programs, and support services that are designed around relevance to student, state, and staff needs to utilize the highest quality administrative and instructional technologies.

System Priorities:

- Communications and relationships
  - Professional development
  - Diversity
  - Human resources
- System Goal 4: Institutionalize the strategic planning process, including planning for communications; coordinating institutional planning with system planning; planning for safe, state-of-the-art, and educationally advanced facilities; planning for resource development and allocation; and planning for data-based decision making.

System Priorities:

- Institutional effectiveness
- Clarity and consistency of messages
- Safe and effective facilities
- A consistent funding base
- Resource allocation
- Data-based decision making

The March 2005 mid-year update to the system planning is available in the workroom.

### **College-Wide Planning and Evaluation at Asnuntuck**

Asnuntuck Community College Strategic Plan, 2004-2009: At the college pre-semester professional days before the fall semester of 2002, Asnuntuck employees met to begin identifying the critical issues that would inform an institutional strategic plan, as well as the revision of the college mission statement (See Standard 1). The issues identified, along with the system strategic goals developed by the Council of Presidents, led to Asnuntuck's President charging the newly formed reaccreditation Steering Committee with developing a draft of Asnuntuck's Strategic Plan. The plan required the following factors:

- That objectives and strategies be established at the department level.
- That specific responsibilities and timetables be assigned for implementing the objectives.
- That there be broad-based participation by faculty, administrators, and staff.
- That strategies for resource allocation be established.
- That research methods for measuring progress be established in every department.
- That the accomplishment of objectives in each department be evaluated.
- That feedback about the achievement of college-wide goals and objectives be provided annually for accountability and program improvement.
- That feedback is used to create and/or modify college-wide goals, objectives, and action items to address deficiencies and new opportunities.

The strategic planning process continued facilitated by Rickes Associates at an All-College Meeting on April 11, 2003. During the first part of the planning process, three separate teams were created, one for each review process: Mission, Credit Program Array, and Non-Credit Program Array. Team members were selected by the President and the President's Cabinet to represent a cross-section of the college and the community. Participant names and affiliations are listed in the respective sections of this document.

Each team began with a half-day meeting to assess the current situation and develop evaluation criteria for the review. Participants were asked to complete a homework assignment based upon the team's activities and the ideas developed during the first meeting. The results of the session and the homework were compiled and served as the basis of a discussion in a second meeting with each team. The purpose of each of these meetings was to develop recommendations relative to the charge of each team. A follow-up All-College Meeting on May 7, 2003 reviewed the strategic planning process and presented the recommendations of each team.

Asnuntuck's complete strategic plan is available in the workroom. An outline of the plan is as follows:

Asnuntuck Goal 1: Provide quality instruction in a nurturing environment that enables students to attain their goals.

- Objective A: Improve the quality of academic programs by the ongoing review and assessment of programs and curriculums.
- Objective B: Develop new academic programs and curriculums to meet the needs of students, business, and the community.
- Objective C: Enhance instruction through the use of technology.
- Objective D: Enhance instruction through professional development of faculty and academic staff.
- Objective E: Enhance academic support services.
- Objective F: Increase student use of online services including financial aid, admissions, and registration.
- Objective G: Enhance academic advising.
- Objective H: Expand transfer opportunities for our students.
- Objective I: Improve student involvement with the institution.

Asnuntuck Goal 2: Respond to community and business needs and establish partnerships to enhance college-community relationships.

- Objective A: Provide businesses with workforce training.
- Objective B: Provide individuals with workforce training.
- Objective C: Provide cost-effective Continuing Education and Business and Industry programs.
- Objective D: Enhance employees' and students' participation in community services.

Asnuntuck Goal 3: Enhance teaching and learning through the management of human resources, programs, and support services that are designed around relevance to student, state, and staff needs to utilize the highest quality administrative and instructional technologies.

- Objective A: Provide employee development programs that meet the needs of all full- and part-time constituencies.
- Objective B: Meet all mandated compliance issues.
- Objective C: Address ERIP issues while continuing to provide Human Resource programs and services.

Asnuntuck Goal 4: Conform to NEASC standards regarding assessment and institutional effectiveness.

- Objective A: Develop and implement a strategic plan
- Objective B: Monitor college operations through an annual budget process.
- Objective C: Develop and implement an institution-wide marketing and recruiting plan.
- Objective D: Enhance internal college communication.
- Objective E: Finalize the campus Master Plan.
- Objective F: Develop five-year deferred maintenance plan.
- Objective G: Increase student enrollment and retention for the purpose of revenue stability.
- Objective H: Achieve Board policy for contingency reserves.
- Objective I: Establish Continuing Education as a self-supporting center by generating revenue to match expenses.
- Objective J: Increase assets of the Asnuntuck Community College Foundation.

Asnuntuck's Strategic Plan is revisited and updated annually based on the progress made at the department and individual levels.

Institutional Research Office Activities: Contemporaneous with development of the Strategic Plan, the Institutional Research Office coordinated and administered several surveys and evaluation projects that inform planning at the college during recent years. Among the areas in which these data have been utilized are scheduling of courses, recruitment of new students, retention of returning students, program review, general marketing of the college, instructional methods, student services, institutional advancement, and further institutional research. (Reports of these surveys are available in the workroom.)

- New Student Survey: The New Student Survey was piloted in 2001 and then conducted full-scale in 2002, 2003, and 2004. The Institutional Research Office mails about five hundred surveys to new and new transfer students each fall semester. The survey results are shared by e-mail, hardcopies or by section of tables with specific groups. Information on the day and the time when new students prefer to take classes is shared with the college Scheduling Committee to facilitate better course

scheduling. Student education goals information is reported to the state Department of Higher Education each year for the state mandatory accountability report. Other information collected from this survey was also used by the college Marketing Committee to better target our potential students.

- Graduate Student Survey: This survey (also called the “six-month out survey”) has been sent every November to the immediate past spring semester graduates since 1999. Each year, the college surveys about 200 graduates. The Institutional Research office handles all mailings, collects the survey forms, and sends them to the system office. An outside vendor handles data entry. Along with overall college planning, the Graduate Student Survey data is used for program review and for state Department of Higher Education performance measures reporting.

- Summer Course Survey: In fall 2004, the college conducted an in-class survey to measure student intention and interest in taking summer courses, as well as what courses our students were interested in taking. The data were used by the Scheduling Committee to assist the design of Summer 2005 course schedule and for future summer course scheduling.

- Course Postcard Survey: In early fall 2004, a post card was mailed to all Liberal Arts and General Studies program students, asking them to provide some feedback on possible courses. Only one mailing was done. Unfortunately, the return rate was very low, and the data has not yet been fully analyzed. This information should prove useful to guide the college in developing more new course offerings geared toward student needs.

- Master Plan Survey: In August 2002, a space utilization survey was emailed from the Institutional Research Office to all college employees. Questions covered topics from individual and departmental space needs, to general thoughts such as, “If you could make just one space-related change on campus, what would that change be?” Responses collected from the surveys were directly passed to the consultant who incorporated the survey result in the final draft of the college Master Plan.

- Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE): The Community College Leadership Program of the University of Texas has developed an assessment instrument, designed to be administered in class to a pre-determined sample of students, targeting institutional practices and student behaviors that are highly correlated with student learning and retention. The instrument touches on both the classroom and co-curricula experience, and asks students about their college experiences. In spring 2004, 52 classes with about 950 students were surveyed. The survey completion rate was 49 percent.

In November 2004, the college results were released and shared with the college community. The CCSSE report included five benchmarks encompassing thirty-eight engagement items from the survey that reflect many of the most important aspects of student experience. Asnuntuck scored higher than the average on the first benchmark

item: Active and Collaborative Learning. Asnuntuck scored lower on the rest of the four benchmark items, including Student Effort, Academic Challenge, Student-Faculty Interaction, and Support for Learners. Because this was the first time we participated in the CCSSE survey, the college is using the CCSSE results to begin a dialogue with faculty, Student Services, and the college community in general regarding student perceptions and experiences.

The CCSSE survey will be repeated in the state community college system in even-numbered years. As a result of random selection of sections surveyed, a greater proportion of students in the 2004 survey came from classes taught by adjunct faculty members. Future CCSSE surveys should generate more information from students in courses taught by full-time faculty members as well.

- Community College Faculty Survey of Student Engagement: This online survey was conducted in fall 2004 by the Community College Leadership Program of the University of Texas in conjunction with Community College Survey of Student Engagement. The survey was part of a national effort to improve community college quality, and what faculty members report will be used to better serve the college. Survey results were made available in spring 2005.
- Web Survey: A pilot survey of student intention to return to take classes in Spring 2004 was done in November 2003. Unfortunately, due to Banner report capacity, the data is not widely used.
- Retention Phone Survey: In May 2003, every employee in the college was assigned fifteen to twenty students to call. A questionnaire was designed by the Marketing Committee, and most of the employees made the calls to students. The information was collected and compiled by the Institutional Research Office and shared with the college Cabinet.
- Non-Returning Student Survey: The Institutional Research Office obtained a \$1,000 mini-grant from Northeast Association for Institutional Research to survey students who enrolled in fall 2000 and have not returned to the college since. The survey was mailed in fall 2003. Data have been collected and the final report was presented to the Faculty Council at its December 2004 meeting.

Reports of the results of these surveys are available in the workroom. In addition to providing data to inform area and college-wide planning, each of these evaluation activities are assessed for usefulness and cost-benefit to determine if they should be repeated, refined, or omitted from future evaluation plans.

### **Area Planning and Evaluation Activities**

As an outgrowth of the 2004-2009 Strategic Plan, each major area of the college conducts its own regular planning activities. Deans and Directors (as well as many individual

employees below the level of Dean and Director) in every area of the college develop yearly work plans (now called “Action Plans”) that are approved by their supervisors. Individual faculty members plan yearly “additional responsibilities” plans that outline their contributions to the college beyond the classroom. These plans are submitted to the Academic Dean in accordance with the collective bargaining agreement. All areas of the college conduct regular “staff” meetings for area planning.

Evaluation is also conducted within each area of the college. For example, the business area and Financial Aid Office are audited regularly by outside agencies. Students in every course evaluate all teaching faculty. Academic areas conduct regular program or discipline evaluations, and each “occupational” program (Accounting, Business, Communication and Broadcasting, Computer Information Systems, Criminal Justice, Early Childhood Education, Human Services, and Manufacturing Technology) has an Advisory Board that meets regularly for outside feedback and evaluation. (Recent Advisory Board minutes are available in the workroom.) The Learning Resource Center has students fill out evaluation forms for each library instruction class. Student services staff members often meet with area high school counselors for feedback on Asnuntuck’s programs and courses. The Information Technology department gets feedback from the Computer Users Group.

These are only a few examples of area planning and evaluation. Similar activities take place regularly in every area of the college.

### **Funding for Planning and Evaluation**

In 2000, the college created a budget department code for Strategic Planning that has ranged from \$5,000 to \$10,000 each year. In addition to that account, much of the Institutional Research budget goes directly toward planning and evaluation. Several other budgetary items also cover planning and evaluation. For instance, the college paid Rickes Associates to gather information from the college community through focus groups and meetings to produce a Space Utilization Plan that forms the basis of the Master Plan. Separately, the college also contracted with Rickes Associates to help jumpstart the Strategic Plan shortly after President McLeod arrived in 2003. Funding for the architect of the college Master Plan came directly from the Board of Trustees. The continued funding of the Institutional Research Office is key to planning and evaluation at the college. It is also important to note that the labor and human resources involved in planning and evaluation at every level of the college are much more significant than any specific budget line item.

# Appraisal

## Strengths

- As part of the Connecticut community college system, the college participates in the system planning process, helping to focus Asnuntuck's strategic planning process. Asnuntuck's President, Deans, and Directors all participated in system-wide planning.
- Each division of the college has its own action plan to meet the goals and objectives of the college's strategic plan.
- Despite the last four years of state budget reductions, the college has committed the necessary resources for essential planning and evaluation activities.
- The college plans to submit its first campus Master Plan to the Board of Trustees for review and approval in fall 2005.
- College-wide planning and evaluation have involved wide employee participation whenever possible.
- The creation of the Institutional Research Office has led to improved direction and leadership in evaluation and supplied considerably more data than had ever been available in the college's history.

## Concerns

- Because of the college's commuter student population, it is difficult to ensure enough direct student representation or input into the planning process.
- The entire college community is not yet fully aware of the college's strategic plan.
- As one of the smallest institutions in the state community college system with limited resources and staff, the college sometimes faces some difficulty prioritizing and implementing the system strategic plan on the campus level.
- While the college currently gathers a wealth of data, we do not yet have complete structure and resources to interpret and utilize all of our data.
- The results of the CCSSE survey indicate that Asnuntuck scored below the state and national benchmarks in four areas.
- Data reporting required by the state system is so demanding that it reduces the amount of time the one-person institutional research office can devote to research for the college itself.

## **Projection**

- The college will implement the interventions indicated by Community College Survey of Student Engagement data, as well as those indicated by other data gathered. In addition, the state community college system will continue to conduct CCSSE in even-numbered years, giving the college a more well-rounded sample from our college.
- When funding becomes available, the college will implement the campus Master Plan that will enhance the teaching and learning environment, build infrastructure, and address target deficiencies.
- As the new governance model is implemented, the proposed Shared Governance Council will seek systematic ways to incorporate planning and evaluation into the more formal governance structure.
- The college will develop, implement, and monitor annual action plans at the department level to continue meeting the college's strategic planning goals.

# Standard Three: Organization and Governance

Overview: Externally, the college is governed by the Board of Trustees of Community-Technical Colleges. Internally, the college has two overlapping but non-competing organizational structures: the reporting structure and the governance system. The reporting structure is the formal organization of ranks and of classifications established by collective bargaining. The governance system is a less formal collection of permanent and shifting committees and organizations. In an effort to codify the governance system and make it more responsive to college needs, the college community has recently begun a process of proposing a more formal governance structure.

## Description

### The Board

Ultimate authority for the governance of Asnuntuck is vested in the Board of Trustees of Community-Technical Colleges. (Although the colleges recently dropped “technical” from our names, the term has remained in the formal Board name.) The Board of Trustees has responsibility for governance of Connecticut’s system of twelve community colleges.

The duties and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees are clearly defined in Public Act 92-126 (available in the workroom) and in the comprehensive mission statement for the community-technical college system (available in the workroom).

The Chancellor of the Board of Trustees is the chief agent of the Board and is responsible for providing for proper functioning of the Board and its committees and for assuring system compliance with the Board actions. A system office staff member in the appropriate area assists each committee and is responsible to the Chancellor. The Board has established the following committees: Academic Policies and Student Affairs, Budget and Facilities, Personnel, Marketing and Development, and Collective Bargaining.

The Board holds eleven regularly scheduled meetings per year and four to six special meetings. The duration of the meetings normally ranges from three to four and one-half

hours. Average attendance at meetings is approximately seventy percent of Board membership.

In accordance with its statutory mandate, the Board appoints for each institution under its jurisdiction a regional council representative of the geographical area served. Each such council may advise the Board with respect to appropriate educational programs to meet the needs of the communities in the region it represents. Meetings are held with college personnel on a regular schedule. The Board periodically requests a report from regional councils, and the Board is linked to the members of the councils individually and collectively for the purposes of communication.

The Board of Trustees of Community-Technical Colleges establishes policy and takes other action as needed with respect to development and maintenance of the educational programs and services of the community-technical college system. The Chancellor, the chief agent of the Board of Trustees, is responsible for providing for proper functioning of the Board and its committees and for assuring system compliance with Board actions. A system office staff member in the appropriate area assists each committee and is responsible to the Chancellor.

A series of system-wide "councils" provides for frequent communication among community-technical college administrators. Below the level of the Council of Presidents, which is chaired by the Chancellor, are the Councils of Academic Deans/Deans of Technical Education, Deans of Student Affairs, Deans of Community Services and Continuing Education, and Deans of Administration. A system office staff member in the most appropriate area is assigned as liaison to each council. At least one President is also assigned as liaison to each council.

The various Deans Councils forward to the Council of Presidents and the Chancellor their recommendations regarding their own Council deliberations, as well as their reactions to recommendations generated by affiliate Councils. Through the Chancellor, the Council of Presidents forwards to the appropriate Board committee recommendations concerning its own deliberations as well as reactions to recommendations forwarded by Councils of Deans. Finally, the Chancellor offers recommendations to the Board of Trustees, or its committees, which may or may not concur with those offered by the Council of Presidents or by other system-wide Councils.

As an agency of the state, the community-technical college system works with, and counts upon the support of, a variety of other state agencies. The State Board of Governors for Higher Education has responsibility for the overall coordination of all public higher education. The State Department of Administrative Services, through its Division of Personnel, concerned with classified state employees, and the Department of Public Works, concerned with facilities development, provide many services to assist the system in its operations. From time to time, the system and the individual colleges may have occasion to work with other state agencies depending on the nature of an issue that may arise.

## **The President's Role**

In accordance with policies established by the Board of Trustees, the duties and responsibilities of each community college President include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Serves as the chief executive officer of the college and in this capacity is the decision-making authority for the college, providing reports and making recommendations directly to the Chancellor of the Board of Trustees;
- Develops and maintains an appropriate administrative organization and management team for the college consistent with Board policies;
- Provides and maintains educational programs in cooperation with the professional staff of the college as authorized by the Board of Trustees and other state authorities;
- Serves as an educational leader in the community and may be called upon to assume a leadership role in a variety of community affairs, consistent with the time limits imposed by the President's responsibilities to the college;
- Serves as chief spokesperson for the college and develops and maintains effective relations with all elements of the community served by the college;
- Encourages the participation of the professional staff and other elements of the college community in the planning, development, and operation of the institution while preserving the ultimate executive authority and responsibility of the President and the Board of Trustees; in so doing, he or she should make clear that the President does not have the authority to approve, agree to, or acquiesce in policies, practices, or procedures which, expressly or by implication, limit or condition the authority of the President to carry out his or her responsibilities as chief academic and executive officer of the college, unless the contrary is indicated by action of the Board and duly recorded in its records;
- Recommends to the Board of Trustees all personnel for appointment, except as the Board may otherwise provide; supervises and evaluates all personnel in accordance with salary schedules, personnel policies established through the Board of Trustees, and the collective bargaining agreement; provides guidance to members of the professional staff in their professional development; determines that affirmative action and equal opportunity procedures and policies are effectively implemented.
- Directs and supervises, in cooperation with the Chancellor, the planning and development of the college's plant and facilities;
- Directs the expenditures of funds within allocations made by the Board of Trustees from appropriations authorized by the general assembly and endeavors to develop and

secure other sources of funding, including federal and private funds, to augment and enhance the educational programs of the college;

- Prepares budgets according to agreed-upon formulas as required by the Board of Trustees, the Board of Higher Education, and other state agencies, submitting same to the Chancellor for coordination and consolidation and recommendation to the Board of Trustees.
- Provides suitable and necessary statistical and financial data for projects, studies, and other purposes as requested by the Board and/or the Chancellor, or other state agencies, or as agreed to by the Presidents and the Chancellor;
- Meets on a regular basis with the Chancellor as a means of maintaining necessary communication and orderly procedural functions of the system office and the community-technical colleges;
- Prepares and submits to the Board of Trustees, either through the Chancellor or the appropriate Board committees, a) items of information, b) items of an emergency nature, c) resolutions for action;
- Prepares an annual report for the Board of Trustees which clearly reveals the strengths, weaknesses, needs, and limitations of the preceding year of operation and which provides recommendations for future action and planning.

Due to Asnuntuck's small size, the President is a very visible member of the college community and is unusually accessible to all employees as well as students. In addition to this relatively "open-door" accessibility, the President exercises management of the institution through weekly meetings with the Cabinet.

### **The President's Cabinet**

The primary function of the Cabinet is to advise the President and provide information about various divisions of the college. The Cabinet meets weekly and consists of the President and her Executive Assistant, the Dean of Student Services, the Dean of Administration, the Dean of Academic Affairs, the Director of Human Resources, and the Director of Continuing Education. The Director of Institutional Research does not attend Cabinet meetings, but she meets weekly with the President and often brings issues of interest to the Cabinet. She also meets with other groups on campus as needed and maintains close contact with the Cabinet.

Any member can raise Cabinet agenda items, and the President also brings agenda items from her work with the community college system Council of Presidents. Minutes of the Cabinet meetings are posted on the college server for access by all college employees. Major issues from the Cabinet may also be raised at all-college meetings. The President

also meets with the members of the Cabinet individually on a weekly basis, and each Cabinet member meets with his or her respective staff on an as needed basis or monthly.

