NJIT
New Jersey's Science & Technology University

STANDARD 9: STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

REPORT OF WORKING GROUP 5: ADMISSION AND RETENTION—DESIGNING THE STUDENT-CENTERED CAMPUS

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Final Report Submitted: May 31, 2011

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9.0 WORKING GROUP ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST FOR STANDARD 9

FUNDAMENTAL ELEMENTS OF STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES	TEAM EVALUATION
(From *Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education: Requirements of Affiliation and Standards of Accreditation.* Philadelphia, PA: MSCHE, 2009)	4=EXEMPLARY 3=EMERGING EXCELLENCE 2=MEETS STANDARD 1=DEVELOPING COMPETENCY
➢ a program of student support services appropriate to student strengths and needs, reflective of institutional mission, consistent with student learning expectations, and available regardless of place or method of delivery;	3
➢ qualified professionals to supervise and provide the student support services and programs;	3
➢ procedures to address the varied spectrum of student academic and other needs, in a manner that is equitable, supportive, and sensitive, through direct service or referral;	4
➢ appropriate student advisement procedures and processes;	2
➢ if offered, athletic programs that are regulated by the same academic, fiscal, and administrative principles, norms, and procedures that govern other institutional programs;	3
➢ reasonable procedures, widely disseminated, for equitably addressing student complaints or grievances;	3
➢ records of student complaints or grievances;	3
➢ policies and procedures, developed and implemented, for safe and secure maintenance of student records ;	3
➢ published and implemented policies for the release of student information; and	3
➢ ongoing assessment of student support services and the utilization of assessment results for improvement.	3

9.1 –INTRODUCTION

9.1.1 Précis: The NJIT Student-Centered Campus

That our campus be student-centered was a value originally promoted by our former President, Saul Fenster, carried forward by our current President, Robert A. Altenkirch, and vigorously embraced by our new Provost, Ian Gatley. Student centeredness is best achieved when an institution encourages student engagement through the creation of a community of communities.

The effort was first physically expressed through the new Campus Center, which opened in 2003-2004. The building has truly become a central focus for the campus community as a home base for a growing number of student clubs and organizations. The Campus Center has led to a re-invigoration of Greek Life and the creation of new campus rituals and traditions. As well, the Campus Center has become the central location for informal gatherings and study groups, often located in our innovative continuous dining program or one of our ala carte venues.

Engagement and community spirit is also encouraged through the rapid advance of our Division I athletic program. Under the leadership of President Altenkirch, we have a new soccer field and track, a newly landscaped central campus and a multipurpose recreational space named for the Naimoli family. To add to community "feel" we added a carillon that chimes every 15 minutes.

We are now planning the implementation, with the encouragement of Provost Gatley, of Learning Communities (Redling, 2011). The Learning Community effort will be realized through a partnership between academic departments and student services, encouraging engagement and advancing the quality of learning. With all of these community-based structures, both physical and programmatic, it is not surprising the sense of community and level of student engagement has steadily advanced.

As the report of this Working Group will demonstrate, we have taken seriously the 2007 review by Katherine Mayberry and Herman Berliner conducted for the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. They wrote, "We do suggest that programs that build student community within a curricular and intellectual context be strongly considered, as such initiatives will be necessary to improve student quality, increase retention and graduation rates, and boost alumni affinity and giving" (p. 9). Our report documents that our efforts at creating a student-centered campus have been successful and that we are working ardently to continue to improve our delivery system.

9.1.2 An Overview of Group 5's Standard 9 Charge and Questions Addressed

The Steering Committee and Working Group 5 jointly developed the following charge questions to study the extent to which NJIT provides student support services that are necessary to fulfill the NJIT mission and its commitment to creating a student-centered campus:

1.   What changes in student services have occurred since the previous self study? What are

the reasons for these changes? (Sections *9.2.2-9.2.1.11*)

2. How might the functions and impacts of the following student support services best be described: admissions, financial aid, registration, orientation, advising, counseling, tutoring, academic discipline, health, housing, placement, student organizations and activities, cultural programming, child care, security, and athletic activities? What metrics are used to assess these impacts? (Sections *9.2.2-9.2.1.11*)
3. To what degree have each of these student support services improved NJIT student satisfaction? (Section *9.2.3*)
4. What evidence exists that there is a need for an integrated model of student support services? What steps might be taken to achieve this need? (Recommendations)
5. How convenient is access to NJIT's various student support services? Sections *9.2.1.1-9.2.1.11*)
6. How effective are student support services? What metrics are used to measure them? (Section *9.2.2*)
7. Given projected enrollment growth, how does NJIT plan to serve greater numbers of students? (Section *9.2.2*)

9.2 SELF STUDY INQUIRY AND OUTCOMES

9.2.1 Overview of Support Services

NJIT Student Support Services are organized under the auspices of the Vice President for Academic and Student Services. Reporting to the Vice President are the following: the Associate Vice President for Enrollment Services, who oversees Admissions and Financial Aid; and the Dean of Students, who oversees Residence Life, the Campus Center and Student Activities, Health Services, the Center for Academic and Personal Enrichment, the Center for Counseling and Psychological Services, the Office for International Students, and the Center for First Year Students. Also reporting to the Vice President are Athletics, Pre-College Programs, Career Services, Professional and Continuing Education, and the Educational Opportunity Program (IRP, *Organizational Chart,* 2011). A robust, well-articulated organizational system is thus in place.

