

# DECENNIAL SELF-STUDY

for Middle States Commission on Higher Education  
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# Glossary of Acronyms

**AACSB:** Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business

**AAUP:** American Association of University Professors

**ABET:** Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology

**AES:** Applied English Studies

**ALEKS:** Assessment and Learning in Knowledge Spaces (software for math tutoring)

**AoL:** Assurance of Learning (for AACSB accreditation)

**APR:** Academic Program Review

**BI:** Business Intelligence

**BoT:** Board of Trustees

**BZA:** District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

**CAEP:** Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation

**CCAS:** Columbian College of Arts and Sciences

**CFR:** Code of Federal Regulations

**CHC:** Colonial Health Center (includes medical and mental health services)

**CI:** Colonial Inauguration (orientation for new undergraduates)

**CITI:** Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (needed to do research on human subjects)

**CPS:** College of Professional Studies

**CSE:** Center for Student Engagement (under Division of Student Affairs)

**CUFR:** Center for Undergraduate Fellowships and Research

**DBER:** Discipline-Based Education Research (Committee for faculty teaching STEM courses)

**DC:** District of Columbia

**DHHS:** Department of Health and Human Services (federal)

**DIT:** Division of Information Technology

**DSA:** Division of Student Affairs

**DSS:** Disability Support Services

**EAP:** English for Academic Purposes

**EAS:** Enterprise Accounting System

**EEO:** Equal Opportunity Employment

**EMSE:** Engineering Management and Systems Engineering, department of

**ER:** Enrollment Retention (under Enrollment Management and Retention)

**ER:** Expendable Resources

**ERP:** Enterprise Resource Planning System

**ESIA:** Elliott School of International Affairs

**FDA:** Food and Drug Administration (federal)

**FERPA:** Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

**FSEC:** Faculty Senate Executive Committee

**FTE:** Full-time equivalent (used for counting students and faculty)

**GIS:** Geographic Information System

**G-PAC:** General education curriculum: letters refer to: Perspective, Analysis, Communication

**GSEHD:** Graduate School of Education and Human Development

**GWLAI:** GW Libraries and Academic Innovation

**GWLaw:** Law School

**GWSB:** School of Business

**HR:** Human Resources

**IRB:** Institutional Review Board

**ISB:** International Student Barometer (survey completed by international students)

**IT:** Information Technology

**LEED:** Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (building certification)

**LGBT:** Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender

## Glossary of Acronyms (continued)

**MBA:** Master of Business Administration (degree awarded in School of Business)

**MFA:** Medical Faculty Associates

**GWSPH:** Milken Institute School of Public Health

**MSCHE:** Middle States Commission on Higher Education

**MVC:** Mount Vernon Campus

**NACAC:** National Association for College Admission Counseling

**NCAA:** National Collegiate Athletic Association

**NC-SARA:** National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (online programs)

**NSF:** National Science Foundation

**NSF HERD:** National Science Foundation's Higher Education Research & Development

**NTT:** Non-tenure track faculty

**ODECE:** Office for Diversity, Equity, and Community Engagement

**OFA:** Office of Faculty Affairs

**OHRP:** Office for Human Research Protections

**OLC:** Online Learning Consortium (consulting firm)

**OVPR:** Office of the Vice President for Research

**PEAF:** Professional Ethics and Academic Freedom (committee of the Faculty Senate)

**R&D:** Research and development

**RA:** Resident advisor

**ROA:** Requirements of Affiliation (Middle States requirement)

**S&P:** Standard & Poor's (finance rating)

**SEAS:** School of Engineering and Applied Science

**SIS:** Student information system

**SMHS:** School of Medicine and Health Sciences

**SoN:** School of Nursing

**SRR:** Student Rights and Responsibilities (policy)

**STEM:** Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics

**SWPC:** School-Wide Personnel Committee

**TOEFL:** Test of English as a Foreign Language

**TSPPPA:** Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration

**T/TT:** Tenure / Tenure Track (faculty status)

**UTLC:** University Teaching and Learning Center

**VSTC:** Virginia Science and Technology Campus

# Executive Summary



## Institutional Overview

Since its founding in 1821, GW has provided a stimulating intellectual environment for its students. Situated in the Foggy Bottom section of Washington, DC, GW offers associate, baccalaureate, master, doctoral degrees, post-baccalaureate certificates, and post-master certificates through 10 schools and colleges. The university currently enrolls more than 27,000 students. Of these students, approximately 11,000 are undergraduates and approximately 16,000 are graduate and professional students. The university's student population represents all 50 U.S. states and approximately 125 different countries.

The Carnegie Classification of Institutions places GW among doctoral universities with the highest research activity (R-1). "Advancing human knowledge in ways that open up new lines of intellectual inquiry and have significant positive effects on society" is, alongside educating its students, core to GW's mission.

## The Self-Study Process

The self-study process took place over a period of two years. Eight working groups were created, one for each of the seven Middle States Commission on Higher Education standards and one to verify compliance with regulations. Each working group was led by two individuals, at least one of whom was a faculty member. The co-chairs of the working groups made up the core of the steering committee. This core was augmented by the then-president's chief of staff and representatives from the Division of External Relations, the Office of the Vice President for Research, and the Office of the Deputy Provost.

Once the steering committee was constituted, the working groups were formed. Although the co-chairs of the self-study recommended certain persons for each of the working groups, working group co-chairs were free to add individuals as they saw fit. Typically, the working groups ended up with 10 to 15 members. Each working group also had at least one of the self-study co-chairs participating in an ex officio capacity. In total, there were more

than 100 people involved in creating the self-study. All 10 schools were represented, as were all major administrative units, the student body, and the Board of Trustees. Over the course of the two-year period, updates were periodically provided to the Faculty Assembly, the Faculty Senate, the Board of Trustees, and the provost.

## Standard I - Mission and Goals

The current version of the university's mission statement was written in 1997 as part of GW's Middle States accreditation. In many respects, the mission statement functions as the cornerstone of the current strategic plan, *Vision 2021: A Strategic Plan for the Third Century of the George Washington University*, adopted in May 2013. Both *Vision 2021* and the mission statement emphasize GW's focus on research and education. Key institutional goals consistent with the mission statement and embedded in the strategic plan include:

- Enhancing the research mission;
- Investing in diversity and inclusive excellence in all areas of the university;
- Safeguarding access and affordability for students; and
- Ensuring financial stability for the institution.

### Recommendations:

1. The university should reevaluate its mission statement to confirm that the mission and strategic goals are clearly defined, well-aligned, relevant, and achievable.
2. A review of the strategic plan should be undertaken now that the new president has taken office and the capital campaign has been completed.

## Standard II - Ethics and Integrity

A commitment to ethics and integrity is an orienting principle for everything that the George Washington University does. Numerous policies and programs have been put in place to foster an atmosphere



of ethics and integrity in research, education, and service, all in support of the university's mission. These include:

- Affirming the university's commitment to academic freedom, freedom of expression, and respect for intellectual property rights;
- Creating a climate that fosters respect among all members of the GW community;
- Ensuring fair and impartial hiring and treatment of employees;
- Providing robust grievance processes for faculty, staff, and students;
- Ensuring the avoidance of conflicts of interest; and
- Guaranteeing the ethical treatment of human subjects in research activities.