### **Student Services**

The Student Services division of the college consists of Admissions, Financial Aid, the Records Office, the counselors, the Children's Reading Room, the Information Center, and the Evening Coordinator. The Dean of Student Services heads the division and has an open-door policy. The Dean meets weekly in Cabinet where information is shared and discussion leads to policy decisions.

Student Services staff meet once a month as a group. Individual staff members submit agenda items along with items that the Dean would like to cover. There is a free exchange of information and ideas including feedback and recommendations from the staff that the Dean presents at Cabinet. With the open-door policy, staff and students feel comfortable seeking advice and guidance from the Dean and all other Student Services staff.

### **Academic Affairs**

Academic Affairs is headed by the Dean of Academic Affairs, who serves as the college's chief academic officer. The areas under her supervision include the Academic Affairs Office staff, the Learning Resource Center, the Academic Skills Center, and all individual faculty members. This area coordinates all credit course offerings, both on campus and off (in cooperation with Continuing Education). The two major subdivisions of Academic Affairs are Faculty Council and Academic Staff.

Faculty Council: All full-time faculty members are members of the Faculty Council. A chairperson is elected each year to facilitate the monthly meetings. Individual faculty members generate agenda items for discussion at the meetings, and the Dean of Academic Affairs facilitates communication between faculty members and the President and Cabinet. There are two formal standing committees of Faculty Council, Curriculum and Standards (which is charged with all issues relating to the courses and academics) and Instructional Excellence (which is charged with enhancing teaching and learning at the college). In addition, the Scheduling Committee, which manages course-scheduling issues, generally reports to Faculty Council.

In an effort to promote interdepartmental cooperation, the "expanded" Faculty Council meets twice a semester. This group includes the Director of the Learning Resource Center, the Director of the Academic Skills Center, the Director of Admissions, Registrar, the Director of Financial Aid, the Tech Prep Coordinator, and the Counselors.

Academic Staff: The "non-teaching" members of the academic area make up the Academic Staff. This includes the staff of the Learning Resource Center, the Academic

Skills Center, and the Office of Academic Affairs. The Dean of Academic Affairs leads this group in monthly meetings and serves as a conduit to the President and Cabinet. Members of the Academic Staff frequently serve on committees more closely associated with Faculty Council, including Curriculum and Standards, Instructional Excellence, and Scheduling. In the coming year, the Dean of Academic Affairs will work with a new committee, an Academic Council. The Academic Council will be a college-wide committee comprised of members of the faculty, academic staff, Student Services, and Continuing Education. The Council will collaboratively address issues that impact the academic success of students and promote a learning-centered environment.

### **Administrative Services**

The Administrative Services area consists of the Business Office, Instructional Technology, Security, and the Facilities department. Like other administrators on campus, the Dean has an open-door policy and relates information to and from the Cabinet. Rather than monthly staff meetings, most meetings in this area take place on an ad-hoc basis as needs arise. The mission statement for Administrative Services is as follows:

The administrative services staff dedicates itself to providing quality service to the Asnuntuck Community College community. The entire staff will provide an open-door policy in regard to information, advice, and assistance to the college's community. We are all committed to provide quality service to all people we encounter; this service will be done professionally and in a pleasant, congenial manner.

### **Continuing Education**

The Continuing Education Division encompasses the Small Business Development Center; Business, Industry, and Manufacturing; Manufacturing Technology; and extension courses. The area includes the Director of Continuing Education, various personnel assigned to each area, and two support personnel. Continuing Education meets monthly as an entire group. Meetings are held weekly with the Director and individual units. Informal communication within Continuing Education occurs frequently due to the proximity of the offices.

Other issues arise due to the unique nature of Continuing Education. By definition, Continuing Education collaborates with organizations other than state agencies or other than academic organizations. Some collaborative initiatives involve pay practices not clearly covered by state policy. Also, some hiring practices that are appropriate in business and industry may not be compatible with state guidelines. In addition, decisions that arise from these partnerships may need to be made in "real time" rather than with the lengthier process common to academic institutions.

## **Student Government**

As an outgrowth of the college enrolling more full-time students of traditional college age, a group of highly motivated students formed a traditional student senate during the 1994-95 academic year. The senate has grown to give the students an expanded voice in the governance structure, in addition to their contributions to various committees.

The student senate mission statement is as follows:

We, the members of the Asnuntuck Community College Student Senate, strive to represent the students in matters concerning their interests including establishing and maintaining working communications with the staff and faculty. The senate also provides students with the opportunities to participate in governmental procedures and leadership.

The senate emphasizes “community” in Asnuntuck Community College by sponsoring and expanding programs of an educational, cultural, social, and recreational nature, therefore enhancing and broadening the perspective of the community. The senate also works to establish a forum of unification among the students, which will aid in the success of several student activities that help the students find their social and self-satisfaction.

In addition, student leaders are also representatives on several college committees, most notably Curriculum and Standards, the Reaccreditation Steering Committee, and the recent Presidential Search Committee.

## **Proposed New Shared Governance Model**

Asnuntuck’s small size naturally leads to a somewhat informal governance system. The positive aspect of this informality is that each employee and student at the college has the opportunity to raise concerns directly with upper levels of the reporting structure. Unfortunately, this can sometimes lead to confusion or inefficiency in governance communication and decision-making. To address this situation, in 2004, the college began the process of proposing and implementing a revised governance structure that would be more formal while preserving the accessibility through our small college reporting structure.

Every effort has been made to ensure that everyone at the college has the opportunity for input into the consideration of our governance structure. The action timeline for our governance revision is listed below.

- May 2004: Four community college models were sent out to all employees on email along with the timetable of establishing the new model. (These models—from

Capital, Middlesex, Quinebaug Valley, and Tunxis Community Colleges—are available in the workroom.)

- May 2004 and July 2004: Two all-college roundtable discussions were convened in the Learning Resource Center Conference Room to discuss expectations and hopes for a new governance structure.
- September 2004: Three faculty members who have worked under different governance models at other colleges in the state community college system (Gateway, Capital, and Tunxis) presented the pros and cons of their models at an all-college panel discussion at the all-college meeting. The meeting was moderated by an Asnuntuck faculty member currently reassigned to work for the Congress of Connecticut Community Colleges, the union for faculty and professional staff members.
- October 2004: A full professional day was held focused on governance using the Appreciative Inquiry method of building an organization by focusing on its strengths. (The college will do much of its planning using the Appreciative Inquiry method.) Working in pairs, small groups, and as a whole group, participants worked on developing a concrete model for governance at Asnuntuck.
- November 2004 to March 2005: A small group of college employees formed a Governance Committee and met periodically to develop a model to be presented at an all college meeting in May.
- May 2005: The Governance Committee presented a “shared governance model” at an all-college meeting. Following detailed discussion of the proposed governance model, the college community expressed general agreement with the basics of the shared governance model and voted to continue considering the model in fall 2005.
- Fall 2005: Discussion and consideration of the shared governance model will continue at an all-college meeting.
- Annually: There will be a structure and process in place to discuss, evaluate, and improve governance at Asnuntuck.

At the May 2005 all-college meeting, the shared governance model presented by the Governance Committee included two basic precepts:

- that governance focus on a decision-making process in support of achieving the college’s mission
- that a shared governance model can strengthen the college through respectful, honest communication and trust built through cooperative action

The Governance Committee also emphasized that an effective governance model must be based on valuing these governance qualities:

- shared commitment to the college mission
- emphasis on student learning as the first priority
- trust, respect, and collegiality throughout the college
- open communication across areas and levels of the college
- access to and participation in governance by all members of the college community
- consensus-building across areas and levels of the college
- input on decisions by people responsible for carrying out or affected by those decisions
- clear and open reasons for decisions and an appeals process
- clearly defined roles and responsibilities
- accountability in decision-making
- continuous improvement in governance

The Shared Governance Model presented by the Governance Committee centers around a proposed Shared Governance Council, composed of elected representatives from faculty, staff, students, and management. The Council is envisioned as an advisory body of campus-wide representatives who participate in the decision-making process of the college through recommendations made directly to the President. This vision is consistent with the definition of what shared governance is and what it is not, as outlined below:

Definition of Shared Governance:

What Shared Governance *Is*

- a participatory and advisory governance system that fosters the valuing of input and contributions of faculty, staff, and students relating to the educational mission of the college
- a vehicle for campus-wide participation in the decision-making process through recommendations made directly to the President
- an opportunity to introduce, analyze, and discuss college goals, policies, and procedures and to make recommendations for consideration in making decisions relative to these important college matters
- a formal, deliberate process
- a forum for active involvement by college employees and students that will be recognized and supported by the college administration
- a process based on open communication and consensus building
- a process involving people with responsibility and accountability to the campus as a whole
- a structure for collaborative decision-making

What Shared Governance *Is Not*

- a replacement for administrative functions
- a process to supersede the authority of the President or the Board of Trustees
- a platform to promote the interest of individual constituencies

- an arena to address all of the concerns of the campus community
- a personality-driven process
- a forum for personal issues or complaints
- a perfect process

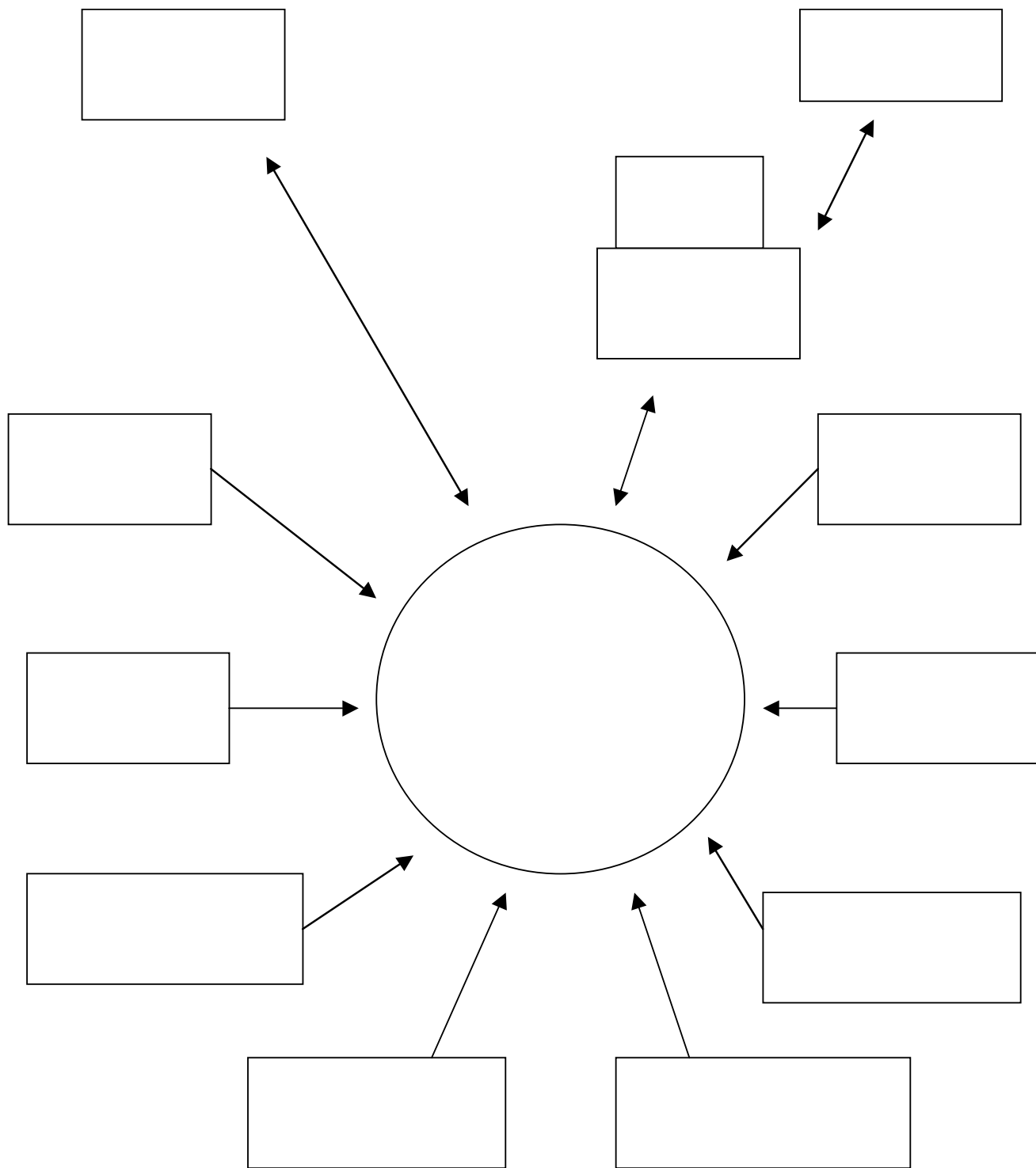
Clarification of Roles and Responsibilities: Under the Connecticut community college system, the Board of Trustees has the responsibility to establish and periodically evaluate all policies regarding the governance and operations of the college. Responsibility for making decisions on policies and for the administration of these policies is delegated to the President.

While the policies of the college require Board of Trustees' approval, the authority for making decisions on policies and for developing procedures to implement these policies is delegated to the President, subject to Board review.

While the President has the authority to make decisions on policy and to develop procedures, guidelines, and practices for the sound operations of the college, in a shared governance system, the President solicits and receives advice and recommendations to assist with policy decision-making and for the development of such procedures, guidelines, and practices from the President's senior staff, the faculty, operational staff, other administrators, students, and the system's legal counsel, as needed.

Several existing committees currently serve to promote the shared governance system. These committees involve and solicit college-wide involvement in the decision-making process at the college. These committees would complement the work of the Council, and they include the Faculty Council, Curriculum and Standards, Information Resources and Technology, Scheduling, and Instructional Excellence. Three proposed committees would also complement the Council: Student Life, Staff and Organizational Life, and Planning and Budget.

The following page shows is a visual representation of the proposed shared governance model:



**Proposed College Shared Governance Model**

Governance will be discussed and refined in the fall of 2005 with hopes of finalizing the model.

## **Appraisal**

### **Strengths**

- The college's revision of its governance model has been a very open process undertaken with the involvement and support of people for every area of the institution.
- The collective bargaining agreement provides a great deal of guidance on governance and reporting issues.
- There are many active committees and working groups at the college that accomplish many significant tasks related to college governance. Some of these are standing committees, and many are flexible, ad hoc groups that are brought into existence to address developing issues.
- The Curriculum and Standards Committee includes representatives from all areas of the college (although primarily academic) to address curricular initiatives as well as concerns and issues surrounding academic standards.
- Curriculum and Standard's decision-making process is very clear, and a system of communication from the committee to faculty and the larger community is in place and working effectively.
- The Instructional Excellence Committee is very active, both on campus and within the state community college system.
- The Scheduling Committee oversight insures that the course schedule is as coherent and timely as possible.
- Asnuntuck's chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa honor society is extremely active, has been honored by its national organization many times, and is a very strong complement to the student government in giving voice to issues that concern our students.

### **Concerns**

- Decision paths would be clearer with a college policies and procedures manual.
- The Curriculum and Standards Committee primarily responds to proposals initiated by faculty, the academic area or system-wide academic issues. As a result, much of our work has focused on approving new programs and courses.

- There is some disagreement among faculty and administrators about whether or not Faculty Council is truly a part of the current governance structure. A new governance model will offer a clearer outline of faculty's role in a more participatory form of shared governance at the college.
- Due to the extensive work in curriculum revision, the Curriculum and Standards Committee has been limited in the "standards" area—although it has attended to policies regarding grading, placement, and prerequisites.
- Due to the size of the college, it is hard to maintain the balance of reducing the number of courses canceled and adding the number of new courses.

## **Projection**

- The roles of Faculty Council and Curriculum and Standards will be more clearly defined in the new governance structure.
- The college will evaluate the effectiveness of its governance system annually.
- The Academic Affairs and Continuing Education divisions will continue to develop shared credit/non-credit courses and programs.
- The Office of Human Resources will begin work on a policies and procedures manual in the 2005-2006 academic year.

# Standard Four: Programs and Instruction

Overview: The college fulfills its mission of offering quality education in an accessible, affordable, and nurturing environment through thirteen associate degree programs and eighteen certificate programs for transfer opportunities, career preparation and enhancement, and lifelong learning. These programs are planned and evaluated at both a state and local level, and carried out through on-ground classroom instruction, online learning, and, in the case of some programs, practicum, internship, or student teaching experiences. Each degree program has specific learning outcomes and, per mandates of both the Connecticut Department of Higher Education and the Connecticut Community College System, requires at least one-third of the curriculum to be comprised of specific general education courses in English, mathematics, science, social science, humanities, and fine arts. Additionally, the college requires a specific diversity course, Self and Others, which also contains a service-learning component.

## Description

### Programs of Study

The college offers degree and certificate programs, as outlined on page 51 through 115 of the current catalog. The Associate of Arts in Liberal Arts provides a broad background in humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and mathematics. In conjunction with early advising from four-year institutions, this degree provides a good transfer program. (See current catalog pages 107-110 for liberal arts and fine arts program descriptions.)

The college also offers an Associate in Science degree in General Studies. The general studies curriculum is designed for students who wish to explore a broad range of subjects and interests. Maximum flexibility in the choice of courses is permitted. While a solid transfer degree, this is often the program of choice for students who seek education as a lifelong endeavor. (See catalog program description page 93.)

Policies and procedures for admission and retention, including degree and certificate students, non-degree students, transfer students, and international students are clearly published in the college catalog, pages 5-22. There are no special admission requirements

for individual associate degree programs, which are open to any student who is admitted to the college.

The college attempts to provide sufficient resources to sustain and improve programs and instruction, especially in the areas of academic computing, radio and television support technology, manufacturing technology, audio-visual classroom support, and faculty computing. For example, the Information Technology Department regularly upgrades and replaces computers and computer labs and provides individual support to faculty and staff. Information Technology staff also provides technical support to the Communications program and its computer-based requirements, upgrades hardware and software as required, and provides assistance on an individual basis. Similarly, the Media Services area of the Learning Resource Center is responsible for providing support to the teaching faculty and the college where necessary. Additionally, the college supports its instructional program by providing funds for professional development, departmental budgets, and faculty training.

Requirements for degree and certificate programs are published in the catalog, on the college web site, and in plan of study documents that are continuously updated. These are available in the student counseling and general information areas of the college. One updated plan of study is kept in every matriculated student's file to track course completions and for scheduling reference. (All degree and certificate program plan of study documents are available in the workroom.)

Each degree program requires a basic core of courses in composition, mathematics, science, humanities, fine arts, communications, and the social sciences, with appropriate prerequisites in place. Syllabi contain course objectives and outcomes including knowledge and intellectual skills to be mastered, methods of inquiry, and, where appropriate, creative abilities, values, and specific career preparation. Programs are logically designed and sequenced, allowing students to move from introductory level courses to more specialized requirements, which build upon past learning. Suggested course sequences for each program are listed in the catalog.

Some programs contain internship or experiential learning opportunities, including student teaching experiences, which serve as capstone courses, bringing together the learning that has taken place during the earlier part of the program. Occasionally, it is necessary to substitute a course for one that is a requirement in the student's program of study. Course substitutions are consistently and effectively evaluated according to a process involving the faculty advisor, program coordinator, counselor, and the Academic Dean. Although program goals and objectives are not currently published in the college catalog, they are on file in the Office of Academic Affairs.

### **Academic Planning and Evaluation**

The college undertakes academic planning and evaluation in a variety of ways. It establishes new courses, programs, and certificates through the Curriculum and Standards

Committee, a standing committee of the Faculty Council. The committee consists primarily of college faculty members, but also includes professional staff and student representatives, along with the Dean of Academic Affairs. The committee reviews and discusses proposals for new courses, programs, certificates, and program revisions. The committee considers each proposal and makes its recommendation to the college President through the Academic Dean. In making its recommendations, the committee considers such factors as student demand, occupational trends, transfer possibilities, program objectives, and expected costs and needed resources. If required, the recommendations are sent from the college President to the Board of Trustees and the Connecticut Department of Higher Education.

Academic planning is also undertaken, in a more specific role, by the Scheduling Committee. The Scheduling Committee, headed by the Dean of Academic Affairs and comprised of representatives from the college's faculty, academic staff, institutional research office, and office of the registrar, meets regularly to develop course schedules up to one year in advance and to make them available to students in a timely way. This helps students plan their academic careers and have a clearer idea—earlier on—about what specific courses will be offered in future semesters.