9.2.1.1 Financial Aid: Changes from 2002 to Present—Gains in Student Support

The Office of Student Financial Aid Services (SFAS) is as an organizational unit within the university that embodies the principles of continuous improvement, self-assessment of the management of student aid, measures the quantity and quality of customer services to students, and institutes quality improvement strategies. To continue to meet the increased demands of recruiting students to the university, to deliver efficiently student aid to our enrolled students while maintaining compliance, and to insure SFAS upholds its commitment to be a "student-centered" department within the university through a continuous re-evaluation of processes—these are the daily operating procedures of SFAS.

Growth in Academic Year (Fall and Spring) Student Financial Aid

In reviewing the university's student financial aid processing and awarding for the past nine years, it is evident that the Office of Student Financial Aid Services has experienced a significant increase in volume.

Student financial aid applications increased from approximately 5,162 to 9,563 during award years (AY) 2002 to 2011, an 85 percent increase in the number of applications that are reviewed on an annual basis for student aid eligibility.   The fact that new federal aid programs were introduced made NJIT more affordable. The new programs encompassed: TEACH Grant, Academic Competitiveness Grant and the National SMART Grant.

The volume of scholarships, grants, loans, and work-study funds disbursed to students also rose dramatically over the past nine years. The chart below reveals the change in dollar volume:

Table 9.0. Student Support, 2002 and 2011

	AY2002	AY2011
Scholarships	$6.7M	$24M
Grants	$7M	$13M
Loans	$12M	$37M
Work-study*	$3M	$9M
Total	$29M	$83M

Growth in Summer Student Financial Aid

In further reviewing the university's student financial aid processing and awarding for the past five years, there has been a significant increase in summer financial aid processing and awarding as well. SFAS has not only contributed to increasing summer enrollment, but has complied with federal regulations requiring us to award Federal Pell Grant in the summer to students who qualify.

Increased Demand to Automate Federal, State, and Institutional Reporting and Processes

1. Federal and state financial aid computer applications: In addition to our own departmental goal to automate fully our processes, there is an increased external demand to employ numerous and varied computer applications to process federal and state aid, and to report, reconcile and request student aid funding.

2. Compliance: In light of the NCAA Division I status, the office has implemented compliance endeavors as it relates to federal regulations. Scholarships for athletic students are processed in accordance with NCAA compliance endeavors.

3. Expansion in systems knowledge and expertise: An increasing segment of all SFAS positions require understanding technological concepts and a working knowledge of basic systems principles. Federal and state financial aid programs continue to develop electronic and web initiatives that SFAS staff must quickly incorporate into procedures and implement for the individual programs. Therefore, staff has developed their systems and technical skills while maintaining the in depth knowledge of policies, procedures, and regulations required to process financial aid.

NJIT Student Employment Program

Continuing the proper compliance endeavors, improved fiscal management, and better service to students and employers, NJIT took the initiative to design a comprehensive Student Employment Management System (SEMS). With the migration to the Banner system, SEMS will be retired and replaced with an employee recruitment system called PeopleAdmin, effective July 1, 2011. The use of this software will further streamline the student employment process.

SFAS is committed to insuring full use of NJIT's Federal Work-Study allocation and to improving compliance. SFAS is aggressively pursuing technical solutions to automate routine tasks and to provide improved service. A system of development and maintenance of the NJIT student employment job-posting database has been handled in a proactive manner.

Expansion of Student Services

1. Financial Aid Web for Students: SFAS, with the support of UIS, implemented the Financial Aid Web for Students product. SFAS is actively dedicated to maintain and enhance Financial Aid Web for Students.

2. SFAS Web Page: Over the years, SFAS developed the content for the university Financial Aid Web Page (SFAS, 2011) included in NJIT's website. Since then, we have maintained the site to incorporate new information about the aid delivery and items that would benefit students. A new look and feel was implemented in the content, design, graphics and forms, maintaining and enhancing the Web Page and uploading and downloading the Web Page as changes were made. Furthermore, SFAS website maintains the latest financial aid news such as tax breaks, articles and trends on student loan repayments for recent graduates, and other additional resources.

3. Increased general customer service: SFAS has increased the efficiency of processing awards and continues to seek better ways to serve our students and public. Part of this effort is to take a more personal approach to each inquiry, increasing face to face or telephone time with students, parents, and others. There are two "on-duty" Financial Aid advisors available to students.

Moreover, NJIT SFAS hosted a nation-wide College Goal Sunday event to assist students complete their FAFSA forms and attracted more than 200 students and families.