### **Recommendations:**

1. The faculty conflict of interest policy should be reviewed for potential updates.
2. The development, dissemination, and implementation of most policies and programs relevant to Standard II pertain to regular full-time faculty. It is recommended that the administration review how well university policies are communicated to specialized and part-time faculty through the Faculty Handbook or other means.
3. Although largely positive, campus climate needs to be improved so that students, regardless of background or circumstance, feel welcome and supported.
4. The university should complete its review and implementation of Title IX policies as well as GW's corresponding Sexual Harassment and Violence Policy.

## **Standard III - Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience**

As attested by both its mission statement and strategic plan, student learning is at the heart of GW's activities. The pedagogical skills and research expertise of its faculty alongside the university's

location offer students a truly unique educational experience, an experience that blends classroom learning, research opportunities, and internship experiences in a way that prepares GW students to be future leaders, scholars, and policy makers. Among GW's strengths are:

- A unified and intellectually coherent undergraduate educational experience that fosters a range of core competencies including creative and critical thinking, information literacy, quantitative reasoning, an appreciation for diverse cultural values and perspectives, and the strong communication skills—both oral and written—that facilitate the translation of learning into effective action;
- A full range of graduate and professional programs that combine both academic excellence and real world experiences and that provide students with the knowledge and tools they need to excel;
- Its Washington, DC location, which provides students with unparalleled access to nationally and internationally known leaders and scholars who engage students on timely and relevant issues; and
- A faculty that is well-respected for both its scholarship and teaching.

### **Recommendations:**

1. An overall strategic plan for online education should be created in order to better plan for centralized support services and coordinated offerings.
2. Student services and support should be enhanced by employing a university-wide constituent relationship management system to be used by all of the academic support services (e.g., advising, Writing Center, STEMworks, and Disability Support Services). Such a tracking system would facilitate communication and enhance analytical capabilities to further facilitate improvement of student services.
3. GW should continue to increase graduate student and faculty development opportunities to improve teaching and learning at all levels.

## Standard IV - Support of the Student Experience

Students are at the center of GW's mission and priorities. From tutoring and disability accommodations to cultural events and volunteer community engagement activities, GW works to reach and support students of all interests and backgrounds. Over the past five years, the university has made major changes to its administrative structures and student services with the purpose of admitting a well-qualified and diverse student body and ensuring its success, both on campus and online. These changes reflect goals put forth in GW's strategic plan. They include the following initiatives:

- The establishment of a Division of Enrollment Management and an Office of Enrollment Retention to more holistically and collaboratively examine the relationships among admissions, financial aid, registrar, summer sessions, graduate enrollment and aid, and student retention and graduation;
- The expansion of access to more socio-economically and geographically diverse and underrepresented undergraduate students through implementing a test-optional application process;
- An overhaul of the administrative infrastructure of the International Services Office to improve support and services for international students and faculty;
- Increased offerings of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) courses to support the growth in international student enrollment at the undergraduate and graduate levels;
- The formation of a wellness hub, providing medical, counseling, and health prevention and promotion services in the Marvin Center, a central location on campus; and
- The reorganization of the Career Center (now the Center for Career Services) to facilitate the integration of career development and experiential learning into relevant portions of the academic curriculum and to use the Center for Career Services to develop expanded opportunities for job and internships in the

Washington, DC metropolitan community and around the world.

### Recommendations:

1. Although the university has made great strides in its recruitment of international students, it should now turn its efforts to diversifying the nationalities of international students.
2. The university should continue its efforts to improve the overall undergraduate experience for its students.

## Standard V - Educational Effectiveness Assessment

GW's mission statement and strategic plan emphasize the importance of educating students. It is through the assessment of student learning and achievement that the university is able to demonstrate that its students have accomplished educational goals consistent with their program of study, their degree level, and the institution's mission, as well as have met the appropriate expectations of institutions of higher learning. Over the past five years, the assessment of student learning at GW has coalesced into an organized and sustainable effort across all schools. Academic programs are doing program and/or general education assessments annually. In addition, they are either undergoing academic program reviews every five years or undertaking systematic evaluations of their curriculum as part of their professional accreditation self-studies. While these processes have been in place for many years, a number of factors implemented in the last five years have contributed to the sustainability of assessment efforts across schools. These include:

- A new online catalog management system, implemented in 2013, requiring that all new and revised course and program proposals clearly articulate learning goals and outcomes, without which the course or program will not be approved;

- Streamlined assessment processes and improved outreach to and training for faculty, which has created a more organized assessment process and simplified venue to store assessment information;
- Creation of dashboards for enrollment, student satisfaction survey data, and post-degree plans in Tableau, an interactive data visualization tool;
- A new course feedback system which makes program-specific survey data available to faculty, program chairs, and deans for use in their assessments; and
- Education and involvement of doctoral students in the assessment process.

In addition, as part of its review, Working Group V conducted a comprehensive and systematic audit of program assessments for all schools and of general education courses to ascertain how each school currently assesses student learning and how it uses the evidence to improve student learning.

### **Recommendations:**

1. GW should build on the progress made during the last ten years in the assessment of educational effectiveness by:
  - a. Further institutionalizing protocols and procedures;
  - b. Continually offering training for faculty and staff involved in assessment;
  - c. Providing more timely feedback on assessments; and
  - d. Focusing more on the use of assessment data to improve student learning.
2. An annual award for assessment excellence should be created.
3. The university should continue and further develop the assessment program that was piloted in summer 2017 by training a new group of doctoral students to provide assistance in evaluating program and G-PAC assessments, thus educating future educators on doing effective assessments.

## **Standard VI - Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement**

The university's educational and research activities are supported by an annual operating budget of more than \$1 billion and an endowment of more than \$1.7 billion. Since its last reaccreditation (2008), GW has made significant efforts to improve its financial strength:

1. It launched and successfully completed a \$1 billion capital campaign (a year early);
2. It made significant investments in both its physical and administrative infrastructure; and
3. It improved both the efficacy and transparency of its budget and planning process.

While GW's finances are strong, as evidenced by its high credit rating, the university depends mainly on undergraduate and graduate tuition for revenue. Critical to the enhancement of GW's long-term sustainability and self-reliance in support of its core missions are strengths in financial resources and planning; human resources; information technology and physical plant resources; and research.

### **Recommendations:**

1. A state-of-the-art research environment should be created by improving research support and concentrating on existing strengths.
2. Human Resources' processes, policies, and priorities should be more closely aligned with the changing needs of the university. In particular, the ability to hire research staff in a timely manner should be enhanced to support increases in research funding.
3. Consider lessons learned from the \$1 billion campaign and build a development organization focused on enhancing the university's mission in an efficient manner.