Each occupational program and non-program academic area at the college undertakes a periodical self-study reflecting the state of the program, its strengths, and areas for improvement. The report is conducted by the program coordinator or designee in cooperation with members of an advisory team or board. Each self-study report reviews program objectives, operations, process, and outcomes. The self-study focuses on several critical success indicators: goals and objectives to support the college's mission, continuous program improvement initiatives, the planning/evaluation process, ongoing need and institutional support, enrollment and occupational patterns, instruction and support technology, curriculum development, skills standards, external agreements, student completion rates, and employment. Recommendations are made in each area for program improvement or enhancement.

In addition, separate, associated Advisory Boards provide guidance to occupational programs and work closely with the program coordinator. These boards meet every semester and are composed of faculty, staff, students, and practitioners in the field. Advisory board meeting minutes are kept on file in the Academic Affairs Office and used for program planning and evaluation. (Advisory Board minutes are available in the workroom.)

The assessment of program outcomes is incorporated into the program review instrument that was adopted several years ago by the Connecticut community colleges. The system requires that each program be reviewed every five years. The program review instrument employed by the system, known as the Gateway (Community College) Model, asks for program assessment data including fall to spring program retention, graduate employment, employer satisfaction with students, measurement of student satisfaction, and pass rates of licensure or certifying exams. Three Asnuntuck programs to date have employed the new program review instrument and the implementation of a program

review process is ongoing. A new program review schedule was prepared during the 2004-2005 academic year and all college faculty are aware of the new schedule for review. A schedule for discipline reviews was also established during the previous academic year, and those reviews are now getting underway. (These schedules are available in the workroom.)

The Chief Academic Officer of the state community college system has recently informed the college that a new, streamlined program review template will be implemented during the 2005-2006 academic year. All future programs reviews will follow the revised template.

Recently, these program and non-program academic areas have been formally evaluated, and the self-study reports are available in the workroom:

- English (spring 2003)
- Criminal Justice (spring 2003)
- Computer and Information Systems (spring 2004)
- Accounting (draft submitted to Academic Dean, fall 2005)

The following is a schedule of upcoming program reviews:

<b>Program/ Discipline</b>	<b>Review Cycle</b>
Accounting A.S.	In progress/End Spring 2005
Accounting Certificate	In progress/End Spring 2005
Accounting Assistant Certificate	In progress/End Spring 2005
BOT Executive Assistant Option A.S.	TBA
BOT Legal Assistant Option A.S.	TBA
BOT Medical Assistant Option A.S.	TBA
BOT Secretarial Word Processing	TBA
Business Administration A.S.	Begin Fall 2005/End Spring 2006
Business Administration Banking Option	Begin Fall 2005/End Spring 2006
Marketing Certificate	Begin Fall 2005/End Spring 2006
Communications and Broadcasting A.S.	Begin Fall 2009/End Spring 2010
Radio Broadcasting Option A.S.	Begin Fall 2009/End Spring 2010
Radio Broadcasting Certificate	Begin Fall 2009/End Spring 2010
Computer and Information Systems A.S.	Begin Fall 2008/End Spring 2009
Computer Programming Certificate	Begin Fall 2008/End Spring 2009
Personal Computer Specialist Cert.	Begin Fall 2008/End Spring 2009
Criminal Justice A.S.	Begin Fall 2007/End Spring 2008
Community Based Corrections Cert.	Begin Fall 2007/End Spring 2008
Pre-Service Correction Certificate	Begin Fall 2007/End Spring 2008
Early Childhood Education A.S.	Begin Fall 2005/End Spring 2006
Child Development Associate Cert.	Begin Fall 2005/End Spring 2006
English	Begin Fall 2007/End Spring 2008
Fine Arts	Begin Fall 2009/End Spring 2010
General Studies A.S.	Begin Fall 2009/End Spring 2010

Human Services A.S.	Begin Fall 2007/End Spring 2008
Gerontology Certificate	Begin Fall 2007/End Spring 2008
Human Services Management Cert.	Begin Fall 2007/End Spring 2008
Humanities	Begin Fall 2008/End Spring 2009
Liberal Arts A.A.	Begin Fall 2006/End Spring 2007
Fine Arts Option A.A.	Begin Fall 2006/End Spring 2007
Math	Begin Fall 2006/End Spring 2007
Science	Begin Fall 2010/End Spring 2011
Social Sciences	Begin Fall 2007/End Spring 2008
Technological Studies A.S.	Begin Fall 2010/End Spring 2011
Machine Technology Option A.S.	Begin Fall 2010/End Spring 2011
Machine Technology Level I Cert.	Begin Fall 2010/End Spring 2011
Machine Technology Level II Cert.	Begin Fall 2010/End Spring 2011

The results of program reviews often lead to course and program revisions. For example, the recent Computer and Information Systems review lead to significant course revisions and additions.

As part of the strategic planning process, the college sometimes terminates programs, such as the Graphic Arts program in 2004 (documentation available in the workroom). When programs are revised or eliminated, updated information is made available to the academic counselors and plans of study documents are modified to reflect program changes. If a program is revised, students who matriculated under the previous set of requirements follow their original plans of study or make provision to take advantage of new course offerings should they desire to. In the case of program elimination, the college monitors students impacted by the change as they continue to follow their original plan of study wherever possible. The college makes appropriate course substitutions or arrangements with affected students wherever the original degree requirements cannot be met because of the curricular changes.

The college maintains responsibility for the academic elements of all instructional programs and courses for which it awards credit consistent with directives from its system office and system Board, as well as its own internal governance system. The college—through its faculty, Academic Dean, appropriate committees, and President—is responsible for course content and the delivery of instructional materials and programs. The Academic Dean, with advice from program coordinators and lead faculty in discipline areas, is largely responsible for the selection and approval of faculty to teach courses at the college. The Academic Dean is also generally responsible for full-time and part-time faculty evaluation. The Dean administers a process each term whereby students have the opportunity to evaluate their instructors. Through the Academic Dean, the college ensures that courses are properly sequenced and scheduled so that students can register for the courses they need and complete their academic programs within a reasonable amount of time. The Admissions Director, often in consultation with faculty members, reviews student prior learning experience and coursework for credit at the college.

All associate degree programs at Asnuntuck contain at least one-third general studies courses. According to Board of Trustee regulations, all Connecticut community college students must take courses in the following areas: humanities, social sciences, science, math, and fine arts. Aside from that, students additionally take courses in a specified major. Asnuntuck has thirteen associate degree programs. Several of these programs contain options within them that allow a student to specialize in a particular sub-discipline. This expands the total number of possibilities for study to twenty. In January of 2005, the Academic Dean asked all faculty to prepare a rationale and learning outcomes for each program and discipline at the college. These are on file in the Office of Academic Affairs. All programs at the college are open-admission programs, and all students who have a high school diploma or GED may gain entry. The college catalog is the primary source of information regarding programs of instruction. All of our requirements and outcomes are appropriate to associate degree programs.

All programs contain upper level courses (200-level at community colleges), and nearly all curricula allow students to take free electives. Most associate degree programs contain courses that require the use of information resources beyond materials assigned in the classroom. English 101: Composition, which is required of all students in associate degree programs, is now required to incorporate an information literacy component. The Learning Resource Center (LRC) provides instruction in how to do research, which includes the use of the many databases available in the LRC, on campus at other computer stations, and off campus, all via the LRC website at <http://www.acc.commnet.edu/LRC>. All instructors are encouraged to make assignments that will require students to use these additional resources, and the LRC encourages faculty to bring their classes to the LRC for literacy instruction.

All course syllabi used by both full-time and adjunct faculty members include a listing of course outcomes. In addition, course outlines (which include a course description, course rationale, and outcomes list) are in the process of being assembled by full-time faculty members and are kept on file in the Academic Affairs Office. (Course outlines are available in the workroom.)

In January 2005, Asnuntuck faculty participated in an assessment workshop for its Professional Day activities. The workshop, conducted by the Academic Dean, discussed the concept of assessment, why it is important, methods of assessment and how assessment is woven into the system-wide program and discipline review process. In addition to introducing the topic to the faculty, the Dean also began the discussion of the use of assessment to improve teaching, as well as less traditional methods for assessing student learning. During that workshop, faculty members discussed the general education outcomes that they feel should apply to all students graduating with an associate's degree from the college. These core competencies include:

- critical, analytical, and creative thinking
- quantitative reasoning
- computer skills and literacy
- information literacy

- communication skills
- an understanding of the values of responsible citizenship
- an understanding and appreciation of diversity
- knowledge and appreciation of the arts
- knowledge of the methods and goals of inquiry in science, humanities, and social science

The college expects to form an Outcomes Assessment Committee that will develop assessment methods for these competencies.

All program coordinators are developing “Program and Discipline Review Worksheets” to articulate the program/discipline rationale, its relationship to the college’s mission, and the learning objectives for that program or discipline. When these are completed, they will be kept on file in the Office of Academic Affairs and be published in future editions of the college catalog.

### **Academic Policies**

Procedures for students transferring to Asnuntuck from other institutions are clearly presented in the catalog (pages 20-21). The college has numerous articulation agreements with colleges and universities both inside and outside the state of Connecticut. There are also program-specific articulation agreements with other institutions of higher education. A complete list is available in the workroom.

Course credit is awarded based on clearly stated criteria reflecting learning objectives as listed on the course syllabus. In the case of transfer credit, the courses being considered for transfer will be evaluated against similar courses offered by Asnuntuck to determine the comparability of learning outcomes. If there appears to be a close match, transfer credit will be awarded. Further, in the case of students wishing to transfer courses from one community college to another within our system, the colleges recently instituted common course names and numbering, making transfer from one state community college to another smoother. Most courses offered at the twelve colleges have already been evaluated and determined either alike or not alike—based on learning outcomes—and transfer credit is awarded accordingly. The Registrar and Director of Admissions apply policies and procedures which provide adequate safeguards to ensure that credit accepted reflects appropriate levels of academic quality and is applicable to the student’s program of study.

There is demonstrable academic content for all experiences for which credit is awarded. Where direct course content correlation with Asnuntuck’s college syllabi is in question, a student may take a CLEP exam. CLEP exams may be taken off campus (see CLEP exams page 18-19 of the college catalog). Asnuntuck no longer administers CLEP exams; however, we do translate scores and give credit for CLEP courses. We also offer students a listing of CLEP testing sites, available on the Educational Testing Services web site. Of the sites listed, for proximity, we generally refer students to Charter Oak State College in

New Britain, the University of Hartford in West Hartford, and Eastern Connecticut State University in Willimantic. No graduation credit is awarded for pre-collegiate level or developmental work designed to prepare the student for collegiate study; however, high school partnership and Tech-Prep courses approved at the college level may count toward graduation.

Credit for prior experiential or non-collegiate sponsored learning is awarded on a limited basis. Students may take a CLEP exam as outlined above. When credit is awarded on the basis of prior experiential or non-collegiate sponsored learning alone, student learning and achievement are demonstrated to be at least comparable in breadth, depth, and quality to the results of institutionally provided learning experiences. The policies and procedures for the awarding of credit for prior or experiential learning are clearly stated and available at the state community college system website. A hardcopy of this information is available in the workroom folders.

The institution specifies and publishes—in hard copy and on its website—requirements for continuation in, termination from, or re-admission to its academic programs which are compatible with its educational purposes (see college catalog, page 15-16). Graduation requirements are clearly stated in the college's degree contracts and in the college catalog. These requirements are consistently applied in the degree certification process. Prior to graduation, student records are reviewed for accuracy during a graduation audit completed by the registrar's office.

### **Scholarship and Research**

At a community college, faculty scholarship often focuses on activities that help the faculty stay current in their discipline or improve teaching and learning. These activities typically include attending workshops and conferences, taking courses at other institutes, staying current with publications within a person's discipline, and participation in off-campus projects. To encourage and facilitate these types of activities, the college has an Instructional Excellence Committee. This committee is charged with coordinating teaching development activities as well as other professional development opportunities for the faculty. At least twice during each academic year, this group plans activities for our Professional Days that are designed to improve some aspect of learning at the college.

The Connecticut Community College System also supports the Center for Teaching, an organization that works to keep faculty current in the evolving paradigms of teaching and learning. Faculty members are encouraged to use professional development funds provided by the System as negotiated by their union, the Congress of Connecticut Community Colleges, to attend workshops and conferences in their field of interest. There are also on-campus workshops offered to faculty. Recently, the System's conversion of its on-line platform from WebCT to Vista has resulted in numerous training opportunities for faculty. Faculty members are also permitted to enroll in community college courses at no cost as a negotiated benefit of their union contract.

Within the Asnuntuck faculty, there are professors who participate in activities that include publishing books and articles, making presentations at conferences, offering training workshops, as well as doing scholarly research. All of these activities allow the faculty to introduce up-to-date, relevant material to their students. (See Standard 5 for other professional development opportunities available to faculty members.)

## **Instruction**

A variety of methods of instruction are employed at Asnuntuck. Faculty members engage in traditional lecture style instruction but, at the same time, many incorporate other instructional techniques. These include web enhancement, small-group projects, collaborative learning, independent study, internships, and online instruction. Especially important is the relatively new concept of web-enhanced classes. Asnuntuck utilizes a course management system now called Vista (formerly WebCT Campus Edition). This system-wide product provides every full- and part-time faculty member with a “course shell” for each course the faculty member teaches. This allows the instructor to post syllabi, class notes, web links, exam information, threaded and unthreaded class discussions, and to communicate with students by email. Asnuntuck instructors have been using this to varying degrees but, as more become familiar with the product and comfortable with its use, more instructors are using Vista to enhance their courses.

The college both encourages and recognizes student creativity and academic achievement. Within the realm of the cultural arts, there are two stage performances each year, the video production students hold a screening each semester with several videos being submitted to national film festivals. The college also produces a poetry magazine, *Freshwater*, which contains poetry submissions from both within and outside of the college but edited by a faculty member and her poetry students. Further, each semester there is an art and photography exhibit displaying the work of Asnuntuck students over the course of the semester.

Students enrolled in multiple courses will be taught by a variety of instructors, ensuring that they are exposed to more than one viewpoint or teaching style. To facilitate this, the college encourages faculty to use creative and innovative teaching techniques. Students with diagnosed learning disabilities benefit from a variety of teaching methods used by faculty and can take advantage of the resources of a Student Services staff member who focuses on assisting learning disabled students.

At present, the effectiveness of instruction is assessed through student evaluation of faculty and by the prescribed system evaluation process whereby the Dean of Academic Affairs conducts a formal observation with faculty, followed by a written evaluation and discussion.

## **Continuing Education and Alternative Instruction**

The Department of Continuing Education offers a wide range of certifications, credit and noncredit courses, training programs, and personal development courses. The college has recently developed several popular allied-health programs that have lead to many student job placements. These programs include the following:

- Certified Clinical Medical Assistant
- Medical Billing Specialist Certificate
- Dental Office Management Certificate
- Certified Pharmacy Technician
- Electrocardiogram Technician
- Certified Phlebotomy Technician
- Emergency Medical Technician Training

Other career training and professional enhancement programs include the following:

- S.M.A.R.T. Certification for Servers of Alcohol
- Microsoft Office 2003 Certificate
- Real Estate Practices and Principles
- Small Business Development

Online courses are offered through Continuing Education in areas that include business, grant writing, career preparation and development, personal enrichment, test preparation, entertainment, the arts, personal finance, health care, teaching, writing, and computer literacy, applications, networking, and programming. In addition, the college offers many online career-training programs in partnership with Gatlin Education Services, a leading online education company. These programs fall under the headings of healthcare, business, construction technology, web design, networking, Microsoft certification, and video game design and development.

The Center for Business, Industry, and Manufacturing encompasses both Business and Industry Services and the Manufacturing Technology Center. Over the last several years, the Center has established a reputation for providing high-quality, cost-effective training to both large and small organizations. Center staff members coordinate and collaborate with customer representatives to ensure customer satisfaction and frequently develop new courses, both credit and noncredit, based on employee assessments. These courses and training programs may be continually customized to meet the specific training needs of each individual organization and can be conducted on or off campus. . Approximately three-quarters of the enrollments were incumbent workers. Much of the recent training is conducted in the manufacturing arena, focusing specifically on aerospace manufacturing. During the 2004-2005 academic year, the Center served more than 750 clients and grossed more than \$520,000

The Manufacturing Technology (formerly known as Machine Technology) program, begun through the Continuing Education department in 1998 to address a high regional

employment demand for trained machinists, currently includes options for a one-semester Level I Certificate, a two-semester combination Level I and II Certificate, and a two-year Associate in Science in Machine Technology. Students who earn the associate's degree can then apply for status as third-year students in Central Connecticut State University's College of Technology. More than 400 students have completed one or more of the certificate or degree options, with a 90 percent job placement rate. Graduates have ranged in age from 18 to 60 and have included both men and women and many non-native speakers of English.

Asnuntuck attempted to begin a "weekend college" with credit classes offered through the Continuing Education department. These classes were also abbreviated classes with instruction compressed to fit into a five-Saturday, intense period. Further, the starting dates of classes were staggered so that some classes did not begin until late-February or April. This concept did not catch on, and most classes were cancelled due to low enrollments. The Dean of Academic Affairs will be working with the college's Scheduling Committee to revisit the issue of weekend college for credit courses and other scheduling models that provide better access for students to the programs of study and course offerings. In addition, the divisions Academic Affairs and Continuing Education will work together to explore viable opportunities for the offering of credit/non-credit share courses programs.

The college offers a small number of "abbreviated" courses during the school year, including the summer sessions. Some courses are concentrated but offer the same number of instructional hours and credits. Other courses are offered for one credit and the instructional time is one third of the conventional three-credit offering. Courses are taught during the day, evenings, on weekends, and online. These abbreviated classes have been taught by the same full-time and adjunct faculty who teach the more traditional classes. They follow the same guidelines required for all instruction at the institution and maintain the same academic standards as courses and programs offered on campus. The summer program is self-supporting, but the same academic and administrative guidelines apply to all classes offered in the summer school sessions as well as to college's highly specialized Manufacturing Technology Program.

Primarily, courses are taught on-ground and require student classroom attendance. Additionally, others are taught asynchronously online or as hybrid classes containing a combination of on-ground meetings and online components. Distance learning courses provide students with opportunities to question and discuss course content through the use of online resources and materials, chatrooms, threaded discussions, email, and telephone. At present, most college faculty members who teach online also teach on campus.

On campus faculty have a substantive role in the design and implementation of off-campus courses and programs. College dependence on resources outside its direct control is small, so most student resource queries are handled on an individual basis. The college operates in a few sites for specialized programs. For example, the institution holds welding classes in Windsor Locks, Fire Technology classes at the Enfield Fire District's

conference room, and Aerospace Management at Hamilton Standard. Credit classes for youth offenders are also conducted in the Connecticut prisons located in our service area. CLEP examinations are conducted at various locations.

Over the past ten years, the college has supported numerous conferences, workshops, and other activities to enhance classroom instruction. These include a one-week conference on the Middle East; a conference on labor-management issues; numerous occupational workshops for college and high school students in such areas as television technology, accounting, and criminal justice; an annual two-day poetry workshop. College art students have taken several field trips to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, theater students have attended live theater productions, and students in our Self and Others course have taken tours of the north end of Hartford. Many faculty members bring guest speakers to their classes that focus on academically relevant topics. The Phi Theta Kappa honor society sponsors a yearly activity consistent with its mission and that of the college, and offers students and faculty members the opportunity to present academic research at the regional and national level. The Human Services program and the Criminal Justice program afford students the opportunities to present scholarly work at regional and national conventions. The University of the Third Age (an educational program for area senior citizens) holds weekly educational workshops and seminars at the college. These activities are approved and supported by the college administration.

### **Student Retention**

The college's admission and retention policies and procedures are clear, consistent with our mission and purposes, and available to all students and prospective students through appropriate publications. The admissions process is described in the Asnuntuck catalog (pages 5-7), on the website, and in the class schedule booklet.

As indicated in the mission statement, Asnuntuck provides students with a "nurturing environment," which contributes to our retention and graduation rates. Although Asnuntuck has the lowest enrollment of all of Connecticut's twelve community colleges, the college has the highest graduation rate. The Graduation Survey Rate (GSR) was 32 percent in 2003. Asnuntuck has been maintaining the highest GSR in the state system the last five years and more than doubled the system average of 15 percent.

Asnuntuck's present system of student advisement involves assigning all matriculated students to a faculty member—within their discipline if possible—as an academic advisor. Each advisor is sent a list of advisees at the beginning of the semester. To the extent possible, the college keeps students with the same advisor throughout their Asnuntuck career. In addition, we have two full-time counselors in the Counseling Center who advise matriculated and non-matriculated students, students with special needs, and students who wish to transfer.