4. Continuous Customer Service Evaluation: In recognition of the University and Enrollment Services Division commitment to quality service and a student-centered philosophy, SFAS has implemented a customer service evaluation program (survey cards and financial aid awareness activities). Devoting the necessary attention to continuous customer service evaluation is one of the office's goals.

Enrollment Impact

As of June 2010, the percentage of financial aid need met for the incoming fall 2009 class was near 70%. This goal positively contributes to retention and recruitment efforts by making NJIT more affordable. According to the *Princeton Review*, NJIT is known for "affordability nationally and in the region" in a survey measuring 3 factors: academic, costs and financial aid. Our average package to needy students increased by nearly $3,000; as well, the average package for non-needy students rose by $1,400.

A proactive approach in perceived affordability was achieved with up-front estimated NJ Tuition Aid Grant offers accomplished by employing the NJ NJEI Calculator tool (used until the final NJ needs analysis index was published late April). This served as a recruitment tool, demonstrating a full package to the incoming freshmen, thus competing with other universities. This allowed us to reach 83 percent in financial aid need met at the present time.

Expansion of Aid Available to Graduate Certificate Programs

Yet another gain is evident: NJIT has implemented and secured Federal Title IV funding for CPE certificate programs for the first time in the university's history. This gain makes graduate CPE certificate students eligible for federal low-interest rate loans and secures income for NJIT.

Analysis of Private Educational Lenders

The past several years has seen the demand for educational loans outside of the traditional aid system increase. To remain compliant with federal and state ethics codes to preferred lending, NJIT has implemented a thorough analysis in the private lender selection process by way of a formal Request for Information (RFI). Based on key factors that are beneficial to students, the lenders are ranked and selected by a committee. This has secured compliance and benefits for students.

Strategic Long-Term and Short-Term Planning

The SFAS department has experienced substantial growth of responsibilities over the past several years, resulting from emerging technologies, increased and continuously changing regulations, increased recruitment efforts, and higher enrollment. These developments have spurred a need

for the department to plan meticulously its activities, both long-term and short-term, and to incorporate them into the university's broader planning.

As the department has expanded in its scope of responsibilities, it has minimally expanded in size as well with the addition of two staff persons to process graduate awards and fellowships. This gain demonstrates the university's commitment to maintaining a student-centered campus. The gain is especially relevant in light of the scarce resource allocation described in the Working Group Report on Standard 3.

Department Mission

The SFAS mission is to provide NJIT students with every possible opportunity to obtain funds to assist with educational costs. This office, either directly or as a third party, provides tens of millions of student aid dollars each year.

Division Mission

Enrolling qualified students and providing a positive climate toward the retention and development of students are elements of the Academic and Student Services Division's mission. As an integral partner within the division, SFAS provides the financial assistance that makes it possible for many qualified students to enroll and return each year in pursuit of their degrees. Student participation in employment programs is one avenue of development outside of the classroom.

9.2.1.2 Registration: Changes: 2002 to Present

Course Scheduling via Infosilem Scheduling Software

Innovatively, NJIT has consolidated course scheduling, faculty assignments and space utilization (class rooms, labs, studios) into an integrated process managed within the registrar's office by utilizing software designed by Infosilem. The project began in 2007 and is now in operation.

The master schedule of courses is designed to support NJIT's academic programs and help students complete their degree requirements in a timely fashion. A consolidated review of student enrollment and degree programs has indentified course combinations by class year and major that must be scheduled conflict free. The Infosilem software has helped NJIT schedule these course combinations in conjunction with faculty and classroom resources so that students can register for conflict free course combinations that are required to progress toward graduation.

The Infosilem software has helped NJIT construct a student-centered schedule of courses that optimizes both space and faculty resources.

First year registration via Infosilem Scheduling Software

An additional feature of the software has been implemented to process registration for the incoming freshman class. First year students are no longer required to register in-person during freshman orientation. The freshman class is now scheduled as a group based upon each student's course placements along with special cohort affiliation such as the Albert Dorman Honors College, the Educational Opportunity Program along with Athletics. The sectioning software efficiently builds complete individual student schedules for the entire freshman class.

9.2.1.3 Orientation: Changes: 2002 to Present

There have been significant changes to the administration, design and intended outcomes of orientation. In 2002, the freshmen orientation program, originally called Miniversity, occurred in 12-14 small sessions of up to 40 students across the summer. Attempts were made to organize the sessions by major. The advantages were that the small group bonded and personalized registration was on-site. Students were taught about NJIT through presentations by their Miniversity leaders in small group sessions. Various administrators visited the groups, but the sheer number of sessions prevented consistent appearances. The operation was designed and implemented by the Associate Director of Campus Activities under the auspices of the Dean of Freshmen Studies.

With the creation of the Center for First Year Students came a new design for Miniversity and a focus on engagement. Added to the title "Miniversity" was the word "connections," with the intended outcomes expanded. Under the new title "Connections Miniversity," the orientation program now seeks to connect students to one another, to their college, to NJIT, and to the City of Newark.