## **Standard VII – Governance, Leadership, and Administration**

An effective governing structure is key to promoting the university's academic and educational mission.

Included in the report on Standard VII are:

- A brief discussion about shared governance at GW;
- An explanation of the administrative structure of the university, including:
  - The Board of Trustees, the institution's governing body; and
  - The president and his administration, i.e., those who manage the day-to-day operations of the institution.
- A discussion of the assessment of the effectiveness of GW's governance, leadership, and administration, including:
  - The assessment of administrative units;
  - The assessment of governance documents (including a recent review of the Faculty Code and the Faculty Organization Plan); and
- The assessment of university personnel, including senior administrators, faculty, and staff.

## **Recommendations:**

1. A review of the university's administrative leadership and governance structure should be undertaken since a new president has taken office.
2. A review of university governance documents should be regularized.
3. The complex financial partnerships among GW's School of Medicine and Health Sciences, the Medical Faculty Associates, Universal Health Care/ the George Washington University Hospital, and the National Children's Medical Center should be reviewed and adjusted to reflect the new realities of healthcare delivery.

In the following pages, the relevant criteria for each Standard as well as the Requirements of Affiliation are noted in the appropriate section headings.

# Introduction



## A Brief History of the George Washington University

George Washington, upon his death, bequeathed 50 shares of the Potomac Company for the purpose of creating a national university in Washington, DC. Unfortunately, the Potomac Company folded, leaving the stock worthless. Nevertheless, a group of Baptist clergymen took up the cause, raising funds for the purchase of a site and petitioning Congress for a charter. The university had its beginning in 1821 as the Columbian College in the District of Columbia. The name of the institution was changed in 1873 to Columbian University and in 1904 to the George Washington University. In 1912, the university moved from College Hill (a tract of land between the present 14th and 15th Streets extending from Florida Avenue to Columbia Road) to Foggy Bottom. Today, more than 100 buildings are situated on 43 acres in the heart of Washington, DC, bordered by the White House, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the State Department, and the World Bank, as well as numerous federal agencies and national galleries and museums.

In 2021 GW will celebrate its 200th anniversary. GW's strategic plan, *Vision 2021: A Strategic Plan for the Third Century of the George Washington University*—whose name alludes to GW's 200-year history—pays homage to George Washington's own vision by focusing on the education of students to become well-informed, ethically grounded citizens and leaders able to find creative solutions to society's most complex problems. Equally important, however, *Vision 2021* looks to GW's future as a major research university, pushing the boundaries of intellectual inquiry in diverse disciplines.

## Institutional Overview

Since its founding in 1821, GW has provided a stimulating intellectual environment for its students and faculty. Students now come to GW from all 50 states and some 125 different countries to learn not only about the arts and sciences but also about engineering, medicine, business, education, law, international affairs, public health, professional studies, and nursing in the university's 10 colleges and schools. Currently, GW's enrollment totals more than 27,000 students. Of these students, approximately 11,000 are undergraduates, approximately 16,000 are graduate and professional students, and over 400 are non-degree students.

The university offers associate, baccalaureate, master, and doctoral degrees of practice and of research; undergraduate certificates in the health sciences; post-baccalaureate certificates; and post-master certificates. Degrees are offered through 10 schools and colleges: the [Columbian College](#) of Arts and Sciences (CCAS), the [School of Business](#) (GWSB), the [Elliott School](#) of International Affairs (ESIA), the [Graduate School of Education and Human Development](#) (GSEHD), the [School of Engineering and Applied Science](#) (SEAS), the [Law School](#) (GWLAW), the [School of Medicine and Health Sciences](#) (SMHS), the [Milken Institute School of Public Health](#) (GWSPH), the [School of Nursing](#) (SoN), and the [College of Professional Studies](#) (CPS).

The faculty is at the heart of the university; in addition to being effective teachers, faculty members are accomplished scholars and active participants in their fields. As Table 1 indicates, in 2016, the number of full-time active status faculty totaled 1,129. Of this group, 79 percent were tenured or had a tenure track appointment, and 21 percent were contract faculty.

The university's leadership team consists of the president, eight vice presidents, and one deputy executive vice president. Their titles are indicated in Figure 1: University Leadership. The administrative structure of each unit can be found in the Document Roadmap, Standard VII.

The university recently completed its \$1 billion capital campaign, "**Making History**: The Campaign for GW." The campaign began with a quiet phase in July 2011, and the public phase opened in 2014. The goal of \$1 billion was achieved one year ahead of schedule, in the spring of 2017. The campaign ultimately netted \$1.2 billion.

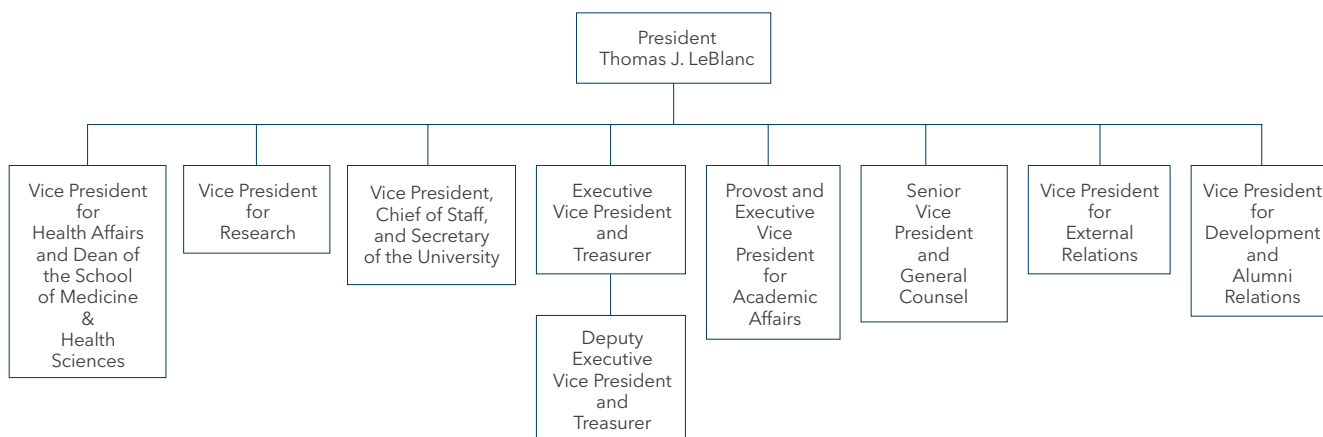
**Table 1. Profile of GW Schools and Colleges: Fall 2016**