Asnuntuck has an open admissions policy. The college accepts all graduates of accredited high schools or those who have completed a General Educational Development Diploma

(GED). Students may be admitted to the college on a full- or part-time basis. A Basic Skills Assessment test in English (reading and sentence skills) and mathematics is administered to all new students (see page 7 in the college catalog and Standard Six of this self-study document). Transfer students may have this test waived based on their academic transcript. This helps ensure that students receive instruction at the appropriate level for them, thus enhancing the chances of student success. During the 2004-2005 academic year, the college formed a task force to consider ways to enhance the provision of basic skills courses. The task force is considering ways to have students enroll in basic skills courses as a cohort, which would provide these students with peer support, and to supplement the basic skills experience with computer instruction, information literacy instruction, English as a second language instruction if needed, and a first-year experience course. It is expected that action will be taken on the recommendations of the task force during the 2005-06 academic year. (The final report of the task force is available in the workroom.)

One way in which the college supports its students is through its Academic Skills Center. Since 1997, the Academic Skills Center has experienced a 68 percent increase in student usage; in 2003-2004, approximately 782 students used one or more services provided by the Academic Skills Center.

The Academic Skills Center is committed to providing academic support services to all Asnuntuck students. Academic support is provided primarily through tutoring services in the following subjects: English, writing, mathematics, Spanish, computer information systems, accounting, statistics, and biology. The tutoring staff is comprised of peer tutors, professional tutors and volunteer tutors. Online tutoring is also available in English, mathematics, and accounting. Although the center provides academic support services for all levels of courses, a particular effort is made to assist developmental students or students with special learning needs.

In addition to tutoring, the Academic Skills Center provides in-class workshops on reading comprehension strategies, research documentation, study skills, and time management. Supplementary materials such as videotapes and computer-assisted tutorials are also available.

Students wishing to access computers on campus may also do so at the Academic Skills Center. The computers are equivalent to computing resources elsewhere on campus, and staff is available to provide basic computer assistance. A special unit is available for visually impaired students. Students with special needs or who need to make up an exam may, upon arrangement with instructor, do so in the Academic Skills Center. The center is typically open six days a week during the academic year. The college website includes a specific section with information about the Academic Skills Center.

End-of-the-year assessments and student surveys indicate a very high satisfaction with services provided by the Academic Skills Center. In the past seven years, 97-100 percent of student survey respondents indicated that “they would recommend the Academic Skills Center to a friend.”

Through the Perkins Postsecondary grant, Asnuntuck has been able to fund a “Retention Specialist” for the purpose of contributing to the college’s retention efforts. The Retention Specialist’s duties include helping to provide a learning environment that fosters student success and encourages student goal identification. This position focuses particularly on assisting at-risk students by providing direct advising and guidance, as well as collaborating with faculty and staff in designing programs to assist these students. Because of the similarities in qualifications, the person in this position is often also hired as an adjunct faculty member to teach Human Development 101: First Year Experience, a course that focuses on preparing new college students for success at Asnuntuck.

Students receive additional student support from faculty academic advisors and through the trained counselors and transfer advisors in the Counseling Center. One counselor has particular responsibility for counseling and arranging for special services for students with physical and learning disabilities. Described more fully in Standard 7 is the adaptive technology available in the LRC to provide further academic support for students with disabilities.

At the direction of the Acting Dean of Academic Affairs and the Dean of Students, a Quality of Student Life and Learning Committee was formed. This task force consisted of faculty, non-teaching professionals and students and its mission was to provide guidance to the college on areas of strength and weakness in regard to the quality of student life and instruction. Recommendations of the task force will be considered by the Deans of Academic and Student Affairs during the 2005-2006 academic year.

Academic policies and procedures for Add/Drop and Withdrawal (catalog page 14) are also designed to help retain students by requesting the following: “Before withdrawing from a course, students should discuss their decision with a Student Services Advisor.”

The college strives to retain students through many avenues in different stages of the students’ academic life. The following specific Asnuntuck programs are designed to attract and retain high school students:

- Tech-Prep, School to Career: Thirteen percent of tech-prep high school students enrolled in one of our occupational programs after graduating from high school. That is more than double the state community college system rate of 6 percent. In addition to the occupational programs, some of Tech-Prep post secondary students also enrolled in General Studies and Liberal Arts programs at Asnuntuck. (See page 10 of the catalog.)
- High School Partnership Program: The college enrolls about 80 area high school students through the partnership program every semester. Many of them enrolled at Asnuntuck after graduating from high school. (See page 9 of the catalog.)
- Asnuntuck Career Passport Program; Four area high schools (Granby, Suffield, Ellington, and East Windsor) send up to five students each to this program. The

college offers courses taught by college faculty in a variety of topics (computers, art, and radio broadcasting, for example), run a variety of leadership building activities, and run a weekly discussion group to build self-awareness and interpersonal skills. The students also take the college placement (Accuplacer) instrument, tour of the college, attend various college activities, and are advised on possible courses they could take at Asnuntuck.

- College Connections Program: In 2004, the college piloted the College Connections Program, a partnership between Asnuntuck and three neighboring school systems (Windsor Locks, Granby, and Suffield). The program offered high school juniors and seniors the opportunity to gain both high school and college credits in the Technological Studies degree program focusing on aerospace welding. In 2005, six high schools are now part of the program, and the number of students has tripled. Students may obtain dual credit in precision machining, welding, or electronics. Courses are offered on campus, as well as at Windsor Locks.

- Terra Nova Alternative High School: This program, housed on campus and administered by local school boards, provides full-time high school study for approximately 25 at-risk students who are near to dropping out of traditional local high schools. As a graduation incentive, Asnuntuck awards each Terra Nova graduate with a certificate for a tuition-free, three-credit class that may be used in the fall and spring semesters immediately following graduation. At least thirteen past Terra Nova graduates have taken or are still enrolled in college level courses at Asnuntuck.

These programs, groups, and courses are designed to welcome and retain new students:

- New Student Orientation (see Standard 6)
- Marketing Committee: (see Standard 10)
- First Year Experience: This course is designed to assist newcomers to college life with making a successful transition to college academic work.
- Connecticut College of Technology: This “Pathway” program identifies a course of study that will lead Asnuntuck students directly into technology programs at the University of Connecticut.
- Guaranteed Admission Program with Central Connecticut State University: This program assures Asnuntuck graduates acceptance into four-year programs at Central Connecticut State University. (See page 22 of the catalog.) A similar program in cooperation with the University of Connecticut is in process.
- General Studies/Allied Health Concentration: This program provides students with an articulated cooperative program in conjunction with Springfield Technical Community College in Springfield, Massachusetts.

- New Student Survey: (see Standard 2)
- Community College Survey of Student Engagement: (see Standard 2)

These college initiatives are designed to retain already enrolled students:

- Friends Week: This program encourages students to bring friends to class with them. The class with the greatest participation is treated to a pizza party.
- Retention Phone Drive: College employees contacted enrolled students and encouraged them to register to take classes during the following semester.
- Early Warning Academic Assistance: Each semester, instructors identify students in danger of earning a low grade in their courses. The Dean of Academic Affairs contacts each of those students by a letter, urges the student to contact the instructor to discuss the matter, to take advantage of the free tutoring services, and to seek help from a faculty or a counselor.
- Children's Reading Room: This is a drop-in childcare center for the children of Asnuntuck students and staff. The Reading Room is at no cost to the students, but they are required to volunteer their time each week in the Reading Room. The Reading Room works in conjunction with the Early Childhood Education program providing Early Childhood Education majors an opportunity to work directly with the children under the supervision of the Program Director. Many of our students would not be able to attend classes or use the Learning Resources Center without this service.

Research supports that more student engagement during their academic life leads to better retention. Better retention will lead to a higher graduation rate. First-time, full-time, degree-seeking students' one year retention rate has been stable the last five years: 59 percent for fall 1998 cohort and 60 percent for fall 2003 cohort. That is consistent with the Connecticut community college system-wide retention rate.

A Non-returning Student Survey is another effort to support retention activities. The Office of Institutional Research obtained a one thousand dollar mini-grant from the North East Association for Institutional Research to survey students who enrolled in fall 2000 and had not returned since. The report was presented at the December 2004 Faculty Council meeting. A Quality of Student Life and Learning committee was developed and charged to identify improvements that can be made to Student Services and various academic components that would encourage students to remain at Asnuntuck.

# Appraisal

## Strengths

- Asnuntuck is the only community college in the state system with academic offerings in all three areas of radio, stage, and television production.
- The degree programs offered by the college are consistent with those offered by two-year colleges in the state and nationally and provide strong transfer curriculum leading to four-year college programs.
- The college has developed a number of specific articulation agreements with regional four-year colleges in recent years.
- The adoption of common course numbers and names within the state community college system has made transfer from college to college easier, as well as encouraging faculty members across the state to assess their departmental offerings in comparison to the other state community colleges.
- The Curriculum and Standards Committee provides the college with a strong, cross-curricular body to advise faculty members on program and course development and review.
- The Scheduling Committee provides an excellent overview of the college's course offerings, allowing for a systematic approach to integrating courses offered by various distinct disciplines.
- The state-wide Center for Teaching provides a strong resource for teaching faculty, and Asnuntuck faculty members are especially active members of the organization.
- The Academic Skills Center receives consistently excellent reviews from students and is viewed as one of the college's most important resources.
- The college has many active programs to recruit and retain students.
- Asnuntuck's College Connections Program is a growing partnership, providing a seamless pathway of articulated college credit between area high school students and the college. The college provides excellent instruction, training, and experiential learning opportunities for students interested in manufacturing technology. This initiative is a direct link to workforce development, preparing students for viable careers.
- The college's graduation rate is the highest by far among Connecticut community colleges.
- Conversion from WebCT to the more user-friendly Vista for web course enhancement will allow instructors to take more advantage of the technology.

## Concerns

- Program objectives are not published for each program described in the college catalog.
- The college needs to provide more extra curricular activities to appeal to the younger students. We also need to increase the number of programs that will get students more engaged with college life outside of the classroom.
- Asnuntuck needs to focus on several areas, including advising, assessment of general education outcomes, assessment of program outcomes, curriculum review for general education requirements, and currency of curricular offerings. They will be addressed one by one.
- Many students do not understand the importance of meeting with their advisor and, despite the letters sent by the college each semester that asks students to contact their advisor, most students do not. They tend to see advising and registration as one step rather than separate processes.
- Because the Retention Specialist is a grant funded position, it is temporary and funding is not assured from year to year.
- Asnuntuck does not yet have a program in place to assess learning outcomes for general education core competencies.
- To a certain extent, the program and discipline review processes are compromised by the small size of the college. Many disciplines and programs are one-faculty programs. The result is that there are few people with whom that faculty member can exchange information and ideas. While members of Advisory Boards are helpful in these situations, the lack of internal resources can be problematic at times.
- Although all programs require students to take a third of their coursework in general education, not all programs conform to the System's distribution requirements. The discipline most frequently left out is Fine Arts. This has precipitated considerable discussion and groups are being formed to address the issue.
- The current organizational structure of Academic Affairs is a concern. The structure is flat. Not all programs have coordinators, and the academic area has no department or division chairs. This has, in part, resulted from the college's size and available resources. However, it is difficult for a program to maintain currency and viability and to respond to the academic needs of the community in terms of programmatic thrust and new program development unless there are designated personnel that operate in the capacity to supervise activities such as program review, assessment, adjunct faculty hiring, and recruitment of students.

## Projection

- By June 2006, the Dean of Academic Affairs will formalize the system for the evaluation of adjunct faculty.
- Providing more effective academic advising is a 2005-2006 strategic planning goal, to be addressed by both Academic Affairs and Student Services.
- An Outcomes Assessment Committee was formed in 2005 to work closely with the Dean of Academic Affairs, Director of Institutional Research, and faculty to develop assessment methods for core competencies. Their first report to the college will be submitted in June 2006.
- The Academic Affairs Office is in the process of developing a performing arts degree program that will include coursework in radio, television, and stage production.
- Each academic department will continue reviewing its curriculums both for currency and for appropriate inclusion of general education requirements.
- Each degree and certificate granting area will publish program rationales in future editions of the catalog.
- In the 2006-2007 academic year, the college will develop an intersession schedule on a trial basis to increase course offerings and enrollment.
- Beginning in 2005, Academic Affairs and Continuing Education, in cooperation with the Scheduling Committee, will develop a more attractive schedule of weekend course offerings.
- The Dean of Academic Affairs is exploring the viability of introducing a new academic structure that will more appropriately address the needs of the college and the community. The proposed structure includes Division Chairs/Directors for three distinct divisions. The proposed Divisions are Business and Technology (B&T); Mathematics and Sciences (M&S); and Visual, Performing, Communication & Arts (VPC&A).

# Standard Five: Faculty

Overview: Asnuntuck’s full-time faculty members are the academic core of the institution. Their primary focus is on their teaching responsibilities—both fulfilling the mission of the college and developing their skills as teachers. Beyond this primary focus, they also contribute to all areas of college operations. An essential pool of adjunct faculty members provides additional expertise and instruction.

## Description

### Faculty Profile

As of spring 2005, the college employs 25 full-time faculty members and approximately 60-80 part-time faculty members. Fourteen full-time faculty members are male (56 percent), and 11 are female (44 percent). Two are African-American (8 percent), and the remaining 23 are Caucasian (92 percent). All hold a minimum of a master’s degree in their field. Four hold a Ph.D. as their highest degree, one an M.S.W., seven an M.S., one an M.P.A., three an M.F.A., four an M.B.A., two an M.A.L.S, and three an M.A. Nineteen hold the rank of professor, two associate professor, one assistant professor, and three instructor. Four have been full-time faculty members at the college for less than one year, 2 from one to five years, zero between five and ten years, five between eleven and fifteen years, four between sixteen and twenty years, two between twenty-one and twenty-five years, five between twenty-six and thirty years, and three more than thirty years. (Data sheets for individual full-time faculty members are available in the workroom.)

### Faculty Teaching Responsibilities

Asnuntuck takes seriously the truism that two-year colleges are teaching institutions. Our mission statement indicates that the college’s primary mission is to offer “quality education in an accessible, affordable, and nurturing environment.” In keeping with this mission, the faculty’s major focus is on teaching.

The teaching focus is directly reflected in the collective bargaining agreement (available in the workroom), which calls for full-time faculty members to teach 24 credit hours per year, as well as the necessary planning and evaluation that accompanies these courses. This emphasis on teaching accounts for 80 percent of the full-time faculty members’ responsibilities. The remaining 20 percent, known as “additional responsibilities,”

consists of service toward the college mission, much of which focuses on support for teaching (see below).

Both full- and part-time faculty are fully qualified to teach at the institution. Consistent with the state community-technical college system policy, all instructors are required to have a master's degree and/or appropriate professional background equivalency in the field in which they teach. In the generalist tradition of community college instruction, occasionally full-time faculty will teach outside their primary specialty—for example, English teachers teach speech, an accounting teacher teaches desktop publishing, or a history teacher teaches art history. But these teaching assignments are approved by the Academic Dean on the basis of training, expertise, and/or previous teaching experience.

### **Faculty Non-Teaching Responsibilities**

Along with teaching-related additional responsibilities, the full-time faculty members are extremely active and involved in the life of the institution and the community through a wide range of activities. Pages 25-26 of the Congress of Connecticut Community Colleges collective bargaining agreement lists some of these additional responsibilities:

- preparation of special reports such as accreditation reports
- participation in special college projects, surveys, studies
- development of new instructional techniques, course offerings or programs, or major revisions of course programs
- participation in community service activities, consistent with the mission of the college
- participation in career development and related advising activities or special retention programs [in addition to academic and career-oriented advising required of all faculty as a teaching responsibility]
- participation on college-wide committees
- advising student organizations and activities
- peer evaluations requested by the college administration; the evaluation of part-time faculty; retention counseling; the recruitment of students
- service on divisional/departmental committees
- providing reasonable assistance in student registration and add/drop procedures
- developing professional development activities generally applicable to the department, division, or college
- within the limitations of [the contract], such other administrative or supervisory or teaching-related assignments as are consistent with the mission and goals of the college, including but not limited to: additional office hours; supervising adjunct or independent study, provided it is not asserted that such supervision is part of the teaching obligation of 24 credit hours; review of patient charts in preparation for clinical instruction

Faculty members serve on nearly every committee at the college, in many cases as chairs. They design and propose new degree and certificate programs, coordinate and revise

existing programs, and advise students enrolled in all programs; they direct student drama productions, coordinate student art shows, and organize student writing contests; they consult for state agencies, serve on the boards of volunteer organizations, and testify before the legislature; they publish their writing, speak at academic conferences, and edit publications; they travel with student groups, participate with students in informal sporting activities, and recruit students from among their neighbors in the surrounding communities. In short, there is not a single co-curricular activity at Asnuntuck without faculty input or participation. (Faculty data sheets detailing accomplishments are available in the workroom.)

Full-time faculty members serve as student advisors in two primary ways. First, each full-time faculty member is assigned a varying number of full-time students as official advisees and meets regularly with those students to discuss their academic progress. (Program coordinators, of course, advise students matriculated in their programs; non-coordinators are assigned students in programs that have no nominal coordinator.) All full-time students are assigned to a faculty advisor. Second, full-time faculty members serve as general advisors to part-time students, usually those who have taken classes with the full-time faculty member. This general advising of part-time students takes place during the faculty member's office hours, whenever the student and faculty member make arrangements to meet, or when the faculty member is available at a scheduled time at the advising center (an open area on the front hallway) during specific advising days just prior to registration. The college recently experimented with "Advising Week," a one-week period when full-time faculty members made special arrangements to be available for extended advising periods. And in fall 2005, the college will take advantage of the extra Tuesday in the schedule to hold an "Advising Day" on November 8 when full-time faculty members will again make special arrangements to be available for advising.

### **Part-Time/Adjunct Faculty**

Just as full-time faculty roles are clearly defined, so too are the roles of part-time faculty. Part-time faculty members are covered by many of the same collective bargaining agreement policies as full-time faculty (for example, grievance procedures, nondiscrimination, academic freedom, etc.). Also, the adjunct faculty handbook, described below, includes a great deal of information about part-time faculty roles.

Part-time faculty members are provided with office space in three of the four faculty office suites. Desks and telephones are assigned with teaching times and office hours in mind so that instructors assigned to the same desk are not often at the college at the same time. In addition, part-time faculty members have the same access to photocopiers, office supplies, and administrative support as do full-time faculty members.

Adjunct faculty are not required or expected to be involved with institutional activities outside their courses because they generally have a full-time job away from the college in

the field in which they teach. However, many adjuncts are involved in college activities despite their heavy outside time commitments.

The college does rely heavily on the 60-80 part-time faculty members who regularly teach courses each semester. The tables below detail full-time and part-time faculty coverage for on-campus credit courses during the five-year period from spring semester 1999 to fall semester 2003. (The Manufacturing Technology and Business Office Technology programs are not included in this report because they have been coordinated by Continuing Education.)

#### Full-Time/Part-Time Data for All On-Campus Offerings, Spring 1999-Fall 2003

Semester	full-time credits	part-time credits	total credits	full-time %	part-time %
Spring 1999	292	195	487	60%	40%
Fall 1999	313	196	509	61%	39%
Spring 2000	288	233	521	55%	45%
Fall 2000	242	220	462	52%	48%
Spring 2001	244	241	485	50%	50%
Fall 2001	236	242	478	49%	51%
Spring 2002	231	268	499	46%	54%
Fall 2002	258	258	516	50%	50%
Spring 2003	245	224	469	52%	48%
Fall 2003	253	242	495	51%	49%
Totals	2,602	2,319	4,921	53%	47%

Average full-time credits per semester: **260.2**

Average part-time credits per semester: **231.9**

#### Summary of Full-Time/Part-Time Offerings by Department, Spring 1999–Fall 2003

Department	average full-time credits per semester	average part-time credits per semester	% of credits taught by full-time fac.	% of credits taught by part-time fac.
Mathematics	22.2	27.3	45%	55%
Psychology	3.3	25.2	12%	88%
Computer and Information Systems	30.5	24.1	56%	44%
English	39.3	22.8	63%	37%
Business Administration	19.5	21.4	48%	52%
Sociology	18.3	19.8	48%	52%
Biology	8.8	13.3	40%	60%
Early Childhood Education	9.6	9.0	52%	48%
History	0.0	8.7	0%	100%
Human Services	5.7	6.6	46%	54%
Spanish	1.5	6.6	19%	81%
Criminal Justice	2.7	6.3	30%	70%
Art	14.1	5.4	72%	28%
Chemistry	0.0	5.2	0%	100%
Philosophy	0.0	4.5	0%	100%
Human Development	0.0	4.4	0%	100%

Economics	4.5	4.2	52%	48%
Ecology	0.0	3.9	0%	100%
Political Science	0.6	3.0	17%	83%
Sign Language	0.0	2.4	0%	100%
Communications and Broadcasting	33.0	1.8	95%	5%
Electrical Engineering Technology	0.0	1.5	0%	100%
Humanities	3.0	1.5	67%	33%
Computer Aided Drafting/Design	0.6	1.2	33%	67%
Statistics	8.7	1.2	89%	11%
Accounting	35.4	0.7	98%	2%
Geography	0.0	0.3	0%	100%
Anthropology	0.0	0.0	-	-

Recent full-time faculty hiring in Business Administration and Social Science (fall 2004) have helped to offset a dependence on part-time faculty members in those areas. An additional fall 2004 full-time faculty hiring in Computer Information Systems offsets the reassignment of a full-time member of that department to work full time for the union, as well as the loss of a continuing full-time, non-tenure-track position in that area. In addition, the spring 2005 reassignment of a college administrator to a full-time faculty position in English has helped address adjunct-dependence concerns in that department.