The design completely changed. We now hold large sessions, with up to 250 students, providing them the opportunity to engage with one another in small groups—or clusters—as well as develop an identity within their colleges and NJIT through large group sessions. Through these sessions students have the opportunity to meet their academic advisors, their Deans, and the Provost. Students also connect virtually, beyond Connections Miniversity, by creating blogs through the Highlander Connections Program (a system named First Year Retention and Engagement or FYRE, customized for NJIT by Education Dynamics).

Orientation Function, Impact and Assessment

The function of orientation—or Connections Miniversity—is to connect and therefore engage students on various levels and through a variety of approaches. The intention is for them to leave feeling good about their decision to attend NJIT, feeling reassured by making new friends and mitigating some of their fears about starting college and living in the city. From the practical standpoint students are noticed about their Placement Scores, advised about their majors and their schedule of classes, have an opportunity to choose their roommates if they live on campus, and meet their academic advisors. From an institutional standpoint, the new design allows for a

larger incoming class size—from 650 in 2002 to over a thousand in 2011—and allows us to bring in the class well before the middle of July. There has also been an economy of scale, particularly when it comes to meals, entertainment, and degree of variety in presentation.

Connections Miniversity is but one of three components involved to engage students into the NJIT community. The on-line component, known as Highlander Connections, links students with the members of their Connections Miniversity small groups, or clusters, and their Cluster Coordinators throughout the summer, providing a comfortable venue for information dissemination and exchange.

When first year students arrive in the fall, they enroll in First Year Seminar, a ten-week required course that continues to utilize the Highlander Connections website as a source for out of class activities, articles, and self-assessment instruments. The classroom then becomes a venue for interaction and discussion. Topics include issues of independence and responsibility, adjustment, study skills, and time management, as well as effectively working in groups and dealing with ethical issues.

Connections Miniversity is assessed by each participant at the conclusion of the program. Each of the desired outcomes is measured on a 1-5 scale to allow us to asses not only the overall impact but the impact of individual sessions. The data suggest that since the 2005 implementation and evolution of the current design, between 95% and 97% of participants concluded that their decision to attend NJIT was a good one; students had positive feelings about their college, intended field of study, as well as the university.

9.2.1.4 Counseling/Tutoring: Changes: 2002 to Present

The Counseling Center in 2002 was staffed by three psychologists and a counselor, as well as a support staff member and a group of Peer Mentors. The Center supported a population of 8,000 students. Today, our population has risen to nearly 10,000. The Center is largely focused on individual therapy. The Center also coordinates disability services and psychological health promotion. Health promotion in 2002 was handled by Peer Mentors but is now done through an on-line publication and Campus Center promotions. As of 2010, the Counseling Center changed its name to CCAPS, or the Center for Counseling and Psychological Services, to reflect better the full range of psychological and counseling services that are provided. CCAPS maintains the same level of professional staff and provides similar services as in '02, but collaboration with Health Services has increased through activities such as *Student Health 101*, our on-line Health Magazine, that appears monthly and reaches far more students than Peer Mentor promotions.

Like most Counseling Centers across the nation, CCAPS is a very busy place. A Wait List for individual therapy will typically appear by mid-semester. Students on the wait list are triaged and those with serious needs are immediately seen. Group sessions and workshops are offered around various topics, including procrastination, stress management, test anxiety, grief, and alcohol and other drug (AOD) concerns. CCAPS is staffed with specialists in AOD, multicultural counseling/diversity, and Men's Issues.

CCAPS is also involved at times when students are hospitalized or need to leave campus for risk assessment. The CCAPS Director, along with the Dean of Students, Director of Residence Life, and Director of Public Safety meet weekly to discuss "Students of Concern." CCAPS also offers a workshop for faculty and staff providing information on recognizing and dealing with distressed students titled "Addressing the Needs of Distressed Students" and is often contacted to provide consultation to faculty and staff.

Assessing the impact of CCAPS is difficult, as the population it serves is confidential, their issues of different magnitude with success only possible for those whose issues are treatable in a relatively short period of time. Our staff had 2,586 individual counseling contacts in 2010 and 2951 group contacts—an increase from 2002 with 2256 individual contacts and 2659 group contacts.

Tutoring

Significant changes have occurred in NJIT's approach to tutoring since 2002. What was once known as the ULC, or University Learning Center, has become "CAPE," or the Center for Academic and Personal Enrichment. CAPE's name reflects a positive emphasis on going for enrichment rather than needing to go for help. CAPE's staff and programs have grown considerably as well. In part as a result of NCAA requirements, the staff now includes two additional full time academic counselors in addition to the Director, Associate Director and Peer Tutoring staff, with 40 paid and 6 volunteer tutors. Tutors go through a rigorous training program and are evaluated by each client. They meet regularly to discuss tutoring approaches. The staff conducts regular workshops in Time Management, Study Skills, and Planning.