	Full-Time* Regular Faculty	Part-Time Faculty	Undergraduate Students (FTE)	Graduate Students (FTE)	Programs Offering Bachelor's Degrees	Programs Offering Master's Degrees	Programs Offering Doctoral Degrees (Practice)	Programs Offering Doctoral Degrees (Research)
<b>CCAS</b>	479	486	5,096	2,029	66	58	1	20
<b>GWSB</b>	99	68	1,673	1,502	12	10	0	1
<b>GSEHD</b>	72	101	0	972	0	23	0	7
<b>SEAS</b>	85	87	949	1,288	9	12	1	8
<b>ESIA</b>	62	100	2,198	706	4	12	0	0
<b>SMHS†</b>	107	61	264	1,277	10	15	3	1
<b>SoN</b>	34	80	271	403	2	8	6	0
<b>CPS</b>	20	87	110	658	3	14	0	0
<b>GWSPH</b>	93	187	210	1,263	2	25	0	6
<b>GWLaw</b>	78	228	0	1,833	0	12	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,129</b>	<b>1,386</b>	<b>10,771</b>	<b>11,931</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>44</b>

\* Includes both tenure track and non-tenure track regular active status faculty and associate deans. Excludes Corcoran faculty hired at the time of the merger and faculty not associated with a particular school (e.g., university professors)

† Excludes 966 full-time and 2,219 part-time affiliated faculty

**Figure 1. University Leadership**



The university operates three campuses. The **Foggy Bottom Campus** is located in downtown Washington, DC, within the **Foggy Bottom and West End neighborhoods**. It covers approximately 42 acres of land and contains 26 residence halls, two sports facilities, and numerous campus dining locations. In recent years the Foggy Bottom Campus has been enhanced in a number of significant ways. These include:

- The opening of **Science and Engineering Hall**, a LEED-certified 500,000-square-foot building (2014);
- The construction of a 115,000-square-foot LEED-certified building for the **Milken Institute School of Public Health** (2014);
- The construction of the **George Washington University Museum** (2015), a museum created to house both the **Textile Museum** and the **Albert Small Washingtoniana Collection**; and
- The addition to the campus of the historic **Flagg Building** (500 17th Street, NW)—a building that will serve as the focus of GW’s arts programs—as a result of the incorporation of the **Corcoran College of Art + Design** into the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences (as Corcoran School of the Arts and Design).

The 25-acre **Mount Vernon Campus** is located just three miles northwest of Foggy Bottom in the verdant Foxhall neighborhood of Northwest Washington, DC. It contains classrooms, six residence halls, and athletic facilities including an outdoor swimming pool, softball field, soccer field, and tennis courts. About 700 mostly first-year students live on the Mount Vernon Campus. In 2011, **Ames Hall**—formerly used for campus life and student support—was renovated and expanded. It now contains a blend of academic classrooms, informal student gathering space, faculty offices, and other academic and administrative support space.

The **Virginia Science and Technology Campus** (VSTC) is located in the Northern Virginia

technology corridor near Washington Dulles International Airport. It covers approximately 123 acres of land with seven buildings that house some of GW’s major support units.

VSTC is also home to 17 research laboratories and distinctive centers of excellence focusing on areas such as transportation safety, high-performance computing, and sustainable energy. In 2016, the **Avenir Foundation Conservation and Collections Resource Center** was opened at VSTC. This environmentally controlled facility provides more than 22,000 square feet for the storage, conservation, and behind-the-scenes support for the public exhibitions and programs at Foggy Bottom’s George Washington University Museum. VSTC’s educational offerings are provided by seven of GW’s schools and colleges; they include certificates, specialized undergraduate, master, and doctoral programs in education, engineering, information technology, business, nursing, and health sciences.<sup>1</sup>

## Mission and Strategic Plan

GW’s institutional identity and mission capitalize on its location in the heart of the nation’s capital, creating a synergistic relationship that is one of its greatest assets. As described in the **mission statement**: GW “draws upon the rich array of resources from the National Capital Area to enhance its educational endeavors. In return, the university, through its students, faculty, staff, and alumni, contributes talent and knowledge to improve the quality of life in metropolitan Washington, D.C.” *Vision 2021*, drafted in 2012, supports and builds upon the mission of “furthering human well-being” through a coherent educational experience that produces innovative thinkers who become leaders in their field and a commitment to basic and applied research, turning this knowledge into action to address and help solve society’s most challenging problems.

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<sup>1</sup> The schools that have a presence on the VSTC campus are the College of Professional Studies, the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences, the Graduate School of Education and Human Development, the School of Medicine and Health Sciences, the School of Business, the School of Engineering and Applied Science, and the School of Nursing.



## Recent Initiatives

In line with both its mission and strategic plan, GW has undertaken various significant initiatives in recent years. These have focused on improving the educational experience of GW students, enhancing the university's research capacities, and service. A few examples follow.<sup>2</sup>

### Education

**General education.** In order to create a more standardized and rigorous core of undergraduate general education across the university, and to make it easier for students to declare a second major or a minor in another GW college, the undergraduate deans of the colleges developed common requirements that went into effect in 2015. Prior to that time, each college that offered undergraduate degrees had its own general education requirements, which often led to confusion and made the process of transferring across colleges difficult. The removal of barriers led to a dramatic increase in the number of students with a minor or second major in a school other than their home school. While 676 students double-majored or minored in other schools in 2011, in 2016 that number climbed to 1,326.

**Cross-disciplinary education.** In order to encourage cross-disciplinary education among students, the university created a number of cross-disciplinary majors and minors, including [biomedical engineering](#), [law and society](#), [sustainability](#), [GWTeach and STEM teaching](#), and [LGBT and sexuality studies](#). Cross-disciplinary graduate programs were also created, including programs in [data science](#), [experiential education and Jewish cultural arts](#), [global communication](#), [government contracts](#), an [MBA focused on healthcare](#), and [regulatory biomedical engineering](#).

**Arts education.** The construction of the George Washington University Museum (2015) and the incorporation of the Corcoran College of Art + Design into the Columbian College (2014) has

resulted in significant educational opportunities for students interested in the arts. The George Washington University Museum offers hands-on learning experiences for graduate-level museum studies students. The addition of the Corcoran College has provided an upsurge in the types of fine arts courses available to GW students. With the completion of the renovations to the Flagg Building, an enhanced venue will also be available to arts-oriented students. Furthermore, the presence of the [Corcoran School of the Arts and Design](#) (Corcoran School) has afforded new opportunities for cross-disciplinary scholarship and education. For example, the William Wilson Corcoran Visiting Professor position was created in order to drive social change at the local level. This year's visiting professor is Joseph Kunkel. He is a Northern Cheyenne tribal member, architect, and community designer, who has worked extensively on research and building capacity in Native American communities.

**Student diversity.** To position the university for changing demographics and to enrich the student experience, *Vision 2021* calls for a significant increase in student diversity on campus. This includes a rise in the number of international students as well as an increase in the number of underrepresented students from the United States. Increasing diversity on campus calls for a number of different approaches. Among steps taken to increase diversity are the following:

- Increasing the number of Graduate Diversity Fellowships for doctoral students from three in 2011 to 15 in 2016;
- Creating (in partnership with alumni and friends) the [GW Cisneros Hispanic Leadership Institute](#), which provides scholarship support for Hispanic students and the [Carlos Slim Scholars](#) program, which offers financial aid for Mexican students;
- Enhancing partnership programs that focus on underrepresented groups, including the [Posse Scholars](#) and [Say Yes to Education](#); and
- Implementing a test-optional admissions policy (2015).