### **Faculty Hiring Process**

Full-time Faculty Hiring: The full-time faculty and Dean of Academic Affairs are instrumental in identifying hiring needs for full-time faculty. Several faculty members formed an ad hoc Hiring Needs Committee in the late 1990s, and this committee coordinated the process of Faculty Council prioritizing which disciplines were most in need of full-time faculty hiring. The Academic Dean then advocated for the identified hiring need with the President and Cabinet. These efforts lead to full-time hiring in Early Childhood Education, and, most recently, Business Administration, Social Science, and Computer Information Systems.

When a full-time faculty position is approved for a search, the Academic Dean coordinates selection of a hiring committee to screen applications and conduct interviews. All hiring committees include full-time faculty members in the discipline being hired (when possible), full-time faculty members outside the discipline being hired, college staff members, and students (when possible). After initial screening and interviewing by the hiring committees, finalists for positions are interviewed by the Academic Dean and the President. The President makes the final hiring decision.

Part-time Faculty Hiring: The Dean of Academic Affairs is responsible for all part-time faculty hiring. The Dean encourages recommendations from full-time faculty members concerning new and continuing part-time faculty hiring and invites full-time faculty members in each discipline to participate in screening resumes and interviewing potential part-time faculty members. Per the Congress of Connecticut Community Colleges

collective bargaining agreement, adjunct faculty are entitled to be on a seniority list, which requires the college to offer them an appropriate course if they have taught 18 or more credits at the college.

### **Professional Development Opportunities**

The college has a very active Instructional Excellence Committee, the local branch of the state-wide Center for Teaching, which meets on a monthly basis and, among other things, develops workshops for both full-time and adjunct faculty. In the spring of 2005, the Center for Teaching conducted a two-day, off-campus teaching workshop at The Mercy Center in Madison, Connecticut. Similar off-campus workshops have been conducted in previous years.

The activities above are supplemented by Professional Day activities at the beginning of each semester. Recently, these activities have included a workshop on assessment, followed by an adjunct faculty orientation that included training in WebCT, recognizing and dealing with sexual harassment, knowledge of student learning styles, and active learning techniques. Workshops in the recent past include classroom assessment, grading evaluation, collaborative learning, using case studies, and VARK learning styles using PowerPoint.

In addition, both full-time and adjunct faculty members are entitled to funds provided by the System Office as a result of a negotiated clause in the collective bargaining agreement for the purpose of faculty professional development. Faculty members have been encouraged to access these funds and many have taken advantage of this opportunity. Asnuntuck is the lead college in New England for Instructional Skills Workshops. In the fall of 2004, the Instructional Excellence Committee sponsored a system-wide week-long workshop on the Appreciative Inquiry technique. Finally, the college presents a Distinguished Service Award each year, frequently to a faculty member. This provides that faculty member with an opportunity to enhance his/her teaching skills by using this money to attend training or travel for other appropriate professional development activities.

### **Faculty Provisions of the Collective Bargaining Agreement**

The collective bargaining agreement between the faculty union (the Congress of Connecticut Community Colleges) and the Board of Trustees codifies many aspects of faculty service to the college, including employment security, salary, academic freedom, grievance procedures, promotion, tenure, ethics, and evaluation. (The collective bargaining agreement is available in the workroom.)

- Employment security: The types and durations of faculty appointments by the Board of Trustees, as well as causes and procedures for termination and dismissal, are set forth in the collective bargaining agreement.

- Salary: Salary schedules and pay increments for all full- and part-time faculty members are negotiated and then set forth in the collective bargaining agreement.
- Academic freedom: Within the bounds of law, reason, respect, appropriate restraint, and the rights of students, all faculty members are granted full freedom in their research, classroom methods and materials, and citizenship in the larger community beyond the college as set forth in the collective bargaining agreement.
- Grievance procedures: Policies and procedures for formal grievances between faculty and the college or Board of Trustees are detailed in the collective bargaining agreement.
- Promotion: Procedures by which faculty members are granted or denied promotion by the Board of Trustees are set forth in the collective bargaining agreement. Full-time, tenure-track faculty ranks include Instructor, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor. The minimum time in rank for each is three years before a faculty member can apply for promotion during the fourth year in rank. The application is evaluated by the Promotions Committee, which makes recommendations to the President, who makes recommendations to the Board.
- Tenure: Procedures by which faculty members are granted or denied tenure by the Board of Trustees are set forth in the collective bargaining agreement. Faculty members may apply for tenure after six years of full-time service, three years of which must be in the current job function. The application is evaluated by the Tenure Committee, which makes recommendations to the President, who makes recommendations to the Board.
- Faculty ethics: Provisions for faculty dismissal in the collective bargaining agreement include causes such as “repeated noncompliance with reasonable regulations,” “conduct which impairs the effective performance of assigned responsibilities or impairs the rights of students or of other staff members,” and “the use of fraud, collusion, or misrepresentation of a fact material to obtaining employment with the college and/or status within.”
- Faculty evaluation: Full-time, tenure track faculty members are evaluated according to this schedule contained in the collective bargaining agreement: in each of the first two years of an appointment; once every two years thereafter before tenure is granted; once every three years after tenure is granted.

# Appraisal

## Strengths

- On the Community College Survey of Student Engagement administered in spring 2004, Asnuntuck students ranked the quality of their relationships with faculty at 5.86 (1 being the lowest and 7 being the highest). This ranking put Asnuntuck faculty ahead of the Connecticut community college average (5.66) and the national community college average (5.61).
- Full-time faculty members bring a professional commitment that reaches beyond the classroom into every area of the college community.
- Full-time faculty members represent the college well in state community college system capacities.
- Both full-time and adjunct faculty members represent the college well in the community, contributing to the college's positive image.
- The adjunct faculty pool brings significant professional and teaching experience to Asnuntuck's classrooms.
- The college has a core of adjunct faculty members who have served the college for many years and have a strong sense of the college's history and mission. In addition, the college continues to recruit excellent new adjunct faculty members to support our mission and add to our history.
- All faculty members have a wide range of professional development opportunities at the college, state, regional, and national levels.
- The college offers regular orientation sessions on instructional techniques and expectations.
- The college provides systematic formal evaluation for all full-time faculty members.

## Concerns

- A great number of full-time faculty members are nearing retirement age, so there will be significant turnover of experienced professors in the near future.
- During much of the period covered by this self-study, there has been a shortage of full-time faculty to cover the needs of the college at an optimal level. We are currently around a 50-50 balance between credit hours taught by full-time and adjunct faculty members. In addition, some areas of the curriculum have had no full-time faculty teaching in them, and some have had only a limited number.

- The limited number of full-time faculty members contributes to a limit on the extent of curriculum development and revision, as well as the possibilities for faculty members to contribute as full as they may wish to new college initiatives.
- The loss of the adjunct faculty liaison position weakens the college's ability to communicate and connect with our adjunct faculty members.

## **Projection**

- The high number of full-time faculty members eligible to retire and the community college ratio of full-time to adjunct faculty is an ongoing concern. The community college system and the state legislature are working together to mandate at 65 percent to 35 percent in the near future, greatly reducing our reliance on adjunct faculty members.
- In 2006, the Academic Affairs office will provide formal mentoring for adjuncts and new full-time faculty, as well as increase awareness of available professional development funds available to adjunct faculty members.

## Standard Six: Student Services

Overview: The college maintains a welcoming and supportive atmosphere for all its students, both traditional and nontraditional in age and circumstances. Students have a variety of opportunities for participation and leadership in the college community, as well as assistance in maximizing their roles as students.

### Description

The college recognizes that academic life, however important, is only one aspect of the college experience. Asnuntuck is a “commuter” college where students come and go as they shuttle between the responsibilities of home, family, community, work, and school. The college provides an array of services traditionally found at the community college and creates a welcoming atmosphere for students that encourages both academic excellence and personal growth.

Just as in all other aspects of college policies and practices, Student Services at Asnuntuck is accessible to every student. Student activities are open to all students at the college. Enrichment programs celebrating diversity are offered, such as Women’s History Day, the Paul Robeson Festival, and Martin Luther King Day activities. The Celebrating Diversity Committee maintains bulletin boards and special library displays. Cooperative childcare is available to students with young children through the Children’s Reading Room. The Learning Resource Center was awarded a \$10,000 Adaptive Technology Grant by the Connecticut State Library in 2004 to purchase technology that will make resources more accessible to patrons with disabilities. The college also recently instituted a payment plan to assist students whose financial situation might make paying all of their tuition and fees in advance difficult if not impossible.

All student services that are available to day students are also available during evening hours. One upper-level administrator serves as the “Dean on duty” during the evening, either on call or actually in the building. Academic advisors from both Student Services and the faculty, as well as representatives from Student Services and the Business Office who can process student registration and payments, are often available in the evening, especially during heavy registration periods. Online tutoring is available to support distance-learning students, and web registration has increased 25 percent in the past year. In addition, computer labs, the Academic Skills Center, The Learning Resource Center all have weekend and evening hours.

The college has a clear process for serving veterans, their families, and members of the Connecticut National Guard. The college participates in the Veterans Educational

Assistance Program, The G.I. Bill, and survivors and dependents educational assistance. The State of Connecticut grants tuition waivers to certain veterans, dependent children of certain veterans, and certain members of the Connecticut Air National Guard. (See pages 31-32 of the catalog for state guidelines.) Student services also works to meet the needs of students who have been activated for duty during the current war. Faculty members also are flexible with students whose military obligations might interfere with their coursework.

## **Student Activities**

Student groups come and go at the college, depending on student interest, but several groups are continually active. These are some of the most active student groups on campus:

- Art Club (sponsors of twice-yearly student art shows)
- Poetry Club (producers of *Freshwater*, a national poetry journal)
- WACC-FM, 107.7 (the only community college radio station in Connecticut)
- House Lights Up (the theater group that has been instrumental in staging shows on campus and at the prestigious City Stage in Springfield)
- Phi Theta Kappa (an award-winning academic honor society)
- Student Senate (student-elected campus leadership)

The college also seeks to address the busy lives of students by offering regular special events such as the student-staff baseball game, barbeques, and one-day enrichment activities.

The athletic fields and track behind the college offer students access to recreational space. In addition, the cafeteria is a popular student gathering spot, particularly with the fairly recent additions of a television, several game tables, and an outdoor deck.

## **Student Leadership**

Student Senate: Standard Three includes a description of Asnuntuck's Student Senate and students' other roles in college governance.

Phi Theta Kappa: Phi Theta Kappa is the only two-year international honor society recognized by the American Association of Community Colleges. Phi Theta Kappa's mission is two-fold: first, to recognize and encourage the academic achievement of the two year college students and, second, to provide opportunities for individual growth and development through participation in honors, leadership, service and fellowship programming.

Asnuntuck's Alpha Lambda Zeta chapter of Phi Theta Kappa is an active organization on campus. The chapter invites students whose GPA is 3.65 or higher and have accumulated

18 or more credit hours to become a part of the organization. The chapter installs new officers each year. Throughout the year they actively participate in the four hallmarks of Leadership, Service, Scholarship, and Fellowship. This chapter involves the college faculty, staff, students and the greater community in their projects. They have played a major role within the community this year by partaking in Relay for Life, Making Strides against Breast Cancer, working with the Associated Press during the 2004 Presidential election and have collected over 300 turkeys during the holidays, which were distributed to those in need in several service towns, such as: Windsor Locks, Suffield, and Enfield. Alpha Lambda Zeta also orchestrated an art auction and tag sale, which raised \$2,100 for tsunami relief. They are the largest active organization on campus and are instrumental in assisting with the public relations of the school in the community.

### **Student Learning Support**

Basic Skills Placement: The college assesses the basic skill level of approximately 600 students each year in order to provide them with a solid foundation in reading, writing, and basic mathematics or algebra. This program is mandated by the state Board of Governors for Higher Education and the community college system Board of Trustees. The following students are required to take the placement test:

- all new, full-time students (taking twelve or more credits per semester)
- any new student who has entered the college since fall 1989 and now wants to register for a twelfth credit, an English class, or a math class

These students are exempt from the placement test:

- those who hold an associate's degree or higher
- those who have taken a college-level English or math course at another institution
- those who self-select a developmental English or math course
- those with an SAT verbal score of 500 or higher (allowing placement into English 101) and those with an SAT math score of 500 or higher (allowing placement into Math 095)

The placement instrument used by Asnuntuck and all community colleges in the state system is called Accuplacer. This computerized testing system uses adaptive testing technology to select specific questions that are best suited for each particular test taker. This "tailoring" is done by keeping track of an examinee's performance on each test item and then using this information to select the next test item. The computerized nature of the assessment also allows for instantaneous score reporting. Advisors know the students' scores right away, making it possible to advise the student on course selection during the same campus visit when the test is taken.

Each college in the state system sets its own cut-off scores for placement into various developmental and college level courses. Asnuntuck's scores and corresponding courses are as follows:

- Reading Comprehension  
81 or below English 073: Academic Reading
- Sentence Skills  
90 or below English 043: Writing: Paragraph to Essay  
91 and higher *and*  
Reading Comprehension higher than 81 English 101: Composition I
- Elementary Algebra  
33 or below Math 075: Prealgebra—Number Sense, Geometry  
34-64 Math 095: Elementary Algebra Foundations  
65 or higher Math 137: Intermediate Algebra  
Math 135: Topics in Contemporary Math  
Math 123: Elementary Statistics
- College-Level Math  
60 or below Math 137: Intermediate Algebra  
61-99 Math 186: Precalculus  
Math 167: Statistics with Technology  
100 or higher Math 254: Calculus I

There is no official appeals process for students who are not satisfied with their placement scores, but the students can retake the test or discuss the situation with the Academic Dean.

Statistics and details on the results of students' placement tests are available in the workroom.

Academic Skills Center: The Academic Skills Center is committed to providing academic support services to all Asnuntuck students. Academic support is provided primarily through tutoring services in the following subjects: English, Writing, Mathematics, Spanish, Computer Information Systems, Accounting, Statistics and Biology. The tutoring staff is generally comprised of peer tutors, professional tutors and volunteer tutors. Online tutoring is also available in English, Mathematics and Accounting. Although the Academic Skills Center provides academic support services for all levels of courses, a particular effort is made to assist developmental students or students with special learning needs.

Since 1997, the Academic Skills Center has experienced a 68 percent increase in student usage; in 2003-2004, approximately 782 students used one or more services provided by the Academic Skills Center.

In addition to tutoring, the Academic Skills Center provides in-class workshops on reading comprehension strategies, documentation, study skills and time management. Supplementary materials such as videotapes and computer-assisted tutorials are also available.

Students wishing to access computers on campus may also do so at the Academic Skills Center; the computers are equivalent to computing resources elsewhere on campus and staff is available to provide basic computer assistance. A special unit is available for visually impaired students. Students with special needs or who need to make up an exam may, upon arrangement with instructor, do so in the Academic Skills Center. The Academic Skills Center is typically open six days a week during the academic year; schedules as well as academic resources are available both in the center and on the college's website.

First Year Experience Course: Several years ago, the college began offering Human Development 101: First Year Experience, a course aimed at supporting students new to college life, particularly the college's growing population of tradition-aged students just out of high school. The course covers a variety of topics, such as study skills, reading, writing, public speaking, community involvement, and health and wellness issues related to college life. This course is now required in the General Studies degree program.

## **Financial Aid**

Due to an increase in demand, the financial aid office has grown significantly. Though the office is minimally but quite competently staffed, the college has been able to provide state of the art computer system support to the financial aid area. The college uses a Banner SCT, and integrated software system, giving students computer access to their financial aid status and ensuring the college full electronic contact with the Department of Education. This has enhanced our ability to keep pace with the increased demand for services. Providing additional staff in the area to ensure adequate responses to students and fiscal soundness is under consideration. The college continues to sponsor effective financial aid workshops for the community each year in early January. Roundtable discussions for high school guidance counselors continue to be popular and informative.

The college provides students with very clear literature on financial aid options, including a student guide from the U.S. Department of Education, a brochure from the Connecticut Department of Higher Education on the availability of financial aid, and a new brochure giving step-by-step instructions for completing the financial aid application and process (available in the workroom). The financial aid office also provides small-group workshops and one-on-one assistance by appointment for completing the financial aid application.

The following forms of aid are available to Asnuntuck students: Pell Grants; Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG); Tuition Set-Aside Aid; CAP Grants; Stafford Loans (subsidized and unsubsidized); PLUS Loans; and Federal Work-Study. In addition, many specific scholarships offered by college, local, and regional groups are available.

### **Orientation, Advising, and Registration**

A formal program of New Student Orientation began for new, entering students in the Fall of 1998, coordinated by the Director of Admissions, assisted by a faculty member. Orientation is highly recommended (but is not required for all new students. In 1998, 39 out of 549 new students attended. This past fall 2004, the number of attendees increased to 120 of 498 new students.

Designed for both traditional and non-traditional aged students, the program takes place on a weeknight just before the semester begins. During orientation, students are introduced to returning students who act as their student leaders and mentors during the first semester. In addition, sessions are designed to allow new students to meet many faculty members and to discuss their programs of study with them. Campus tours bring students to the Learning Resource Center, Academic Skills Center, college bookstore, computer labs, classrooms, and the Student Services area.

A retention study of those students who attended orientation in fall 1998 showed that 100 percent persisted through the end of the first semester compared to 96 percent for those who did not attend orientation. Of this same cohort, 82 percent of orientation participants enrolled in courses in the Spring 1999, compared to only 50 percent of the non-participating group. Another retention study will be done after the fall 2005 orientation program.

The current advising system involves the faculty and Student Services staff and provides training for faculty and staff advisors. Students who are matriculated into a degree program are assigned a faculty advisor (their degree program coordinator in many cases) and are advised on an ongoing basis. Part-time students may be advised by a faculty member, although many seek advising from the Student Services staff. Student services staff members are available on a regular basis throughout the semester to provide academic advising during office hours and by appointment. The bulk of all academic advising is done once the appropriate academic schedule is available. Advisors sign registration forms for students to ensure that they have been advised prior to registration. During fall and spring of 2004-2005, the academic area experimented with an "advising week," when faculty members were available for extended office hours to meet with their advisees.

The college registers students in person, by mail, by fax, and on the Internet. During defined periods in the fall, spring, and summer, expanded registration services are available on campus. These periods usually occur in May, June, and August for the fall

semester, November and January for the spring semester, and May and June for the summer session. All continuing students from the previous semester are contacted by phone and invited to attend an early registration period so that they may have access to the best course selection.

As each semester approaches, the college administration keeps all employees updated on enrollment. The Dean of Student Services gives a presentation at the beginning-of-semester all-college meeting, and the Dean of Administration sends out frequent e-mails tracking overall enrollment through the first two weeks of classes to keep the college community abreast of how close the college is to meeting our enrollment goals. These updates encourage all employees to focus on providing advising and registration services to as many students as possible.

Ongoing college fairs and high school recruiting occur. Career workshops are held about six times annually.

### **Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Recognition**

The college adheres to clearly defined policies on student actions and ethics that originate with the state community college system and are published in the catalog (pages 38-42). These policies include student discipline, proscribed conduct, discipline procedures, disciplinary penalties, rights of students, student grievance procedures, and review of academic standards.