CAPE collaborates with the CCAPS in the administration of Testing Accommodations for students with disabilities; CAPE also works with the Center for First Year Students in the administration of the APT program for 65 students admitted part-time and with the Academic Success Program for 40 under-performing first year students. In addition, CAPE works with the Athletic Department to administer the Highland Academic Support Program for 130 student-athletes. CAPE also provides tutoring in the Residence Halls and holds study sessions and Finals Preparation Workshops in the Campus Center. All told, 765 students, excluding athletes, came for tutoring sessions at CAPE in 2010.

Assessing the many impacts of CAPE occurs in a variety of ways. CAPE staff saw that our average student–athlete performance was on average higher than students in general, with an average GPA of 2.71. CAPE's tutors were favorably reviewed by 76% of their clients, and CAPE's efforts with 40 under-performing freshman saw 25 failing students achieve at least a 2.0 in the spring with five achieving Dean's List status.

9.2.1.5 Academic Discipline: Changes 2002 to Present

Academic integrity cases are handled, as in 2002, through the Office of the Dean of Students. Students who are charged with integrity violations have the option of the case being heard by

administrative review or by a panel, which is the Professional Conduct Committee (PCC), made up of Faculty, Students and Administrators. The number of cases heard in '02 was 37, with several decisions not supporting faculty claims of cheating.

In 2006 the Committee on Academic Affairs approved modifications to the PCC, making it possible to call the panel together more rapidly and throughout the summer, as well as adding a more efficient process for administrative review. The ability to adjudicate matters in a more timely fashion and the acquisition of turnitin.com has had excellent outcomes. Out of 46 cases adjudicated this past year, 46 were found to be responsible for a violation. Each of the students involved declined to be heard by the panel and accepted the conclusion of the administrative review. No student appealed the decision.

Any assessment of the process would indicate that it is successful. The impact, however, is less than desired, as a recent survey conducted by the NJIT student senate suggests that cheating is mostly handled by faculty and goes unreported. The number of cases adjudicated within the system suggests that more work is needed to promote the use of the system by faculty.

9.2.1.6 Health Services: Changes 2002 to Present

In 2002, NJIT Health services staff consisted of two nurses and visiting physicians contracted from University Hospital in Newark. A visiting physician provided two hours of service per day, Monday to Friday. Today, we have a full-time physician, a full-time registered nurse, and a temporary part-time registered nurse. The full time physician has allowed for greater continuity of care. Health Services provides a full range of primary care (including routine gynecology exams), vaccinations, and tuberculosis screening. Vaccinations have increased significantly in that Hepatitis B vaccination (series of 3) and Meningitis vaccination are now mandated by NJ State law but were not in 2002. MMR vaccination also increased from one dose in 2002 to two doses. Phlebotomy is performed in house as well as CLIA waived tests, with bloodwork, and other diagnostic exams performed by Labcorp. There is no in-patient care. When advisable, those needing in-patient care are transported to one of our two local hospitals. Referrals to the various specialties including Cardiology, Orthopedics, Gastroenterology, Gynecology, Endocrinology, Dermatology and Podiatry are also arranged through Health Services at off campus sites.

The function of Health Services has continued to provide primary care to our international student population, to our growing undergraduate residential population, and to our undergraduate and graduate commuter students. 3,294 students were seen in 2010, doubling the number seen in 2002. The impact of the service is substantial and was particularly important during the H1N1 pandemic. Flu vaccination clinics were offered to the student population during the H1N1 outbreak.

Student medical insurance benefits were increased to provide greater major medical benefits, prescription coverage and specialist visit coverage. An on-line insurance waiver for students with existing medical insurance was also instituted since 2002.

9.2.1.7 Housing and Residential Life: Changes: 2002 to Present

In 2002 our residential capacity had reached 1,680 students with the opening of the final phase of Laurel Hall. This past year NJIT expanded its housing stock by block leasing 230 beds in the University Center, across from campus. Through the years since 2003, NJIT has maintained an occupancy rate of 97-98%. We are currently planning an additional 300-bed residence hall as well as housing for approximately 300 members of Greek letter organizations.

Residential Life has played a critical role in the level of student engagement and community building on campus. We have increasingly emphasized community standards in building our residence hall environment. As a result, students are empowered to set boundaries and handle problems. The result has been an environment that meets the needs of our students to study and socialize. In addition, programming by staff has increased markedly. With barely 200 programs in residence during 2002, 2010 saw 395 events with 5,616 in attendance (duplicated).

Changes in the environment are also reflected in the declining number of judicial violations. Last year, 170 students had charges brought against them, while prior years saw in excess of 200.