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<sup>2</sup> These and other initiatives will be discussed in greater detail throughout the report.

These strategies have begun to pay off. The percentage of international undergraduates increased from 7 percent in 2011 to 10.8 percent in 2016 and the percentage of international graduate students increased from 11.9 percent in 2011 to 18.5 percent in 2016. The first year of the test-optional admissions policy saw a growth of 15 percent in African-American enrollments, an increase of 11.8 percent in Hispanic enrollments, and an upturn of 13.1 percent in first-generation students.

**An increase in graduate funding.** *Vision 2021* calls for an increase in funding for graduate students. This has occurred at both the master and doctoral levels. Between 2012 and 2016, approximately 80 doctoral-level packages were added. Furthermore, the average doctoral graduate aid package increased from approximately \$17,000 to \$23,000.

**Assessment of student learning.** In the last five years, the university has stepped up its efforts to create rigorous and sustainable processes for assessing student learning to ensure that all GW undergraduates “acquire the skills and knowledge that are a hallmark of a strong liberal arts education,” and that graduate programs enable students “to acquire the grounding they need to be effective and innovative leaders in their chosen fields” (*Vision 2021*, p. 22). These efforts have included the following:

- Creating new assessment officers in four of the 10 GW schools with the result that all 10 schools now have an associate dean overseeing assessment efforts;
- Implementing a new online [catalog management system](#) (2013) that requires that all new and revised program and course proposals clearly articulate learning goals and outcomes;
- Creating new streamlined assessment processes;
- Improving both outreach to and training for faculty;
- Simplifying the venue for storing assessment information;
- Creating new dashboards for enrollment, student satisfaction, and post-degree plans, which can be used as indirect measures of course assessment;

- Purchasing a new course feedback system that makes course- and program-specific survey data available to faculty, program chairs, and deans; and
- Creating a pilot program to involve doctoral students in the assessment process both to deliver timely feedback to faculty on their assessment reports and to provide the next generation of faculty with a strong background in assessing student learning.

## Research

**Enhancement of physical infrastructure.** In order to promote research at GW, the university has recently invested significant resources into physical infrastructure. As mentioned above, a number of state-of-the-art buildings were recently constructed that enhance the university’s research potential. These include Science and Engineering Hall (2014), the Milken Institute School of Public Health Building (2014), The Textile Museum and the George Washington University Museum (2015), and the Avenir Foundation Conservation and Collections Resource Center (2016).

**Administrative support for research.** In order to facilitate and support research, the university recently hired two senior administrators, an associate vice president of [research Integrity](#) (2014) and a director of the [Office of Human Research](#) (2015). Furthermore, research administrators were created in seven GW schools to provide pre- and post-award support.

**Cross-disciplinary research.** *Vision 2021* calls for an increase in cross-disciplinary research. The university has supported this endeavor in a number of ways. First, although the university committed itself to the continued funding of existing cross-disciplinary research institutes—including sustainability, computational biology, and global women’s issues—it also funded the creation of an additional two, the [Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders Institute](#) and the [GW Cancer Center](#). Second, the university hired a number of senior faculty engaged in cross-disciplinary research. These include, among others, researchers focused on autism, cancer,

biomedical engineering, obesity, science and technology policy, organizational effectiveness, and visual cognition. Third, the university created a fund to seed cross-disciplinary research initiatives involving principal investigators from more than one school. Fourth, GW's partnership with the [Children's National Medical Center](#) has funded faculty pursuing translational research through the [Clinical and Translational Science Institute](#).

**Reverse sabbatical program.** One of the objectives of *Vision 2021* is to "encourage...policy research that works toward solutions to and new perspectives on significant societal problems." As part of its plan to achieve this objective, the university instituted a "reverse sabbatical" program, in which individuals engaged in policymaking, governance, or professional practice are hired as visiting professors, typically for one year. Several schools have followed through on this by hiring officials from the U.S. Navy, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, and the Senate Budget Committee.

## Service

**Sustainability.** GW is at the forefront of sustainability on college campuses, earning 18th place in the [Sierra Club's 2017 list of most environmentally friendly schools](#). The university's commitment to sustainability is demonstrated both by its academic programming (with numerous courses and programs focused on the topic) and its daily operation. Twelve university buildings are [LEED certified](#), and six have green roofs. Furthermore, GW currently receives 50 percent of its energy from [solar power](#).

**Faculty and student engagement with the local community.** The number of [service-learning courses](#) offered across GW's schools has more than doubled since 2011. Furthermore, GW students, faculty, and staff have greatly increased their individual community service. In 2010, in response to a request that she speak at graduation, then-First Lady Michelle Obama challenged the university community to log 100,000 community service hours. GW responded with over 160,000 hours.

Since then the number of hours has continued to climb. In the 2016-2017 academic year, the GW community logged 712,000 hours of service.

**Partnerships with local organizations.** GW continues to foster relationships in the DC community through partnerships with DC public schools such as [School without Walls](#) and the [Duke Ellington School of the Arts](#). The university has also built on its [Trachtenberg Scholarship Awards](#) by creating the [District Scholars Program](#) which offers full-need awards to DC high school students who meet certain criteria. Through research and service the Honey W. Nashman Center and GW schools build robust academic and civic partnerships with DC public schools and non-profit organizations that foster improvement in health, education, and economic development.

**A center for the arts.** In 2015, the Textile Museum, which had previously been located in the Kalorama neighborhood of Washington, moved to the Foggy Bottom Campus and became part of the George Washington University Museum. In its first year, the museum attracted 34,000 visitors. It also hosted dozens of student performances and sponsored public lectures having to do with the collection. In addition, the Corcoran School now provides a year-round forum for the exhibition of work by students and visiting artists. Graduating seniors and graduate students have the opportunity to exhibit the culmination of their Corcoran School studies in a thesis exhibition titled [NEXT](#), held at the end of the academic year. Most of these events and exhibits are open to the public.

**The Albert H. Small Center for National Capital Area Studies.** The Albert H. Small Center engages not only GW students and faculty but also the public in research and educational programs pertaining to the nation's capital. The reading room, which is open to the public by appointment, houses a non-circulating library of books relating to DC history—including rare books and bound congressional acts tracing the city's development—as well as an extensive flat-file collection of maps, illustrative prints, newspapers, and tourist ephemera items.

**Promoting GW research beyond the bounds of the academic community.** The university continues to expand its online presence by using live-streaming technology and showcasing major campus events of interest to the public. In addition, the position of director of research communications was created in 2012 to help make faculty research available to the public.

## The Self-Study Process

The self-study co-chairs compiled a list of faculty and staff to lead each of the eight working groups (one for each standard and one focused on compliance). Factors that were considered were efficiency and knowledge of the university. An effort was also made to make sure that there was diversity in this group. Once the list was complete, invitations were sent out by the provost. Fortunately, almost all those asked agreed to serve.