In addition, the college also has specific policies governing racism and acts of intolerance, sexual harassment, computer use, privacy and confidentiality, drugs and alcohol, nondiscrimination, disabilities, smoking, and crime reports. These policies are published in the catalog (pages 43-49). Also, much of the language concerning ethical standards and student rights are included in course syllabi and the student handbook.

The college recently revised its sexual harassment brochure and procedures to make it more current and accessible to students and employees. A larger and more diverse group of intake officers is now available to respond to concerns. The college has provided sexual harassment training to all employees.

An awards ceremony is held each May where the student awards presented include the following, among others:

- Alumni Memorial Scholarships
- Foundation Scholarships
- Early Childhood Education Outstanding Achievement Awards
- Theta Chi Psi Chapter Members Awards (Criminal Justice Program)
- History Award
- Excellence in Psychology Award
- Human Services Club Memorial Scholarship

- Phi Theta Kappa Scholarships for Continuing and Transferring Students
- Phi Theta Kappa All-State and All-USA Academic Team Awards
- Accounting Department Scholarship
- Bartlett Memorial Scholarship and Award (Accounting and Business)
- Libby Family Scholarship and Award (Marketing)
- Student Senate Awards
- Women's Club of Enfield Scholarships
- President to President Scholarship (with the University of Hartford)
- Who's Who Among Students in American Junior Colleges

In addition, the two most prestigious student awards, The Nelson Bordeau Award and the Broken Paddle Award, are annually presented to two graduating students during commencement ceremonies.

### **Student Records**

Student records and files are maintained according to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 and the state Public Records Administration higher education codes published by the Connecticut State Library. The materials maintained in students' records are the admission application, high school transcripts, college transcripts, transfer credit evaluations, grade reports, and independent study descriptions. The registrar's office maintains official records, and the Student Services area maintains working records. Each student has the right to inspect and review records that contain information directly related to the student. The college will not release student records or information to anyone other than the student unless written permission is granted by the student.

### **Evaluation of Student Services**

In Spring 2004, Asnuntuck administered the Community College Survey of Student Engagement to learn more about students' needs in terms of both learning and co-curricular information. The results of this survey can be used to guide institutional goals and planning. Another system-wide instrument is the graduate survey, administered to all students graduating from the state community college system.

The college conducted a telephone survey in May 2003. Every employee at the college was assigned fifteen to twenty students to call. A questionnaire was designed by the Marketing Committee, part of which measured satisfaction with student life at the college. The information was collected and compiled by the Institutional Research Office and shared with the college Cabinet.

# Appraisal

## Strengths

- Asnuntuck's chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa honor society is extremely active, has been honored by its international organization many times, and is a very strong complement to the student government in giving voice to issues that concern our students.
- Seventy percent of CCSSE respondents stated that the college provides the support they need to succeed at Asnuntuck "quite a bit or very much."
- The college has not always successfully assessed the basic skills of all students who should be tested according to Board policy. However, placement testing is now situated in the Student Services area and is thus more seamlessly integrated into the admissions and counseling process. An ad hoc working group of faculty and Student Services members collaborated to identify ways to improve the testing and placement process for basic skills. Placement testing information is clearly described in a letter sent to new students.
- The Financial Aid office received a perfect audit in 2003-04. In addition to ongoing financial aid services and outreach at the college, Asnuntuck also offers two financial aid workshops a year to the community in conjunction with state elected officials. The workshops are very well attended.
- The extended new student orientation is strongly supported by all areas of the college.
- Academic advising has greatly improved in the past few years. An enhanced academic advising system has been implemented that ensures full-time matriculated students are assigned to a faculty member. Banner use improves information access for students and advisors.
- End of the year assessments and student surveys indicate a very high satisfaction with services provided by the Academic Skills Center. During the past seven years, 97 to 100 percent of student survey respondents indicated that they would recommend the Academic Skills Center to a friend.
- Asnuntuck has continued to create student gathering spaces: for example, adding comfortable seating clusters in the hallways, building a new deck area, and beautifying the cafeteria.
- Student involvement in theatre productions is strong, and the award-winning poetry magazine *Freshwater* has a national reputation.
- The recent addition of adaptive technology makes the LRC's holdings and services far more accessible to students.

## Concerns

- Due to state budget cuts, the Coordinator of Student Activities position was eliminated at Asnuntuck and all of the Connecticut community colleges. Asnuntuck has not yet been able to reinstate this position.
- The CCSSE survey suggests that students do not fully access career counseling and job placement at the college. Asnuntuck's career counselor recently retired and has not been replaced.
- As indicated by the CCSSE survey, Asnuntuck students' participation in college-sponsored organizations and activities is low. However, the same survey shows that Asnuntuck students spend a greater amount of time working for pay than at similar institutions.
- Despite repeated college efforts and some level of student interest, the college has not been able to establish a coherent intramural athletic program.
- The college has not effectively engaged its alumni in the life of the college.
- Spring semester orientation for new students entering the college for the first time in January has been unsuccessful. At this time, there is no mid-year orientation program.
- The advising system does not include a formal process for part-time students not matriculated into degree programs. In addition, students who register on the internet can do so without actually speaking with an advisor.
- Sexual harassment intake officers have requested sexual harassment training specific to higher education scenarios and their roles, but the training provided has focused more on corporate situations.
- Student Services meets monthly to review concerns, goals, and objectives, but the area does not routinely conduct a standard or ongoing evaluation of services provided. No standardized instrument or process to gauge students' co-curricular needs is regularly administered.

## Projection

- The college has formed a basic skills developmental studies task force that is planning a fall semester 2005 pilot project to address the needs of incoming students who need the most help with math, reading, and writing. The pilot will then be expanded into a comprehensive program for incoming developmental students.
- The Student Services area will explore ways to reinstate the Student Activities Coordinator position and a position focused on career advising.

- The Student Services area will recruit student interns from area four-year and graduate schools to supplement current professional staff.
- The Student Services area will adopt the system-wide model for evaluating Student Services.
- The college is committed to using CCSSE data to meet its mission.

# Standard Seven: Library and Information Services

Overview: The college's Learning Resource Center combines the services of a traditional library along with audio-visual and computerized resources to give students, faculty, staff, and the community access to an extremely wide range of materials.

## Description

### Learning Resource Center Holdings and Services

Asnuntuck's "library" is known as the Learning Resource Center (LRC), located in the western wing of the building, an expansion of the original building completed in 1990 that provides 9,000 square feet for the LRC. The LRC is open to the general public, with priority given to the students and staff of the college. Asnuntuck's collections and services in the LRC include the following:

- Approximately 33,000 books on the shelves and over 700 e-books online
- Subscriptions to over 250 periodicals in print and microform and approximately 10,000 more online
- Access to Library Catalogs, databases, and the World Wide Web
- Interlibrary loan services
- Library instruction for Asnuntuck courses
- Support for WebCT online course components
- AV materials and equipment
- Pathfinders (guides to researching your topic in the LRC)
- Coin-operated photocopier for public use
- Microfiche and microfilm reader/printer
- Typewriters
- Adaptive technology for LRC users with disabilities or special needs
- Comfortable space for quiet study

The LRC includes four noteworthy special book collections:

- Copernicus (Polish history and culture—shelved separately)
- Early Childhood Education
- Literacy Volunteers (shelved separately)
- Writing Instruction

The LRC is open for operation during the following hours:

- During Semesters:
  - Monday through Thursday: 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.
  - Friday: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
  - Saturday: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Between Semesters:
  - Monday through Thursday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
  - Friday: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
  - Saturday: closed

Loan policy for circulating materials is as follows:

- Books: 4 weeks
- Pamphlets, College Catalogs, Annual Reports: 2 weeks
- Compact Discs, Audiotapes, Records: 2 weeks
- Videotapes and DVDs: 2 days

The LRC web site (<http://www.acc.commnet.edu/lrc>) links directly from the main college website and includes the following:

- Catalogs of books and other materials in the LRC, in all twelve Connecticut Community College libraries, and in many other libraries in Connecticut and beyond
- “Electronic Information Databases” (many with full text articles)
- “Subject Guide to the Internet” (web sites related to Asnuntuck courses and programs)
- “Writing and Research Skills” (links to helpful web sites)
- “Ask a Reference Librarian” (e-mail link to the LRC Reference Desk)
- “This Month in the LRC” (bibliographies of items on display in the LRC)
- LRC hours and contact information
- Online request forms for selected LRC services (pending)

In addition to the design and content of the LRC web site, the three LRC librarians offer library instruction sessions to all faculty members and for all courses on how students can make the best use of LRC resources and services. Librarians work with individual faculty members in gearing these sessions to the particular needs and assignments of each class. The sessions usually include distribution of several handouts about the LRC and its services. (A typical packet of handouts is available in the workroom.) To make these sessions interactive and engaging for students, librarians usually begin them with hands-on demonstrations of online catalog and database searches in one of the college’s computer labs and finish (or follow up in a later class) with a brief tour of the LRC.

Since information literacy underlies the college’s updated mission statement, Asnuntuck’s Curriculum and Standards Committee approved in May 2005 a recommendation from LRC staff and English faculty that library instruction should

become a required component of two courses: English 043: Writing: Paragraph to Essay and English 101: Composition. This requirement is effective in the fall 2005 semester and should increase students' understanding and use of LRC resources and services.

In the spring 2005 semester, the LRC also joined the libraries of four other Connecticut community colleges in offering a six-month pilot 24/7 virtual reference project to give Asnuntuck students reliable help with their research assignments from professional librarians, especially during hours when the LRC is closed. Based on the success of the pilot project, this "InfoAnyTime" service is being continued on a permanent basis this year.

### **Learning Resource Center Staffing and Budget**

The LRC is staffed by three library professionals (including the Director and two information services librarians) and three support staff positions (one audio-visual coordinator, one media assistant, one circulation coordinator). In addition, the LRC employs eight to ten student workers each semester who work from 5 to 15 hours per week. Because most of these student workers are on the federal work-study program, the funding is from an external source. Several student volunteers also work in the library as part of their twenty-hour community service requirement for the Sociology 190: Self and Others course.

Faculty and staff members are encouraged (and reminded periodically through LRC newsletters and frequent personal interaction with librarians) to recommend new books and other materials to be added to the LRC's collection, as well as older materials to be removed and updated.

The LRC's yearly budget (excluding employee compensation) has been approximately \$80,000 in recent years. To ensure viability of the LRC's collection, more than two-thirds of that budget is made up of subscriptions and book purchases. In addition, the Audio-Visual department (which is coordinated by the LRC), has seen growing budgets in recent years to accommodate necessary new equipment to support instruction.

### **Accessibility in the Learning Resource Center**

As an open admissions institution, Asnuntuck Community College has always opened its doors to students with disabilities. According to a counselor who works with students in need of accommodations that are mandated by the Americans with Disabilities Act, Asnuntuck has served a total of sixty-five students to date with the following challenges (numbers that are expected to increase in the future):

- three with traumatic brain injuries
- five with physical disabilities
- two with chronic medical conditions

- more than fifteen with psychiatric conditions
- approximately forty with learning disabilities

The Learning Resource Center was awarded a \$10,000 Adaptive Technology Grant by the Connecticut State Library in 2004 to purchase technology that will make resources more accessible to patrons with disabilities. The new equipment includes the following:

- a hand-held magnifier
- a closed circuit television that magnifies and adjusts for brightness
- Kurzweil 3000 software that enlarges text on the screen and in print
- Dragon Naturally Speaking, voice recognition software to facilitate word processing
- a Tracker 2000 hands-free mouse that allows navigation with head movements

These items are located in a quiet space in the Learning Resource Center and are accompanied by a computer workstation with Microsoft Office on height-adjustable furniture for patrons in wheelchairs.

### **Learning Resource Center Planning and Evaluation**

Each year, the Director of the Learning Resource Center submits a detailed work plan to the Academic Dean, summarizing how the LRC accomplished the previous year's goals and proposing goals for the upcoming year. Special attention is given to assuring that the LRC's goals correspond to the overall college strategic planning goals. In addition, the LRC Director, in cooperation with his staff, develops yearly work plans for each member of the LRC staff.

LRC staff members have periodically surveyed LRC users, including students, faculty, staff, and local community residents, about what they need from the LRC and their level of satisfaction with current LRC services and resources. Responses to these surveys and to relevant portions of the CCSSE survey administered by the college have generally indicated a high level of satisfaction with the LRC and also offered specific suggestions for further improvements.

## **Appraisal**

### **Strengths**

- The LRC has a multitude of electronic databases that give what appears to be a small library extensive access to information resources.
- The recent addition of adaptive technology makes the LRC's holdings and services far more accessible.

- Recent LRC facilities improvements include improved lighting, furniture, and ceiling tiles, making for a greatly improved learning atmosphere.
- The LRC's e-mail newsletter keeps the college community well informed about new holdings and services.
- The LRC makes special efforts at continuing acquisitions aimed at staying current with the needs of students and the college community in general.

### **Concerns**

- Staffing levels in the LRC may be below the recommendations of profession library associations.
- Library instruction is underutilized by faculty members.

### **Projection**

- A comprehensive plan to address staffing needs will be completed by June 2006.
- The college's Master Plan for space utilization will address continuing improvements to the physical environment in the LRC.
- A plan to increase overall library utilization and to tailor staffing and library instruction services to more closely meet the needs of students and faculty members will be included in the LRC's strategic plan.

# Standard Eight: Physical Facilities

Overview: Asnuntuck's buildings and grounds, as well as its computer and telecommunication facilities, provide adequate space and resources for our present needs. To allow for and encourage future growth and improvements, the college is currently finalizing a comprehensive Master Plan for renovating the facilities.

## Description

### The Building and Grounds

Asnuntuck is housed in the Kosciuszko Education Center, a single-building former junior high school on Elm Street in Enfield, Connecticut. The town of Enfield owns the building and surrounding land. The college has a 25-year lease that began on January 1, 1983 and runs to December 31, 2007—with options for two extensions of ten years each. Lease payment during the first 10 years was \$40,176 per year; currently and for the last 15 years of the lease, the payment is \$32,556 per year. The college has an option to purchase the building at any time for \$2.5 million. (The lease is available in the workroom, and a building map will be made available to the visiting team during the visit.)

The building is two stories high with 168,649 gross square feet, 111,038 square feet of which is assignable for use. The grounds cover 36 acres, primarily composed of a green area at the front of the building and several athletic fields behind. The parking lots in front and rear of the building contain 600 total spaces. In 2003, the entrance from Elm Street to the parking lot was renovated from two separate roads (one entrance and one exit, each one-way) to a single two-way entrance/exit with a stoplight at the Elm Street intersection.

The college employs five full-time maintainers in two shifts for full-day coverage. Maintenance staff have recently been provided formal training in restroom and classroom cleaning, Material Safety Data Sheets to track chemicals used in the building, as well as Blood Borne Pathogens Standard training for dealing with blood-related accidents or injuries. Supplemental coverage is provided by up to two employees from an outside contracted service to help during high-demand times. Security is provided by a day and evening officer, contracted through an outside security agency.

The Building Superintendent, who reports directly to the Dean of Administration, supervises the maintainers and security officers and oversees maintenance of the physical plant. The Building Superintendent has recently undergone training in supervision, facilities planning and design management, environmental safety and health, facilities

construction and project management, facilities financial management, facilities operations and maintenance management, electrical use reduction, and storm water procedures.

The following table shows the square footage of each assignable space in the building:

<u>Space Description</u>	<u>Total Square Feet</u>
<u>Executive Office</u>	
President	1,206
Human Resources	1,004
Institutional Research	482
Total	2,692
<u>Dean of Administration</u>	
Dean of Administration	347
Business Office	5,673
Bookstore	1,134
Information Technology	1,927
Facilities	842
Gymnasium/Multipurpose Space	11,767
Auditorium	4,211
Food Service	4,388
Total	30,289
<u>Dean of Academic Affairs</u>	
Dean of Academic Affairs	1,697
Academic Skills Center	1,580
Computer Information Services	6,170
Classrooms	18,350
Instructors	4,639
Liberal Arts	2,219
Science & Technology	3,495
Library/Learning Resource Center	10,445
Total	48,595
<u>Continuing Education</u>	
Continuing Education	9,277
Business & Industry	151
Small Business Development	153
Tech Prep	145
Manufacturing Technology	8,260
Total	48,595
<u>Dean of Student Services</u>	
Dean of Student Services	515

Admissions/Counseling	1,981
Children's Reading Room	1,506
Evening Coordination	94
Financial Aid	1,027
Student Activities	741
Records & Registration	758
Total	6,622
SUBTOTAL, ASNUNTUCK SPACE	106,184
<u>Rented Space</u>	
Literacy Volunteer Program	336
Howell Cheney Nursing Program	2,604
Terra Nova Alternative High School	1,914
SUBTOTAL, RENTED SPACE	4,854
GRAND TOTAL, ASSIGNABLE SPACE	111,038

### **Classrooms**

The college has 30 classrooms, mostly located on the second floor, that average approximately 900 square feet each and seat from 25-35 students each. A range of furnishings is available to suit different teaching/learning styles—from the traditional seat-desk combination to large tables in rows to modular table arrangements to even a couch-and-pillow setting. Most classrooms have been fitted with built-in TV-VCR combinations, and two have been upgraded to “smart classrooms,” containing a personal computer, document camera, DVD/VCR Combo, amplifier, speakers, and LCD projector. More smart classrooms are planned, as funding becomes available.

The Instructional Excellence Committee did a survey of classroom conditions and found many somewhat minor problems in most classrooms, ranging from rips and stains in carpets to blinds that did not fully open or close. Because our students spend so much time in our classrooms and tend to judge the college as a whole by the condition of the classrooms, the committee relayed these concerns to the administration. Many improvements have been made, and more are in the planning stages.

### **Science and Technology Facilities**

In Asnuntuck’s early days, the college offered only a limited number of laboratory science sections off-campus using Enrico Fermi High School laboratory facilities, while conducting lecture sections on campus. Since 1990, when college renovations included the addition of state-of-the-art science facilities, the college has had fully stocked biology and chemistry labs to support course offerings in these disciplines.

A Manufacturing Technology (formerly known as Machine Technology) program was begun in 1998. The program utilizes more than 8,000 square feet and includes an extensive range of shop equipment, including vertical and horizontal milling machines, lathes, cutter grinders, computer numeric control milling machines and lathes, Power saws, drill presses, bench grinders, belt sanders, coordinate measuring machines, optical comparators, granite surface plates, mechanical and air/hydraulic presses, heat treat furnace, hardness testing machine, abrasive cut-off machine, and bench/vise workstations.

### **The Master Plan**

The Asnuntuck Master Plan for space utilization has been developed in collaboration and consultation with both the Board of Trustees of the community college system and the administration at Asnuntuck. When implemented, the Master Plan will help to reinvent the existing building's image to draw in prospective students. The master plan relies mainly on space reorganization to increase the functional use of existing spaces. The image and operation of the renovated facility will be elevated to a level competitive with regional and national community colleges. (The complete Master Plan is available in the workroom.)

The Education Planning Assessment by Rickes Associates (the contracted education consulting firm) determined that the existing 111,038 assignable square feet should accommodate the space needs of the 2015 enrollment projection of 1,000 full-time equivalent. Therefore, there is no additional space proposed in this Master Plan.

The campus will gain usable square footage through the reorganization of existing spaces. The proposed building organization seeks to accomplish these major goals:

- capture under-utilized spaces
- recognize and enhance existing building and site assets
- reorganize functional relations to promote efficiency and ease academic and social interactions
- provide additional facilities and services to the students and faculty
- upgrade infrastructure and teaching environments
- facilitate community interaction through added/enlarged facilities and access
- project a collegiate presence to the college and the general community

Most of the “new” spaces will come from the division of the under-utilized gymnasium. One half will remain operational for physical activities, and the other half will become classroom spaces separated by removable walls. The building footprint will not be changed, nor will its circulation paths. Several departments will be relocated, and dividing walls will be demolished and reconstructed to fit the new divisions of space. Parking lots will be repaved and slightly modified in their layout to service the new main

entrance that will be located where the kitchen near the cafeteria spaces currently resides.

The Machine Technology classroom spaces will remain largely untouched, receiving a few minor additions of a second computer classroom, and the inclusion of the Continuing Education offices. The President's office, computer labs, auditorium, science labs, boiler room, bathrooms, and several smaller technology rooms will remain in their present locations. Corridor walls will also remain, though glass will be added for interest in certain locations. Many of the walls dividing the various rooms on the first floor will be demolished and relocated to fit the new program. Several departments and classrooms will be relocated to different corridors. The second floor walls will remain where they are with the exception of the merging of a few smaller classrooms to create larger rooms.