In addition, our food service operation has greatly improved, which has added much value to the residential experience. In 2009, we introduced a concept that allowed students the ability to self-serve and self-prepare their food. Students make omelets, sandwiches, pasta dishes, wok dishes, custom pizza, soups, baked potatoes and steamed vegetables. In addition, there are four prepared entrees, a carving station, pizza, fajitas made to order, a well-equipped salad bar, sushi and a wide range of beverages and deserts. With continuous dining, students have the ability to enter the facility as often as they wish from 7:30 am to 9:00 pm daily.

With major changes in the quality and variety available in dining, with far more activity and with staff impacting not only behavior but serving a valuable educational function, it is not surprising that our Educational Benchmarking Incorporated, or EBI, data indicates increasing satisfaction with our food service and with an increasing sense of community in our residence halls.

9.2.1.8 Student Organizations and Activities: 2002 to Present

As represented earlier, the physical transformation of the campus led the way to greater engagement through the development of community. With the new Campus Center, opportunities that previously did not exist were made available. From '04 on, with the 2nd phase of the new Center open and the notion of possibility realized, the activities staff and Student Senate as well as the Student Activities Council (SAC) began to take advantage of the new situation. What occurred was indeed a transformation.

It began with a new tradition, NJIT Day, as well as the creation of Friday Pub Nights, Weekends At NJIT and the creation of C.A.R.S.—Commuter Assistance Resources and Services. For the first time our commuters had their own "base" and an office, lounges and student organization that was specifically targeted to meet their needs.

The new Center gave birth to a number of new clubs and organizations, giving students new possibilities for engagement and joining a community. Student organizations increased from 94 to 106 in a period of two years. It was not so much the number of organizations that grew, but also the number of students who became involved. By 2010, 2,160 of our students (averaging 20 students per organization) were involved in a club or organization, up from 1,515 in 2002 (averaging 15 students per organization). Engagement was clearly on the rise. Currently, the Campus Center oversees over 128 student organizations, and the number continues to grow.

One impact, unintended, was on the Greek community, which previously had been the center of campus life, but was now in decline. As Greeks had represented the strongest alumni base and traditionally represented the leaders on campus, the administration saw a need to maintain and build upon a valuable community asset. In 2003-2004 the university began its first meetings regarding the creation of a Greek Village, where Greek organizations could flourish in a setting far from neighbors and located, essentially, on-campus.

Years of work followed, dealing with concerns in the Greek community regarding the Gateway Plan (JLL, Elkus Manfredi, NJIT, 2010) and Greek autonomy. By 2011 the Greek Village Task Force (2011) had finally settled on a developer and declared that building Greek Houses was financially feasible for NJIT Greek organizations. The project is now progressing and is intended to open in 2013. (For more on the Campus Gateway Plan, see Working Group Reports, Standards 1 and 2.)

Mention should also be made regarding the Student Senate (2011) and the Graduate Student Association (2011). These organizations began to emerge as credible bodies in 2002. They have steadily grown in stature and importance over the years. The Student Senate is regularly represented on the Committee for Academic Affairs, their concerns are regularly heard and they play a vital role in decision-making where students are impacted.

9.2.1.9 Cultural Programs: Changes 2002 to Present

A significant development in presenting cultural programs at NJIT was the creation of the Society and Technology Forum (Kappraff, 2011) in 2004. The Forums, which are presented three or more times per semester, involve discussions on contemporary issues and feature major guest speakers. Once per semester, the forum presents a musical program, which can range from a string quartet to jazz musicians to choral groups to the compositions made between humans and whales.

The impact of these programs, now ongoing, has been to unite the campus around current issues and technological solutions. While there is no formal assessment of the programs, the best measure of impact is the attendance, which averages 300 individuals per program. Roughly half of the attendees are students, the rest faculty and administration.

The Forums have become a valued tradition on our campus and serve as a vehicle for engagement and community development on many levels.

9.2.1.10 Child Care: Changes: 2002 to Present

The Sarah Ward Nursery (Murray, 2011) continues to provide child care for a reduced fee to NJIT students, faculty and staff. It is located across from the campus. Child care and preschool programs are available for infants age 6 weeks to 5 years. An after school program is available for children ages 5 through 13.

9.2.1.11 Athletic Activities

The most noticeable change to the overall athletic program began in the fall of 2004, when NJIT embarked on a five year transition process to reclassify its athletic program to the NCAA Division I level, from Division II.

This move was made to help the school gain a national visibility for the university as a whole, in addition to helping enhance student life/activities on campus as we continue to move toward being a residential campus.

Over the five year transition, fundraising for athletics increased, facilities were improved , and student life and visibility were enhanced.

Regarding fund-raising for athletics, we note that shortly after announcing the intent to reclassifying the athletic program, the school began an ambitious $5 million fundraising campaign focused on athletics. This campaign was successfully completed in 2009.

Athletic Facilities

Part of the fundraising campaign was to help with facility improvements. Three projects were undertaken, and successfully completed.