Each working group was led by two individuals, at least one of whom was a faculty member. This group of co-chairs comprised the core of the steering committee. This core was augmented by representatives from the Division of External Relations, the Office of the Vice-President for Research, the Office of the Deputy Provost, and the then-president's chief of staff. Ultimately, the steering committee was made up of 22 members, representing eight of the 10 GW schools (the other two schools were represented on various working groups).

Once the steering committee was constituted the working groups were formed. Although the co-chairs of the self-study made recommendations, co-chairs were free to add individuals as they saw fit. Typically, the working groups ended up with 10 to 15 members. Each working group also had at least one of the self-study co-chairs participating in an ex officio capacity. In total, there were more than 100 people involved in creating GW's self-study. All 10 schools were represented, as were all major administrative units, the student body, and the Board of Trustees. Over the course of the two-year period, updates were periodically provided to the

Faculty Assembly, the Faculty Senate, the Board of Trustees, and the provost.

### The timeline for the self-study follows:

**November 2015:** Middle States Self-Study Institute (attended by self-study co-chairs)

**January - February 2016:** Selection of the steering committee

**March 29, 2016:** Kick-off meeting of the steering committee

**March - April 2016:** Creation of eight working groups (each co-chaired by two steering committee members)

**March - April 2016:** Creation of the self-study design and submission to Middle States liaison

**May 4, 2016:** Campus visit by MSCHE liaison

**June 2016:** Working groups begin their analyses

**November - December 2016:** Progress updates from co-chairs of each working group

**February 2017:** First drafts of working group reports due

**April 2017:** Second drafts of working group reports due

**May - September 2017:** Co-chairs compose first draft of complete self-study

**October - November 2017:** Community review and discussion of self-study draft

**November 2017:** Visiting team leader visits campus

**Spring 2018:** Final draft of self-study sent to visiting team and visit by team

Most of the working groups' efforts took place in the summer and fall of 2016. In the spring of 2017, preliminary group reports were read and critiqued by the steering committee. The drafts were then revised and turned in to the self-study co-chairs. The co-chairs put the report together from late spring to early fall, 2017. Following the completion of the draft, the self-study was made available for comments and corrections to the GW community in the fall of 2017.

# Standard I: Mission and Goals



*The institution's mission defines its purpose within the context of higher education, the students it serves, and what it intends to accomplish. The institution's stated goals are clearly linked to its mission and specify how the institution fulfills its mission.*

The George Washington University was established in 1821 to fulfill its namesake's vision of a national university that would educate the next generation of citizen leaders. Since its founding nearly 200 years ago, the university has educated students to become well-informed, ethically grounded citizens and leaders able to find creative solutions to society's most complex problems. In recent decades GW has also become a major research university, pushing the boundaries of intellectual inquiry in diverse disciplines.

## **Mission and Goals**

### ***(Criterion 1; Requirements of Affiliation [ROA] 7, 10)***

The George Washington University has a clearly defined mission. It is laid out in various documents, two of which are especially significant: 1) the [mission statement](#) of the university, drafted in 1997 appears below and in the Document Roadmap; and 2) *Vision 2021: A Strategic Plan for the Third Century of The George Washington University*, approved by the university's Board of Trustees in May 2013. Both the mission statement and the strategic plan were developed through collaborative participation from across the institution.

### **Mission Statement**

The current version of the university's mission statement was written in 1997 as part of GW's decennial Middle States accreditation. The self-study provided "an opportunity to clarify and to re-state the university's fundamental purposes, to coordinate these with similar re-thinking going on in many of its schools, and to provide a corporate touchstone by which to assess the university's

achievements" (GW Self-Study, 1997). Drafts of the mission statement were shared with deans, vice presidents, faculty, students, administrators, and the community, and their suggestions were incorporated into what became GW's mission statement. The mission statement appears in GW's strategic plan, *Vision 2021*, in the "About the University" section of the [University Bulletin](#) and on the website of the president of the university. The full mission statement follows:

The George Washington University, an independent academic institution chartered by the Congress of the United States in 1821, dedicates itself to furthering human well-being. The university values a dynamic, student-focused community stimulated by cultural and intellectual diversity and built upon a foundation of integrity, creativity, and openness to the exploration of new ideas. The George Washington University, centered in the national and international crossroads of Washington, D.C., commits itself to excellence in the creation, dissemination, and application of knowledge. To promote the process of lifelong learning from both global and integrative perspectives, the university provides a stimulating intellectual environment for its diverse students and faculty. By fostering excellence in teaching, the university offers outstanding learning experiences for full-time and part-time students in undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs in Washington, D.C., the nation, and abroad. As a center for intellectual inquiry and research, the university emphasizes the linkage between basic and applied scholarship, insisting that the practical be grounded in knowledge and theory. The university acts as a catalyst for creativity in the arts, the sciences, and the professions by encouraging interaction among its students, faculty, staff, alumni, and the communities it serves. The George Washington University draws upon the rich array of resources from the National Capital Area to enhance its educational endeavors. In return, the

university, through its students, faculty, staff, and alumni, contributes talent and knowledge to improve the quality of life in metropolitan Washington, D.C.<sup>3</sup>

As the mission statement indicates, GW embraces its historical roots and unique location at the national and international crossroads of Washington, DC. Student learning and faculty research are both positively impacted by the university's home in the heart of the nation's capital. Conversely, GW actively contributes to the quality of life in Washington through the talent of its faculty, staff, students, and alumni.

The mission statement specifically defines its internal constituencies to include full- and part-time students in undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs. The university's student-focused community, in turn, depends upon interactions with a diverse faculty and staff, who are dedicated to providing a high-quality educational experience for all of its students.

The Carnegie Classification of Institutions places GW among doctoral universities with the highest research activity (R-1). National universities at this level are expected to award at least 20 research/scholarship doctoral degrees per year and to conduct research in all disciplines at the highest levels. GW awards over 100 doctoral degrees per year. So crucial is scholarly inquiry to GW that its mission statement addresses the topic several times and from several perspectives.

The mission statement points out that "[a]s a center for intellectual inquiry and research, GW links basic and applied scholarship and grounds practical endeavors in knowledge and theory." Such links between basic research and its practical application are evidenced by the work of GW's professional schools. But even in the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences, recently created programs such as cybersecurity, big data, and sustainability clearly focus on practical, real-world matters.

A significant portion of the research done at the university is linked to GW's Washington, DC location. Faculty often work with international and national organizations that make policies directed to resolving fundamental societal problems focused on security, economic development, the rights of women and minorities, health, and sustainability. For example, research being done in the Milken Institute School of Public Health is shaping the public health policies and practices of tomorrow; Elliott School of International Affairs faculty bring their academic rigor to bear on government policy challenges; and Law School faculty sometimes file briefs on behalf of members of Congress. In addition, GW faculty members are frequently in the news commenting on current topics of concern.