Goals for the overall site include the following:

- reorganize parking lot and car circulation to create efficient use of the site
- create new entry "plaza" and replace the sidewalk around the school
- replace pavement and curbing
- enhance existing outdoor gathering spaces and create new ones
- implement a landscaping and lighting plan.

Goals for the building interior include the following:

- relocate the interior dividing walls to fit the new space program
- remove and replace carpets
- replace the gymnasium floor
- demolish or puncture for glazing several corridor walls, as well as the exterior wall to the new main entry

Goals for equipment/technology include the following:

- wire all the teaching spaces for data and video projection
- utilize "smart board" type technology and a technology "podium" that can control all the technology within that space

Goals for the mechanical system include the following:

- replace existing boiler and associated equipment
- replace existing chiller
- replace selected fan coil units
- replace existing roof top units
- replace existing gymnasium air handling units
- replace existing control system
- replace selected exhaust fans and associated ductwork
- clean existing equipment including ductwork, condensation pans, and intake and exhaust louvers

Goals for the plumbing system include the following:

- replace hot water heater and associated equipment
- replace valves and fittings of existing domestic water system with any associated construction

Goals for the electrical system include the following:

- replace the 1964 electrical distribution equipment
- replace lighting fixtures with lay-in 2x2 and 2x4 fluorescent fixtures. In most spaces they should have parabolic lenses. In the library and spaces with concentrated computer usage, they should be direct/indirect lay-in fixtures. In lobby and display areas, they should be limited accent and spotlights.
- replace gymnasium lights with H.I.D. fixtures
- equip all spaces with occupancy sensors
- replace exterior lighting system with light sensors and timer
- provide a public address system
- provide a central clock system
- upgrade existing fire alarm system
- provide a security system

Educational Planning Assessment: In developing the Master Plan, the team used data developed by Rickes Associates in a several-step process. They started by reviewing the objectives, establishing a plan, and then collecting data. The data came from interviews and surveys, as well as enrollment projections based on population data. Finally, a strategic planning initiative assessed and evaluated existing instructional space usage as compared to projected future needs. Based on their assessments, they made recommendations for the future.

In interviewing the college community (including employees from Continuing Education, Administrative Services, Student Services, Academic Affairs/Faculty, and the Office of the President, as well as students officers from the Student Senate), Rickes Associates identified several areas that were perceived as needing attention:

- more gathering spaces for students
- lounge space for faculty
- general meeting spaces
- more classrooms for evening Continuing Education classes
- updated technology and furniture for classrooms
- centralized faculty offices
- food service
- additional space for selected programs

Surveys were distributed to administration and faculty that requested specific departmental information. The findings of the surveys can be grouped into three major categories. First would be specific limitations of classroom space such as inadequate or

inappropriate sizes of classrooms, as well as under/over utilization of classrooms at different times of day. The second category of findings concerned pressing space needs such as more classrooms and labs, more space for student gatherings, and inefficient or inadequate spaces for business functions, registration and the library. The third category of survey findings concerned suggestions for space related changes to the campus.

To make use of the collected data, Rickes Associates had to make some assumptions regarding the future needs of the college. Based on population projections for our service area, projected enrollment could reach 1,000 FTE for credit programs and 200 FTE for non-credit programs. Full-time faculty would increase from 24 to 34, and full-time staff from 55 to 78. To address these changes, the college embarked on a strategic planning initiative to provide further information to be used in the Space Utilization Study and Master Plan. This process was designed to identify the mission of the college, the effectiveness of programs to achieve success in the mission, and changes that might be needed to meet the needs of students in both credit and non-credit programs.

In their assessment and evaluation of existing instructional spaces, Rickes Associates noted a mismatch between class size and classroom size with most classrooms having a capacity of 30-40 students when almost half of all day and evening classes have 20 or fewer students. Because of this, smaller classes are often held in rooms that are inappropriately large. It was also noted that classroom usage was much heavier in the evening than during the day. Based on the projected population increase, classes offered, and class size patterns, Rickes Associates made suggestions for general classroom space needs. A full explanation of classroom utilization needs is given in section 6.0 of their report in the workroom.

For the other spaces, it was determined that some areas lacked sufficient space for future needs (for such things as conference rooms, work spaces, etc.) because of the need to reassign spaces and increase staff. Section 8.0 of the Rickes report details suggestions for reallocating spaces based on space requests and commonly accepted space guidelines.

In summary, the Rickes Associates report evaluated all available space at the college and compared it with other community colleges in the state system and concluded that the ratio of space to student (FTE) at Asnuntuck is highest in the system and that the current usable square feet will be adequate for the projected 2015 student population. The ratio of space to student at that time will only be slightly higher than the current state system target. However, the way spaces are used and allocated needs reorganization, rearrangement, and updating in order to position the college to meet the educational needs of the region for the next ten years.

The following table summarizes the current and proposed space utilization:

Existing Gross Square Feet	168,649
Existing Assignable Square Feet	111,038
Existing Usable Square Feet (not including Community Space)	106,185

Current Enrollment (FTE-Fall 2004)	759
Existing Usable Square Feet per FTE	140
Proposed Gross Square Feet (Total Campus)	168,649
Proposed Assignable Square Feet (Total Campus)	111,038
Proposed Usable Square Feet (not including Community Space)	104,954 (-1 %)
Projected Enrollment (2015 Full Time Equivalent)	1,000 (+31.7%)
Proposed Usable Square Feet per FTE	105 (-25%)
Connecticut Community College System Target	95 SF per FTE Student
National Community College Average	100 SF per FTE Student

Phasing of Construction: Phasing the planned renovation of the building will allow the work to be done with less interference to campus activities throughout the course of construction. The Master Plan will make a significant improvement to the flow of daily functions on campus as well as revitalizing the image the college presents to the community but calls for renovations to the existing building that are potentially very disruptive. The timing of the construction should coincide with the summer break in order to minimize the disruption.

Currently, a sum of money has been budgeted for the improvements to the college. The scope of work for the first phase will need to fit within that amount. Additional funds have also been set aside for roof replacement and site improvements. The site improvement project should be coordinated with the first phase of construction.

Phase I construction will consist of the following:

- capture currently under-utilized spaces such as the gymnasium, kitchen, and the cafeterias
- create a new image for the college with a new entry canopy, lobby, and cyber café
- repair and clean existing exterior envelope
- renovate and expand the Media Center
- divide gymnasium by converting one half into Continuing Education training rooms and using the other half as fitness space
- relocate Continuing Education offices and Terra-Nova Spaces
- renovate the existing Cafeteria Two space into two dividable classrooms
- replace the building's infrastructure

Phase II will complete the renovations of the building. The scope of the work of Phase II is extensive and will require further phasing. The majority of the renovation involves the administrative offices and classroom spaces. The construction will probably need to be spread over eighteen months with a substantial portion of it occurring during the academic year. The construction should be timed to start at the beginning of the summer break and to utilize two summer breaks to renovate the areas that require complete reconstruction. Strong construction management, creative use of construction systems,

and collaboration between those overseeing construction and the college administration will be essential to minimizing disruption.

### **Facility Code Compliance**

Asnuntuck meets all state and federal guidelines on facility safety management, including the following:

- National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 110: Standard for Emergency and Standby Power Systems
- National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 25: Standard for the Inspection, Testing, and Maintenance of Water-Based Fire Protection Systems
- National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 72: National Fire Alarm Code
- National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 101: Life Safety Code
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), currently 100 percent compliant
- Occupational Health and Safety Administration, 100 percent compliant
- Local and State Fire Marshall yearly inspections
- State Elevator Inspector at least yearly inspections
- Hartford Steam Boiler Inspection and Insurance Company biennial inspection for renewal of state operating certificates
- Environmental Protection Association voluntary chemical compliance initiative
- Monthly environment reports for TRC Customer-Focused Solutions environmental consultant
- Science lab hazardous materials reports for TRC Customer-Focused Solutions environmental consultant

Documentation for these compliances is available in the workroom.

### **Air Quality Issues and Testing Results**

Because of inadequate ventilation and excess humidity, the college had experienced in the mid-1990s what came to be referred to as the “air quality problem.” The college commissioned a detailed engineering report and remedied that problem by replacing substantial amounts of flexible ductwork with sheetmetal ductwork, by eliminating the ceiling space as a return-air plenum, by increasing the volume of outside air drawn into the building, by increasing the number of fan-coil units, and by reducing the humidity in fresh air before it is moved through the ventilation system.

Air quality problems resurfaced in 2000 in the form of an ethylene glycol leak from the ventilator in one faculty office. The college then retained EnviroMed Services to conduct air quality monitoring. Their investigation found no detectable level of ethylene glycol after the area was cleaned, and the office carpet was removed as EnviroMed recommended. CONN-OSHA also performed an air quality investigation and found no violations of OSHA standards with regard to air quality.

During this time, there were reports of what was described as a “vomit smell” in several locations around the building, as well as a leak in the Academic Skills Center. The college retained AQuest Corporation to provide an indoor air quality solution. This extensive program included complete filter replacement with high-quality filters, complete inspection of the mechanical conditions and verification of operations, and increased air flow in the building. AQuest also developed an “Odor Assessment Survey Form” to encourage all employees and students to report any odor or air quality concerns.

During the testing and investigation, Asnuntuck’s President sent eight e-mail reports to campus employees updating the air quality situation, and the college held several all-college meetings for discussion of the issue and reports on how the college was dealing with air quality problems. (All reports relating to air quality and testing are available in the workroom.)

### **Computer and Information Technology**

Platform: The college went from the MARKOS legacy system with DEC VT220 terminals on a VAX platform in 1995 to Windows 95-based IBM-compatible PC hardware environment running the Systems and Computer Technology Corporation Banner administrative information system with a graphical user interface on a Windows NT server with Oracle databases, and then to a Windows XP based IBM-compatible PC hardware environment running web based Systems and Computer Technology Corporation (SCT) Banner and PeopleSoft Core-CT administrative information systems using two Dell servers running the Windows Server 2003 with Active Directory operating system.

Staffing: The information technology staffing has gone from two full-time and two part-time employees in 1995 to the present total of four full-time and no part-time employees.

Computer Resources: All computers are currently on a three-year replacement schedule. The college currently has nine computer labs and more than 250 personal computers available to students on campus, as well as more than 100 computers for employee use. A list of all upgrades and additions to our computer resources is available in the workroom.

Telecommunication: The college has also made many updates in the telecommunication area in recent years:

- May 2001: In an infrastructure upgrade, fiber backbone was installed from each switch to each telecommunication closet.
- July 2002: Lab 133a and 133b were rewired (from coax to Cat5).
- January 2003: New switches in labs 212, 214, 215, and the Academic Skills Center were installed to speed up data transfer from 10 mb to 100 mb.
- September 2003 through December 2003: Infrastructure Upgrade project included Multiple Cat5e data drops being installed in every office and classroom. This

increased the capability to send and receive data 10 times faster than before. Data drops to support wireless Access Points were installed in the Learning Resource Center, the LRC Conference Room, and the Cafeteria.

- May 2004: The college voicemail system was upgraded with Names Directory software. This allowed callers to enter a few digits of a person's last name and be transferred to that person's extension. Single Digit/Flex Menu software was also added to make sub-menus possible.
- Spring 2005: The college will upgrade our switches to layer-three switches for increased security and performance as well as to implement Virtual Local Area Networks (VLANs).

Banner: The Banner enterprise resource planning (ERP) system provides an integrated administrative system for all 12 colleges and the System Office. Banner includes the following modules: Student, Financial Aid, Finance and Human Resources. Students, Faculty, and Staff use Banner to manage their class schedules, student accounts, registration, and perform other administrative services. The Human Resources module has recently been replaced by a state-mandated PeopleSoft (Core-CT) HR module.

Internet Native Banner (INB) is the method by which the standard SCT Banner application is accessed and run within the Connecticut Community Colleges. It uses web-based Java technology, and launches from within a web browser.

Banner self-service has been enhanced in the twelve state community colleges through the implementation of on-line resources through Banner Web for Students/Financial Aid and Web for Faculty/Advisors in a secure environment for all Connecticut community college students, faculty and staff to access. The self-service systems are used extensively for verifying personal information, admissions, registration, tuition and fee payments, grade entry, class and schedule look-ups, transcripts, entering and following-up Student Financial Aid documentation.

WebCT Course Management System: The twelve Connecticut community colleges have standardized on the Campus Edition of WebCT as its single course management system. The WebCT server is managed by the Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium (CTDLC). The WebCT software has been integrated with the Banner database to provide data synchronization between the two systems. The twelve community colleges will upgrade from Campus Edition to WebCT's academic enterprise system, Vista, in Fall 2005. Asnuntuck will be able to aggregate content or an entire curriculum and make it available to departments and users across the college.

Library Resource Information System (Libris): This is an integrated library network for the twelve Connecticut community colleges. The Libris network is built on the Voyager Integrated Library Management System manufactured by Endeavor Information Systems, Inc.

Library Proxy System: This provides access to subscription databases from off-campus via a URL-rewriting proxy server. The proxy server redirects authenticated remote users

to some external service that normally may not be accessible to off-campus (i.e. distance learners) students. The result is a seamless environment for the twelve state community colleges remote users to access external library services.

## **Appraisal**

### **Strengths**

- The college has been able to maintain its physical plant in a reliable and productive manner with existing resources.
- The evening security guard coverage has been supplemented by a day officer, ensuring security presence throughout weekday open hours.
- Renovation of the college entrance has made the intersection at Elm Street safer.
- The college has made significant progress in correcting the deficiencies listed as critical contained in the Facilities Condition Assessment conducted by VFA, Inc., for the Connecticut Department of Higher Education. The college was evaluated with an FCI score of .0, signifying overall good condition, one of the best scores in the state community college system. All asbestos in the building has been identified and removed.

### **Concerns**

- The building is forty years old, so many of the mechanicals need updating.
- Because the building is leased, the college has had to defer major expenditures on the replacement/upgrading until such time as funds become available.
- The college has begun the renovation process including asbestos removal. Two years ago the washrooms on both the first and second floors were completely renovated. Nine classrooms have been remodeled, and more classrooms are scheduled to be completed in the near future.
- Proposed revisions to the Americans with Disabilities Act would require minor updating of the facility.

## **Projection**

- The Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee of the Connecticut state legislature voted in April 2004 to approve funding for Asnuntuck's building improvement and acquisition. Bonding will be approved in 2007 to purchase the building from the town of Enfield.

- The college is committed to enhancing instructional technology available in classrooms. In addition, the college will utilize a wireless LAN campus-wide with associated security and user authentication within the next two years.
- The college will finalize and present the campus Master Plan for Board of Trustees approval in fall 2005. Once the plan is approved and funded, the college will implement Master Plan renovations.
- A committee has been formed to look at upgrading the existing NEC 2000 telephone system and the VMX 100 voicemail system. The committee will make its recommendations by December 2005 with implementation of the new systems planned for 2006.

## Standard Nine: Financial Resources

Overview: Asnuntuck has felt the financial strain of continued budget reductions from the state legislature. Despite these cuts, the college and state system have in place a coherent budgetary process to make the most of funding that is available.

### Description

As a public institution, Asnuntuck has both many financial advantages, and many disadvantages. With the institution of the state income tax in the early 1990's, Connecticut's state revenue base became much more stable. This has been a tremendous plus, providing a relatively stable base to the Connecticut Community College System's budget. This has enabled Asnuntuck, as all Connecticut community colleges, to do much more realistic budgetary planning on a multi-year basis.

On the other hand, the economy largely drives income tax revenues in Connecticut, as everywhere. Connecticut has not been immune to the state budgetary difficulties facing all the New England states. This has meant a relatively flat amount of funding from the state for the past four years. While Asnuntuck has not faced the intense budget problems that have beset some private institutions, and those public institutions in states without a relatively stable tax base, the college has been constrained in the development of new programs and activities. Creative planning and collaborative use of resources and people has enabled the college to move ahead.

Over the past five years, Asnuntuck's overall budget has increased by eight percent, with much of the increase coming from tuition and fee increases voted by the system's Board of Trustees. While student costs are higher than in previous years, there is little indication that they are close to the point where students cannot come to college.

Well over 90 percent of the college's state funding is allocated to personnel, with the rest going for capital projects and dedicated funds for capital equipment and technology infrastructure. Part of the savings from the early retirement incentive from 2003 went to the state coffers, but the other portion was returned to the colleges for necessary hiring.

Legislative changes during the 1990s gave the Connecticut community colleges considerable more flexibility in the allocation and use of funds, bringing us more in line with national standards. We are now able to maintain fund balances, and this enables Asnuntuck to have sufficient funds on hand for short-term financial emergencies. In addition, of course, as part of a twelve-college system, should a very extraordinary situation arise, the college can call upon resources from the state office. For the past several fiscal years, the college's ending fund balance has been approximately \$1.5

million, providing sufficient cushion to handle many exigencies.

In addition to regular operating funds, the state provides bond funds for the purchase of equipment, technology infrastructure, and building renovations. The college now has a draft master plan for its physical resources (available in the work room), and bond fund requests and decisions are based upon this plan. In addition, the state is in the process of exercising its option to buy the college's leased building and land from the town of Enfield. This will be finalized by December 2007 and will free up more money for building and parking lot repairs.

### **Budget Process**

The State of Connecticut now has a biennial budget, with the Governor and Legislature making some changes to the budget during the second year. Thus, the Board of Trustees does its most major budget review and projection for the biennial budget, with adjustments in the off year.

The community college system Chancellor, working with the Council of Presidents and Council of Administrative Deans, develops system guidelines for budget submission. These take into account state law and policy, the policies of the Board of Governors of Higher Education, the system strategic plan, and the college's individual strategic plan. Within these guidelines, Asnuntuck's Cabinet prepares the college's submission.

After the legislative process is complete, appropriations come to the Board of Trustees, which allocates funds to the individual colleges. This allocation is based upon the guidelines above, and follows a resource allocation model that provides an equitable distribution of funds. After the allocation is made, however, individual colleges have considerable flexibility to make decisions about specific items to fund within the general categories of personnel, operating expenses, and equipment.

Within the past two years, Asnuntuck has developed a more open and inclusive budgetary process. As a small college, many members of the professional staff in effect manage their own budget in a decentralized fashion.

In the spring, requests for departmental budgets are sent out. As mentioned above, this often means that they go to an individual. Departmental requests are prepared and sent to the area Dean for review and approval. Recent changes to provide more discussion have received very positive responses from staff.

The Deans forward their recommendations to the Dean of Administration, who prepares information for the President's Cabinet. The Cabinet allocates funds in accord with need and the strategic plan, and the Deans then provide information to their staff.

Starting in the late 1990's, the community college system began using the Banner Finance Module. This has enabled much more accurate information about the state of the college's

finances. Information on expenditures and budgets is also much more readily available.

The purchase process at Asnuntuck begins at the departmental level. Internal requisitions are sent to the appropriate Dean or Director for approval. They are then forwarded to the Business Office for processing. Since Banner allows the college to encumber funds at the requisition stage, this allows the Business Office to immediately notify a department if there are insufficient funds for the purchase. A new process informing departments when an item is being purchased has resulted in very positive responses from staff. A flow chart depicting the purchase process is in the workroom.

The college also is able to provide a quarterly statement to each budget department identifying spent and available funds. This new process is evolving and has been getting increasingly sophisticated, again receiving very positive responses from staff.

Asnuntuck's financial records are reviewed by the State Auditors of Public Accounts about every two years. The most recent audit as of the writing of this report was of fiscal year 2002. In addition, the community college system now does its own audit, currently using PricewaterhouseCoopers, in accord with generally accepted standards for colleges and universities. A system-wide audit of each college is done annually, starting with fiscal year 2002. Every three years that company selects three colleges for very detailed audits. Results of the past three audits are available in the work room and identify no exceptions or concerns about the way the college handles and controls its expenditures. These system audits also contain spreadsheets comparing Asnuntuck expenditures by category with expenditures for other Connecticut Community Colleges. Asnuntuck's expenditures are comparable to the other community colleges.