- The first was the soccer facility. For years the field had a natural grass surface, severely limiting its use to those outside the varsity athletic program. In 2003, the original natural grass field was replaced with synthetic grass. This change allowed for the field to be open and used all year long by a multitude of constituents from both inside (intramurals, convocation) and outside the university (community groups).
- The second project, beginning in 2005, was the rehabilitation of parts of the Fleisher Athletic Center. The main gym area received a new floor, improved lighting, a sound system, and new bleachers. The athletic training room sq footage was increased, locker room, weight room and office areas were also improved.
- A final major facility improvement was the addition of the Naimoli Family Athetic and Recreational Facility, opened in January of 2011. This facility adds another almost 25,000 square feet of open space for use by the athletic program, as well as other campus constituencies.

Student Life

The number of night and weekend on campus events has increased as have the number of name recognizable opponents that come to our campus. Together these factors have increased the interest from our student body.

Visibility

Our program visibility both in and outside the region has increased. Over the past few years, there have been nationally televised basketball games (the big ten network) and local broadcasts (Comcast). The school name- NJIT appears almost daily on the ESPN ticker of scores throughout basketball season. We have had multiple articles in the Star Ledger, New York Times, and Wall Street Journal, and have had mentions on radio and TV throughout the metropolitan area.

9.2.2 Relationship Between Support Services And Student Admission And Retention

Students apply to NJIT primarily because of the academic programs offered. However, the decision to enroll, and stay enrolled, is more often associated with the applicant's or student's impression of, and satisfaction with, life outside the classroom, or what we refer to as student support services. While our students are serious about their studies, they and their parents are also cognizant that social, interpersonal and collegial relationships are extremely important to personal and professional growth. And developing life skills often begins with the business part of attending college: registering for classes, completing financial aid forms, paying bills, or looking for a job.

Since the previous self-study in 2002, there have been a number of changes in student services. First and foremost was the construction of the new Campus Center, needed since the campus population had outgrown the former facility. The new Center houses more offices and programming facilities, more lounge space, a rooftop garden that helps supply fresh produce for the dining facility, new dining venues, and the bookstore. Dining options, discussed above, were improved. We are sensitive to student issues about dining, varying options, locations, or vendors quickly to accommodate changing tastes, and keeping "green" whenever possible (no trays, recycling, eliminating waste wherever possible.) Campus programming has increased, especially on weekends, and the percentage of students participating increases annually. Community service has grown and expanded, including Engineers Without Borders, and Habitat for Humanity. Increased used of new technology (I-Tunes, Blogs, Social Media) has enhanced participation by disseminating information quickly and in the modes preferred by students.

The Center for Academic and Personal Enrichment (CAPE) has evolved into a facility serving the entire campus community, with professional staffing, expanded services, and group and individual tutoring sessions. At-risk students are dealt with individually, with personalized counseling and regular monitoring so that intervention can be swift and effective.

The Dean of Freshman Studies Office has become the Center for First Year Students (CFFYS), serving not only incoming freshmen but also new transfer students. Freshman Orientation (Miniversity) has been completely reformulated into Connections Miniversity and further expanded by the First Year Connections Program, which in addition to Connections Miniversity, is composed of the First Year Seminar and First Year Connections Events and Traditions and features more relevant content and opportunities to engage new students and keep them engaged throughout the first year. We contracted with an outside vendor to provide a computer based tool (FYRE-First Year Retention and Engagement), customized by NJIT into a hybrid engagement tool, incorporating social media with the traditional Freshman Seminar to provide year long engagement with cluster coordinators and cluster members. The CFFYS also conducts academic advisor workshops and conducts testing and placement for new students.

The Residence Halls are at capacity, and we have contracted with near-by University Center to lease floors and operate them as we do our own facilities. The model in all our residence facilities is one of "community standards"—the students themselves develop guidelines on acceptable behavior (study hours, quiet hours), and self-monitor. This model promotes independence, responsibility, and growth in interpersonal skills and conflict resolution. Special programs have been developed for commuting students (CARS) to ensure that they have opportunities to engage with other students in similar circumstances.

The Educational Opportunity Program continues to provide access to higher education among traditionally underrepresented and economically disadvantaged groups. Largely due to their success, we continue to rank among the top schools in the nation for graduation of minorities in STEM disciplines.

The Center for Pre-College Programs strives to promote interest in STEM programs to students not yet in high-school, as well as creating opportunities for students in high school to enroll in classes for college credit. They also offer opportunities for educators and school administrators to develop skills relating to the STEM disciplines.

The Office of Continuing and Professional Education offers non-credit professional development programs, and also develops new delivery methods for adult and non-traditional populations, including on-line courses and certificates, hybrid courses, non-traditional scheduling (weekends), and options for corporate site delivery.

The Office of Career Development Services engages students on a number of different levels, including workshops on resume writing and interviewing, coordination of internships and co-op placements, career advising, career fairs, and lifelong access to CDS services for alumni. They play an essential role in retention because positive employment outcomes are increasingly important to students, and parents.