Even though the 20-year-old mission statement still reflects what occurs on campus and in many respects guides the leadership of the university and its schools, the more recently created strategic plan, *Vision 2021*, has in many ways superseded the university's 20-year-old mission statement. The occasion of this accreditation process and the recent inauguration of a new university president provides a unique catalyst and opportunity to redefine the mission and unite the community behind a vision that will steer GW into its next century and the development of its next strategic plan.

### **Collaborative Planning: *Vision 2021: A Strategic Plan for the Third Century of the George Washington University***

The mission statement was in many respects the cornerstone of the *Vision 2021* strategic plan that was adopted in May 2013. The 2021 plan, like the mission statement, emphasizes GW's contributions through research and teaching to the world and the DC community and its commitment to both integrative learning and diversity.

In fall 2011, then-Provost Steven Lerman appointed a steering committee to begin the planning of a new strategic plan. The committee comprised faculty members, including a member of the Faculty

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<sup>3</sup> The individual schools of the university also have their own mission statements. Links to them can be found on the Document Roadmap.

Senate Executive Committee, a dean, and senior administrators.

The group met weekly to discuss how best to craft an aspirational and realistic plan. The questions that framed the discussions were:

- What is it that makes the university special?
- How will changes in the nation and the world affect it in the years and decades to come?
- How should the university invest its resources to best meet its enduring goals of educating the next generation, advancing human knowledge through research, and serving society?

The steering committee held multiple forums with faculty, students, staff, alumni, and parents to hear their answers to these questions. The trustees also held a retreat in June 2012 that focused on the strategic plan. What emerged was the consideration of current trends in higher education and an understanding of the university's exceptional strengths, including a number of world-class academic programs, a unique location in Washington, DC, and close ties with public and private institutions in the broader Washington, DC area. These discussions evolved into four broad themes that encompass GW's vision and opportunities for the future:

- Innovation through *cross-disciplinary collaboration*;
- *Globalization* of educational and research programs;
- Expansion of programs that focus on *governance and policy* in the public and private sectors; and
- Emphasis on infusing the ideas of *citizenship and leadership* into everything the university does (*Vision 2021*, p. 6).

Four working groups, including students, staff, and faculty with relevant expertise, were convened and charged with developing objectives and actions that incorporate the three broad goals of GW's mission:

education, research, and service. The central questions to be addressed were:

- What defines a GW education?
- What are the goals of its research?
- How does service enhance the GW community?

These themes have been interwoven into a variety of new initiatives. But most importantly, they all returned to the key goals of enhancing the research capabilities of the university and expanding educational opportunities for students.

Concerted efforts were made to inform and involve the GW community in the development of the plan. More than 80 faculty, staff, and students across the university were members of working groups charged with tackling a specific theme. Over 90 presentations, meetings, and group conversations were held across GW's main campuses. Provost-hosted dinners allowed faculty to discuss the plan in a more intimate setting. Numerous town-hall meetings were held on GW campuses and the Board of Trustees annual retreat in 2012 focused solely on the strategic plan. A final version of *Vision 2021* was approved by the Board of Trustees in 2013.

To date, many of the objectives and actions recommended in the strategic plan have already been implemented through initiatives originating from the [Office of the Provost](#). These have included, among others, increasing campus diversity, creating a more unified and coherent undergraduate curriculum, promoting cross-disciplinary research, and expanding GW's role as a model institution citizen for the greater Washington, DC area.

At the Board of Trustees May 2016 meeting, Provost Forrest Maltzman provided an update on the [implementation](#) of the strategic plan. It included prioritizing some of the plan's objectives and adding actions for further consideration.

As will be demonstrated in later chapters of the self-study report, GW's mission statement and strategic plan serve as a blueprint that guides the



university's decisions related to planning, resource allocation, program and curricular development, and the definition of institutional and educational outcomes. Standards III and IV provide multiple examples of how the institutional goals related to student learning are supported by administrative, educational, and student support programs and services. Standard VI provides examples of administrative support for institutional improvement. In the section that follows, broad institutional goals arising from the strategic plan are discussed.

## **Institutional Goals**

### ***(Criteria 2, 3; ROA 10)***

As mentioned above, although the strategic plan ultimately revolved around four specific themes (cross-disciplinary collaboration, globalization, governance and policy, and citizenship and leadership), all of the themes ultimately returned to the two realistic and appropriate goals of enhancing the university's research capabilities and expanding educational opportunities for its students. These two goals are discussed in detail below as is the important goal of ensuring the university's financial stability.

## **The Goal of Enhancing the Research Mission**

### ***(Criterion 2)***

GW continues to advance its mission as a "center for intellectual inquiry and research." Currently the university has more than 70 centers and institutes that engage in cutting-edge research projects in science and technology, health, public policy, global security, education, international affairs, and the arts and humanities. GW has also forged new alliances in the arts and humanities, sciences, and engineering fields that have opened up research opportunities for faculty and students.

**GW's growing research portfolio.** GW's growing research portfolio is reflected in national benchmarks. From fiscal year 2013 to fiscal year 2014, GW experienced a 17 percent growth

in federal research expenditures while other universities in the top 100 federally funded institutions in the NSF survey averaged a 3.2 percent decrease in federal research expenditures. In 2015, the university ranked 83rd in research expenditures from federal sources in the [National Science Foundation's Higher Education Research and Development Survey](#) (the most recent data available) compared with 114th in fiscal year 2006.<sup>4</sup> But research expenditures are not the only measure of the university's growing research capacities. Since 2011, seven GW faculty members have been awarded Guggenheim Fellowships and five faculty members have been elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

**Interdisciplinary institutes and centers.** Critical to the expansion of the university's research portfolio has been the development and staffing of a number of interdisciplinary institutes and centers. These have occurred at both the school and university-wide level. Many of them have included cross-school collaboration including the Global Women's Institute, the [GW Cancer Center](#), the Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders Institute, GW Institute of Neuroscience, the Computational Biology Institute, the Sustainability Institute, and the Biostatistics Center.

**A new science and engineering building.** To provide the science and engineering faculty with the requisite facilities for state-of-the-art research, the university recently invested in the creation of the [Science and Engineering Hall](#), a LEED-certified 500,000-square-foot building, on the Foggy Bottom Campus. The building, which officially opened in 2015, serves as the academic home for a multitude of researchers. Its four specialized "core facilities," or cutting-edge labs shared by researchers across the university, include a factory-like "clean room" for building nano-scale devices, a microscopy suite, a three-story-tall high bay for testing enormous structures and a greenhouse. The building also houses the university's interdisciplinary GW Cancer Center.

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<sup>4</sup> See Figure VI.1 in the report for Standard VI.