### **The Asnuntuck Foundation**

After being dormant for some years, the new Asnuntuck Community College Foundation was founded in 1998 as an independent entity separate from the college itself. The foundation currently has assets of nearly \$100,000. The foundation has done the following since its founding:

- awarded scholarships to students from local high schools to attend Asnuntuck
- supported Asnuntuck faculty in projects such as the Art Club and Freshwater Poetry Festival with \$400 grants
- supported a film series with two \$400 grants
- instituted annual fundraising events such as the Asnuntuck Golf Classic, the Gala Ball, and the Murder Mystery Dinner, which not only raise funds, but also raise friends for the college and increase visibility within the community
- co-sponsored a concert at the college featuring the United States Coast Guard Band
- sponsored a Phi Theta Kappa honor society student to attend a national scholarship conference in Texas with a \$1,500 grant
- assisted in obtaining a \$30,000 grant for the Teaching Scholars Program
- conducted a successful Thirtieth Anniversary alumni appeal campaign

# Appraisal

## Strengths

- Each division of the college gets quarterly updates on expenditures from the Business Office, providing timely information to assist with purchasing and expenditures. In addition, the Business Office provides an annual budget report at an all-college meeting, usually at the beginning of the fall semester.
- The Business Office provides the college with frequent enrollment updates, particularly at the beginning of each semester, allowing members of the college community to share information about where our full-time enrollment is in relation to the college enrollment goals.
- The college is in compliance with the newly revised Board policy regarding unrestricted net assets, which better enables the college to handle unforeseen financial situations.
- The new purchasing process is much more streamlined and accountable than in the past.
- The new purchasing process is a considerable improvement in the reporting and tracking of purchased items.
- Use of the computerized Banner Finance Module has made budgeting more efficient.
- The college tuition payment plan has allowed students to pay their bills in installments rather than all at once, easing students' financial burdens and encouraging enrollment.
- The college has improved the consistency of its message to area legislators and decision makers in regard to budgetary needs.
- The college is completing its first facilities master plan, which will make for a more focused budget process for capital equipment.
- The Asnuntuck Foundation is operating much more effectively than in the past, conducting fundraising efforts for scholarships and innovative funding for projects.

## Concerns

- While the college has already taken steps to provide more detailed budget information to the entire staff and has a plan in place to help the staff become financially knowledgeable, there is still a sense of a general lack of financial information among college employees.
- State funding instability and the timing of budget decisions continues to impact the college. This year, for example, the final state budget was voted late in the session, so the System Office only got Asnuntuck's fiscal year 2006 allocations to the college in June,

which makes proper budget planning difficult. In addition, very tight state budget allocations mean that state revenues are not even covering all personnel costs.

- The college's purchasing process, although considerably improved, still has room for further improvement.
- The college's internal budget request process is more based on the previous year's budget rather than a direct connection to the college's Strategic Plan.
- Academic area budgets have largely been static over the past decade. This makes new program development and the revision of current programs difficult.
- College staff report considerable frustration with the long lead-time required by the Board of Trustees and state processes for capital improvements. While this is beyond the ability of any college staff to affect, it is a significant source of difficulty.
- The college relies more and more on grant funding due to inconsistent state funding, but there are currently no specific guidelines for administering those grants.

## **Projection**

- Administrative Services will develop a more inclusive budget process within college departments and divisions and implement business processing to provide real-time budget information to all department and grant officers.
- The Asnuntuck Foundation will annually review its strategic plan, including outreach to alumni, local businesses, and the community.
- The college will continue to meet Board policies on unrestricted net assets.

# Standard Ten: Public Disclosure

Overview: The college makes itself known to the public through its catalog and a variety of other ways. In particular, the activities of the Marketing Committee, along with the increased exposure of the college through the radio station, access television programming, and expanded web site, has provided the college with a strong public profile.

## Description

### Information Center

The college has developed and maintains an Information Center as a reception area for telephone inquiries, walk-ins, and mail distribution. The center is the focal point for disseminating all general and specific information. The center is staffed from 8:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday.

Employees and student workers who staff the center respond to in-person and telephone inquiries about college information and services and, upon request, will provide any written institutional policy or procedure to any current or prospective student.

The Information Center also coordinates the posting of notices on designated bulletin boards throughout the building, as well as on the television monitors located near the building entrances. All student clubs and organizations have space available to post notices and information about their activities.

### Marketing

The institution provides information to the public that is complete, accurate, and clear through the following sources: the college catalog, the college course schedule, and the college web site. In addition, program brochures are available describing the requirements of various degree and non-degree programs offered.

In 1995 Asnuntuck created a half-time position to oversee college marketing, public relations, and publications. Since the staff person who filled this position was transferred into a new development position in 2000, the marketing position has not been refilled. But a Marketing Committee with members from throughout the college was created to perform some of the same functions.

The Marketing Committee was founded to assure that Asnuntuck's image would be seen in a consistent and positive light in the community. Membership is comprised of representatives from across the college: faculty, staff, and students. The committee coordinates television, radio, and print ads to publicize the college. The college's web site also operates with a great deal of input from the Marketing Committee. In addition, the committee coordinates and supports many specific activities and events that keep Asnuntuck's name visible and recognized both within and outside the walls of the building. Some of these activities include a college booth at area town fairs, an information kiosk at the local mall, sponsorship of events at area recreation centers such as Six Flags New England and Springfield Falcons hockey games, and on-screen ads that run at area movie theaters.

### **The College Catalog**

The current catalog can be perceived as a compliance document for the institution. The catalog contains the college's accreditation status, mission statement, objectives, and expected educational outcomes; requirements and procedures and policies related to admissions and the transfer of credit; student fees, charges and refund policies; rules and regulations for student conduct; other items related to attending or withdrawing from the institution; academic programs, courses currently offered, and other available educational opportunities; and academic policies and procedures and the requirements for degrees or other forms of academic recognition.

The catalog also includes a list of current full-time faculty, indicating departmental or program affiliation, showing degrees held, and the institutions granting them. The names of administrative officers, with their positions, and the names of members of the governing board may also be found here. Part-time faculty are not included in this list and do not currently appear in any college publication.

Asnuntuck's catalog is accessible on the college web site, and a CD-ROM version of the catalog was produced several years ago. The CD has not been updated because it is a less efficient tool than providing the same information online through the college web site.

The catalog does not indicate programs, courses, services, and personnel not available during a given academic year because the vast majority of Asnuntuck's services are available year-round. Nearly all courses not offered for two consecutive years are removed during regular revisions of the catalog, but a few remain.

### **College Web Site**

The college's first website was designed by Bligh Graphics, an outside consultant, and came online in 1997. The website was redesigned in 1999 by another consultant, First Experience Communications. A third redesign was done by the college's Director of Media Services in 2000. The fourth (and current) redesign was done by the college's

media assistant in 2004. The media assistant has been assigned webmaster duties as part of his regular position requirements, giving the website the consistent vision and timely attention it lacked earlier. The Web Advisory Group and Marketing Committee advise the webmaster on policies and guidelines. The webmaster has given limited access to some departments to be able to update content on their web pages.

The college's current website (<http://www.acc.commnet.edu>) contains the following information:

- the college mission statement
- the college catalog
- the student handbook
- the semester schedule
- information on admissions procedures, tuition, and fees
- a list of full time employees, showing their contact information
- Continuing Education offerings and schedule
- employment at the college
- financial aid information
- access to ONLINE: the Connecticut Community Colleges' self-service student information system (<http://www.online.commnet.edu>), which gives access to applying and registering online, applying for Financial Aid, viewing grades, getting class schedules, and getting unofficial transcripts
- regularly updated reports on college news and events
- access and information assistance for WebCT, online course support
- access to the college radio station, WACC, 107.7 FM
- many photos of people and events in the college community

The Asnuntuck web site strives to comply with the standards of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), which ensures that content is readable across all qualified web browsers, and strives to comply with requirements of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which, through a 2001 amendment, sets criteria for accessibility of Web sites.

### **College Radio Station**

The college was granted radio station licensure from the Federal Communications Commission in 2001 and began broadcasting with 100 watts in March 2003 as the only community college radio station in Connecticut. WACC, 107.7-FM can be heard approximately five to ten miles in all directions from Enfield, encompassing much of our service area. The college web site also links to Internet access for streaming audio of the radio station's broadcast.

An operations manager oversees the daily functions of the station, and there is also an appointed Advisory Board and a contracted chief engineer. WACC plays a combination of album oriented rock and adult album alternative music, along with a variety of talk

shows and specialty programming. Among the many public service announcements broadcast by the station are frequent announcements of college programs, courses, and services available to the community. The state-of-the-art digital audio facilities include five networked workstations for producing on-air materials. The college radio station is not only an information and marketing tool for Asnuntuck, but also a curriculum resource for students in the Communications and Broadcasting program, which offers several radio courses.

### **College Television Exposure**

In 2004, the college President began hosting *Asnuntuck: Changing Lives*, a weekly talk show broadcast on local cable access television, available to most of the college's service area. The program features interviews with students, alumni, employees, and community members and highlights the positive impact Asnuntuck makes in the larger community and in the lives of individuals within the community. In addition, members of the Asnuntuck community appear often on other access television programs.

The college has also enhanced its television advertising exposure. Commercials featuring students, employees, and alumni appear frequently, highlighting the positive value Asnuntuck has for potential students, and a "crawl" ad plays during the popular local forecasts on the Weather Channel.

### **Other Publications and Documentation**

A college view piece is available which contains a description of the size and characteristics of the student body, the campus setting, those institutional learning and physical resources from which a student can reasonably expect to benefit, and the range of co-curricular and non-academic opportunities available to students.

Documentation for any statements and promises regarding such matters as program excellence, learning outcomes, success in placement, and achievements of graduates may be obtained through the office of Institutional Advancement. Achievements of college faculty do not appear in one place or publication, but local newspapers frequently carry articles about faculty activities, and faculty members are often featured on the local public access television station. This information is also available through the Academic Affairs Office.

All publications of the institution are readily available upon request and can be obtained in person, through the mail, online, at the public library, at a kiosk in the mall and at various drop-off points throughout the region. The most recent audited financial statement of the institution is available in the office of the Dean of Administration.

The college's Marketing Committee and various departments and offices periodically review publications for consistency, currency, and accuracy.

# Appraisal

## Strengths

- The college's Marketing Committee has developed a marketing plan that it implements and monitors on an ongoing basis. In addition, the Marketing Committee's work has significantly increased Asnuntuck's presence in local, state, and national media.
- The radio station has increased the college's presence in our service area and energized the Communications and Broadcasting program.
- The college's web site is an extremely valuable means for disseminating information and increasing the college profile.
- The software used to maintain the college web site is user-friendly enough so that responsibility for maintenance of specific links can be distributed at the departmental level.
- The President's Office solicits campus-wide input and sends a monthly e-mail newsletter to the college community.
- The President's monthly show on local cable television has highlighted various programs at Asnuntuck and improved the college's profile in the community.
- All-college meetings give members of the college community a forum to have their voices heard, as well as an increased opportunity for collegial interaction with others we may connect with regularly.

## Concerns

- While the Marketing Committee is very effective, it cannot replace staff to meet the marketing and publication needs of the college.
- While the Web Advisory Group is also working well, the college webmaster is only contracted to work for five hours per week, which may not be enough to develop and oversee maintenance of the college web site.
- Names of part-time faculty are not listed in any college publication.
- The college does not always clearly indicate which programs, courses, services, and personnel are not available during a given academic year.
- While all publications of the college, as well as its latest audited financial statement, are readily available on request, this information is not widely known.

## **Projection**

- Beginning in 2005, the college will reevaluate staffing for the critical functions of marketing, public relations, and web management.
- In the next edition of the catalog, the college will publish a listing of part-time faculty who have taught at least eighteen credit hours at Asnuntuck and make it available to faculty, staff, and students.
- Beginning in 2005, the college will clearly indicate in appropriate publications and the web site which programs, courses, services, and personnel are not available during a given academic year.
- The radio station will increase its wattage output to reach even more of our service area. In addition, the radio station will include more college-specific programming.

# Standard Eleven: Integrity

Overview: Asnuntuck's adherence to high ethical standards, especially in regard to nondiscrimination and diversity, creates an atmosphere that best serves our students and employees.

## Description

### Legal Authority

The college awards degrees under the legal authority of the state of Connecticut, specifically the state's 1992 Public Act 92-126 (available in the workroom), which authorizes the community colleges to grant associate's degrees and certificates appropriate to our curriculum.

### Ethical Standards

Asnuntuck subscribes to strict ethical standards to ensure that it continues to provide the best possible educational services to its students and the best possible working conditions to its employees. These ethical standards are variously documented in the ethical conduct policy of the state community college system, the collective bargaining agreements, the college catalog, Board policies, and state regulations. All documents are available in the workroom. In addition, the community college system ethical guidelines can be found online at this location:

<[http://www.commnet.edu/emprel/Emp\\_Rel/EthicalConductPolicy.doc](http://www.commnet.edu/emprel/Emp_Rel/EthicalConductPolicy.doc)>,

The state ethics code can be found here:

<[http://www.ethics.state.ct.us/Regs\\_and\\_Code\\_Information/2004\\_poguide.htm](http://www.ethics.state.ct.us/Regs_and_Code_Information/2004_poguide.htm)>.

### Academic Freedom

The college is committed to the free exploration of knowledge on the part of both faculty and students. In fact, these two aspects of academic freedom are inexorably bound at Asnuntuck because much of our faculty scholarship concerns discovering ways to enable our students to participate effectively in the academic experience. This classroom-based research enhances freedom of educational pursuit for both faculty and students.

Academic freedom for students is also supported by the college's policy on proscribed student conduct, as published on pages 38-39 of the catalog.

Although the college itself has no specific statement on academic freedom for faculty members, such a statement is included in the Congress of Connecticut Community Colleges collective bargaining agreement and is fully embraced by the college (see Standard 5).

### **Nondiscrimination and Diversity**

The college's previous mission statement (which still guides much of the college's activities—see Standard 1) supplies the groundwork for our emphasis on nondiscrimination and diversity by putting our institution's approach to providing education in the context of "involvement in the wider social and cultural community" and "global awareness" and "connections to the world community." Our primary clientele are "students whose opportunities may have been limited by responsibilities to work and family, or by race, gender, age, or disability." And our mission statement concludes by emphasizing our focus on "fostering human respect and compassion."

The college further celebrates diversity by making knowledge of social and cultural differences a major part of the education we provide. Most associate's degree programs require the course Sociology 190: Self and Others. This course encourages students "to examine self-concept, values, the way they relate to others and society, and to develop their own personal statement about self and society" (quoted from the course description). Far from indoctrination in any sort of political philosophy, this course offers our students, many of whom are residents of the institution's rather homogenous service area, the chance to further their education by making them more open to the larger world.

The college also works with the faculty to promote multicultural education and awareness of social issues across the curriculum. To this end, we organized a series of extracurricular programs for the college and community following the events of September 11, 2001, as well as a Middle East Teach In, a week-long series of events in 2003 that focused on awareness of social, political, religious, and economic issues related to this important part of the world. Another week-long symposium focused on the history of the American labor movement. And in fall 2004, the college (in conjunction with Middlesex Community College) was awarded \$30,000 from the United States Election Assistance Commission under the Help America Vote College Program. The popular program allowed students to enroll in Elections and Civic Participation in America, a one-credit political science course that covered election history, current trends in the election process, and civic responsibility. Students also received poll worker training, making them eligible to work in their hometown polling locations on election day.

The college provides many other activities to promote awareness of diversity, including the annual Paul Robeson tribute, a program celebrating the accomplishments of this African-American performer and political activist, a former resident of Enfield. The

college's Celebrating Diversity Committee coordinates the institution's celebration of diversity in many ways. Among other activities, the committee organizes a bulletin board display in the central hallway visually depicting various diversity issues for the college community.

The college further promotes diversity through a clear plan of hiring goals, both short- and long-term, to fill vacancies with people who reflect the race and gender mix of our community, state, and nation. These hiring goals are revised periodically to account for staffing changes, and are overseen by the President, as assisted by the Director of Human Resources and the affirmative action officer.

Several institutional documents affirm our commitment to diversity. The college catalog contains a statement of nondiscrimination (page 49) and detailed statements regarding racism, intolerance, sexual harassment, and privacy (pages 43-47), as well as disabilities and veterans' benefits (pages 30-32). The document that contains the clearest statement of this commitment is Article II, Section 2 of the collective bargaining agreement, a statement of nondiscrimination:

The Board and the Congress shall continue their policy of not discriminating against any member of the bargaining unit on the basis of race, religion, physical disability, criminal record, national origin, sex (including sexual harassment), sexual orientation, age, marital status, political affiliation, or retaliation, as required by any federal or Connecticut statute or regulations pursuant thereto. The parties acknowledge their mutual support of the concept of affirmative action. In the event that a problem arises between the parties concerning affirmative action, it may be raised at a meeting between the union and representatives of the Board but not through the grievance and arbitration provisions of this agreement.

### **Integrity in Employee Relations**

Grievance Procedures: The Congress of Connecticut Community Colleges (the union for faculty and professional staff members) collective bargaining agreement provides extensive and detailed guidelines for employee grievance procedures. The introduction to these guidelines provides an overview of the philosophy behind the procedures:

The Board and the Congress recognize the importance of adjusting grievances fairly without fear of prejudice or reprisal. Accordingly, the Board and the Congress agree that they will encourage the prompt settlement of grievances which may arise between a professional staff member, a group of the professional staff, or the union and the employer. Unless otherwise provided within this agreement, the orderly processes hereinafter set forth shall be the sole method used for the resolution of all grievances.

Three other collective bargaining agreements spell out grievance procedures (along with many other employee/college guidelines) for other Asnuntuck employees. Secretarial and

clerical staff members are covered by the agreement with the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO. The college maintenance workers are members of the Connecticut Employees Union, "Independent" (affiliated with the Service Employees International Union, AFL-CIO, CLC). And several members of the Business Office staff are members of the Administrative and Residual Employees Union, AFT/CFEPE, AFL-CIO. (All four collective bargaining agreements are available in the workroom.)

Employee Recognition: For years, the college has annually recognized one classified staff member for his or her contribution to the college at the Awards Ceremony. The President also awards several Merit Awards each year to recognize outstanding job performance. These awards are funded jointly by the state and the Congress of Connecticut Community Colleges union. A Distinguished Service award is presented yearly to an employee with at least ten years of service in the state. And the popular, recently founded "Kudos" program features an employee committee that takes nominations of Asnuntuck employees who show excellence "above and beyond" in their service to the college and presents several awards each year at all-college meetings.

### **Integrity in Student Relations**

The college strives to deal with student concerns in as fair methods as possible. Student grievances are submitted in writing to the Dean of Student Services or the President's designee. The college investigates the situation and makes recommendations to the President. The President may or may not appoint an advisory committee of students and employees to make recommendations and is responsible for final disposition of the grievance. Student grievance procedures are detailed in the catalog (pages 41-42).

### **Integrity with Accrediting Body**

The college has followed accrediting guidelines since its founding more than thirty years ago. The college operated under provisional approval until it was first accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges in 1977. Asnuntuck was subsequently reaccredited after comprehensive reviews in 1980 and 1985; an interim report was submitted to the New England Association in 1990, and accreditation was reaffirmed through 1995. This was followed by a 1995 comprehensive visit and a 2000 interim report that accredited the college to the present. The preface of this document describes the integrity of the college's self-study process for reaccreditation. In addition, several of our faculty members and administrators contribute to our relationship with the New England Association of Schools and Colleges Commission on Institutions of Higher Education by participating as members of visiting teams for accreditation at other institutions similar to our own.

## **Evaluation of Ethical Policies**

Asnuntuck works regularly with the Board of Trustees and other appropriate state agencies to assess the effectiveness of its ethical policies and procedures. The President's Cabinet assesses the effectiveness of all college operations, including integrity policies and procedures. To complement the Cabinet's assessment, the college recently began a process of developing a Shared Governance Model (see Standard 3 for details). In addition, each department of the college reviews its own policies and procedures with a constant eye toward integrity as a function of fulfilling the college mission.

## **Appraisal**

### **Strengths**

- The college subscribes to high ethical standards that show a special concern for the needs of non-traditional students, particularly as they reflect a great diversity of backgrounds, skills, experiences, and needs.
- The college supports a number of excellent programs that focus on our non-traditional student population.
- The Sociology 190: Self and Others requirement gives most degree program an emphasis on diversity.
- The Learning Resource Center has introduced a range of adaptive technology services for students and other LRC users with special needs.
- Asnuntuck's open admissions policy fosters a diverse student population.

### **Concerns**

- Financial resources, which are thin in all areas, leave limited specific funding for activities promoting diversity.
- The Celebrating Diversity Committee may need some re-energizing.

## **Projection**

- When the Americans with Disabilities Act is revised, the college will review its program of compliance.
- As part of annual budget planning, each area of the college will incorporate a specific plan to ensure adequate resources for recognizing and celebrating diversity.

# **Appendices**