Increased enrollment will provide real challenges. If the enrollment growth occurs in the undergraduate population, we will need not only additional classroom space, more residence hall capacity, parking facilities, but also additional student services staff in all areas. If the growth

occurs in the graduate population, the physical plant needs may be less, but we would certainly need additional staff in admissions, financial aid, registration and records, and possible career services.

9.2.3 Assessment of Support Services

Each year, the Office of Institutional Research administers and analyzes a Student Satisfaction Survey (IRP, 2009). The survey measures student satisfaction with many facets of the NJIT experience, including" Campus Life" which encompasses many of the support services. Results of the analysis are posted on the IRP website, are presented to the Committee on Academic Affairs and other faculty and administrative committees and divisions in order to identify areas in which we might improve to enhance student satisfaction.

Some key areas where NJIT has improved in the past 10 years include:

- Opportunity for involvement in student organizations and events
- Quality of campus life
- A feeling of community on campus
- Enhancement of food services

Most other student services areas have remained fairly consistent in the satisfaction ratings.

Student Organization Trends

Since the Campus Center opened completely in fall 2004, student participation in student organizations has increased as evidenced in the growth of the number of organizations and their membership. All student organizations are required to have at least 10 members to be recognized. In 2011, we saw an increase of 12 student organizations from 2010, an increase of 27 organizations from 2004. In 2011, As Table 9.1 shows, the average membership of student organizations is 25, with many of the cultural and religious organizations having memberships in excess of 50.

Greek Life Trends

Sororities declined since 2002 as a result of lack of student interest in some of the multicultural organizations and therefore not being able to sustain 10 members. The biggest loss was in FY10. However, all of NJIT's Greek organizations are diverse in membership.

Two fraternities were suspended for violations to the NJIT code of conduct in 2005 and 2009. 2010 began to see an increase in membership for Greek social organizations with the new member class reaching 45 students. In spring 2011 the new member class expanded to 73 students joining Greek organizations. In 2010, the average membership for sororities was 12 women, for fraternities 16 men. With the addition of the Greek Village in 2013, we are

expecting a continued increase in Greek organization membership and the addition of new national organizations.

Table 9.1. Student Organizations, 2002-2011

Year	Clubs	Honor Societies	Fraternities	Sororities
FY2002	66	9	17	9
FY2003	65	10	17	8
FY2004	60	10	16	8
FY2005	69	10	15	8
FY2006	72	11	15	8
FY2007	73	11	15	8
FY2008	73	11	15	8
FY2009	71	11	14	8
FY2010	78	12	14	4
FY2011	90	12	14	4

9.3 CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

As discussed in the Working Group Report for Standard 8, NJIT has just completed a study on graduation and retention (Altenkirch, Task Force, 2011). Among the motions of the task force, emphasis was placed on ensuring that students have access to timely and successful completion of an NJIT degree (Gatley, et al., 2011). That aim is consistent with the report of our working group. Among the recommendations of the Task Force was the need to create a unified advisement system for undergraduate students; that recommendation is also congruent with the analysis of our working group. These new efforts will continue the university commitment to the student-centered environment on campus. As our report documents, NJIT maintains a system of student support services that yields mission fulfillment; as well, an atmosphere of improvement of the delivery system—from enhancement of the physical plant (covered in Working Group Report, Standard 2) to the creation of Learning Communities to the dramatic rise in student support—is in place.

9.4 COLLABORATION WITH OTHER WORKING GROUPS

In scheduled meetings hosted by the Rapid Assessment and Steering Committee, our Working Group collaborated with other groups. Collaboration was also strengthened through meetings with the self study consultant (Robert Clark). Asynchronous communication was fostered through the open source content management system (Moodle); in that platform, the Working Groups collaboratively reviewed each stage of the planning and reporting process, from question design to outlines of the Working Group Reports, to edited review, to final copy.

9.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

9.5.1 Recommendations Table: Standard 9: Student Support Services

RECOMMENDATION 1	Ensure that students have access to timely and successful completion of an NJIT degree
➤ VISION: The desired future for the recommendation	An improved level of successful completion of UG studies and reduced average time to completion.
➤ STRATEGY: The methodology recommended to achieve the vision	Coordinated, ongoing review and revision of admissions, curriculum, advising and other factors.
➤ TACTIC: The specific action recommended to implement the strategy	Continue work of the Provost's Committee on Retention and follow up on its recommendations.
➤ ASSESSMENT: The metric recommended to measure achievement of the vision	Time to completion of degree.
RECOMMENDATION 2	Improve the design of our coordinated system of student support services
➤ VISION: The desired future for the recommendation	Increase the efficient allocation of support resources to strengthen the student-centered campus environment, an implicit element of the NJIT mission.
➤ STRATEGY: The methodology recommended to achieve the vision	Improve coordination among academic support units; collect data on the impact of each program on student success.
➤ TACTIC: The specific action recommended to implement the strategy	Establish ongoing forum under VP for Academic and Student Services.
➤ ASSESSMENT: The metric recommended to measure achievement of the vision	Track outcomes of each program using defined methods.

Resources

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