**A record-breaking gift for the School of Public Health.** An \$80 million transformative gift was given by the [Milken Institute](#), the [Sumner M. Redstone Charitable Foundation](#), and the [Milken Family Foundation](#) to the School of Public Health. The gift is enabling the university to address many of the world’s public health challenges by focusing on the prevention of disease and the promotion of wellness. The gift was announced in 2014, a few months after the completion of the school’s LEED-certified [building](#) on 24th Street. The record-setting gift has also propelled the school—now named the [Milken Institute School of Public Health](#) (GWSPH)—and the newly created [Sumner M. Redstone Global Center for Prevention and Wellness](#) forward along the lines of three of the strategic plan’s four themes: cross-disciplinary collaboration, globalization, and the creation of policy.

**The George Washington University Museum.** In 2015 the university opened the [George Washington University Museum](#) on GW’s Foggy Bottom Campus. The 53,000-square-foot building includes the [Albert H. Small Washingtoniana Collection](#) of 18th- and 19th-century Washington ephemera. This collection provides faculty and students with a unique opportunity to use original documents and works of art in their research. The museum also includes the world-renowned collections of [The Textile Museum](#), which moved from its former home in Kalorama to Foggy Bottom. In addition to providing resources for research, the museum also provides museum studies and museum education graduate students an opportunity to curate and design art exhibits; creates more space on campus for students to congregate and study; and provides service to the broader DC community by offering a variety of exhibits and events that are open to the public.<sup>5</sup>

**GW and the Corcoran College of Art + Design.** GW entered into a historic collaboration with the

Corcoran Gallery of Art and the National Gallery of Art in 2014 under which the [Corcoran College of Art + Design](#) and the Corcoran’s iconic [Flagg Building](#) on 17th Street became part of GW. The university now operates the college, maintaining its distinct identity within the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences and assumed ownership of, and responsibility for, the Corcoran’s Flagg Building, including its renovation. As part of the agreement, GW also received approximately \$43 million in funds, of which \$35 million are earmarked for the renovation of the Flagg Building, and \$8 million in restricted endowment funds are being used for the operation of the school, now known as the [Corcoran School of the Arts and Design](#) (Corcoran School) within the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences. Students enrolled at the Corcoran in fall of 2014 and full-time faculty members teaching at the time were transferred to GW. In addition, the university assumed ownership of another Corcoran property, the Fillmore Building, which was sold in summer 2015. The proceeds of that sale are also being used for the renovation of the Flagg Building and for programs within the Corcoran School. The university has begun a multi-year, phased renovation of the Flagg Building, during which the building will continue to serve as the home of the Corcoran School. Renovations will be designed to upgrade outdated infrastructure and preserve the Flagg Building’s historic exterior and interior spaces while accommodating the technological and other needs associated with an innovative model of arts education, which will continue to evolve into the future. The [Corcoran School’s inaugural director](#), who came on board in October 2015, embraces the opportunity to integrate the arts at GW and to add cultural vibrancy to the broader university community.<sup>6</sup>

Research, innovation, and creativity are driving forces advancing GW’s commitment to “excellence

<sup>5</sup> The George Washington University Museum is not the only exhibit space on campus. There is also the Luther W. Brady art gallery on the second floor of the School of Media and Public Affairs building. The Luther W. Brady Gallery manages GW’s permanent art collection.

<sup>6</sup> More information about the Corcoran School can be found in the Substantive Change document, Team Visit report, and two follow-up reports.

in the creation, dissemination, and application of knowledge” and its mission to act as a “catalyst for creativity in the arts, the sciences, and the professions by encouraging interaction among its students, faculty, staff, alumni, and the communities it serves” (Mission Statement).

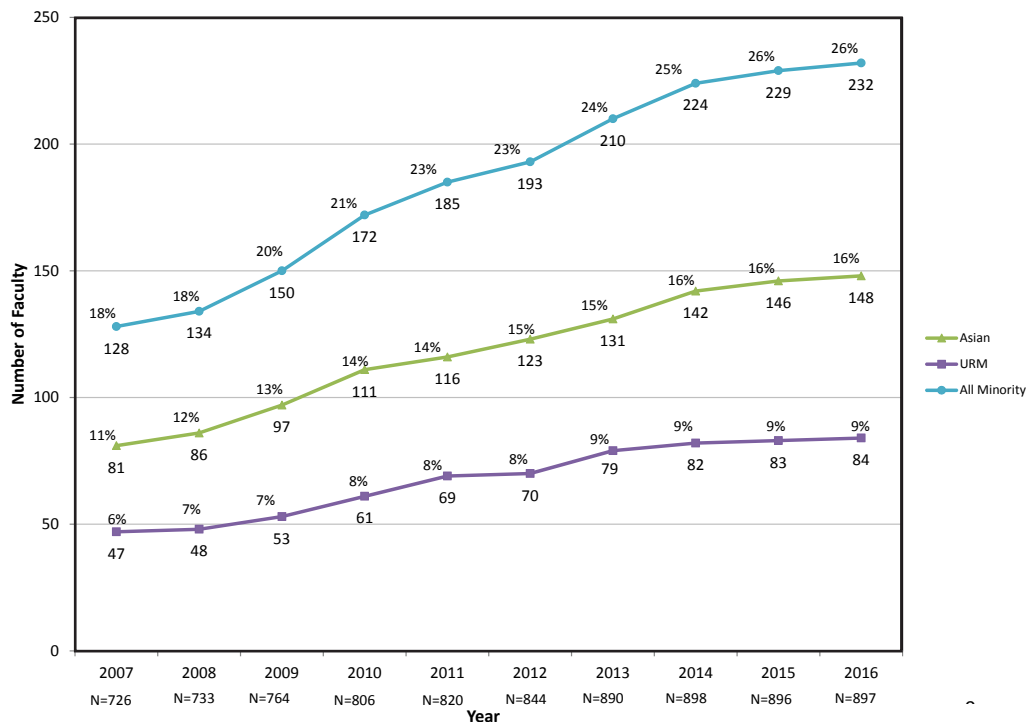
### Goals that Focus on Student Learning (Criterion 3)

**Investing in diversity and inclusive excellence.** The university has made a significant effort to diversify its student body, faculty, and administration, including the diversification of senior leadership. In line with the strategic plan, it has also been helping address the “pipeline” problem by expanding the opportunities for doctoral training of populations that are traditionally underrepresented in higher education. In order to increase faculty diversity, a “target of opportunity” hire program was created to allow deans and department chairs greater flexibility in hiring. The percentage of non-U.S., minority, and female faculty has gradually increased (see Figures I.1 and I.2). However, it is clear that the university must continue to make a concerted effort to both recruit and retain these faculty members.

Similarly, the university has been moving ahead to further diversify the student body. Efforts to enroll international students have resulted in a significant increase at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Whereas approximately eight percent of undergraduates and 17 percent of graduate students were international when the strategic plan was drafted (2012), today, approximately 11 percent of the undergraduate population and close to 19 percent of all graduate students are international. With the creation of the [Office of Enrollment Management and Retention](#), GW is strengthening its ability to increase the quality and diversity of the student body by improving its recruitment, admissions, and financial aid practices.

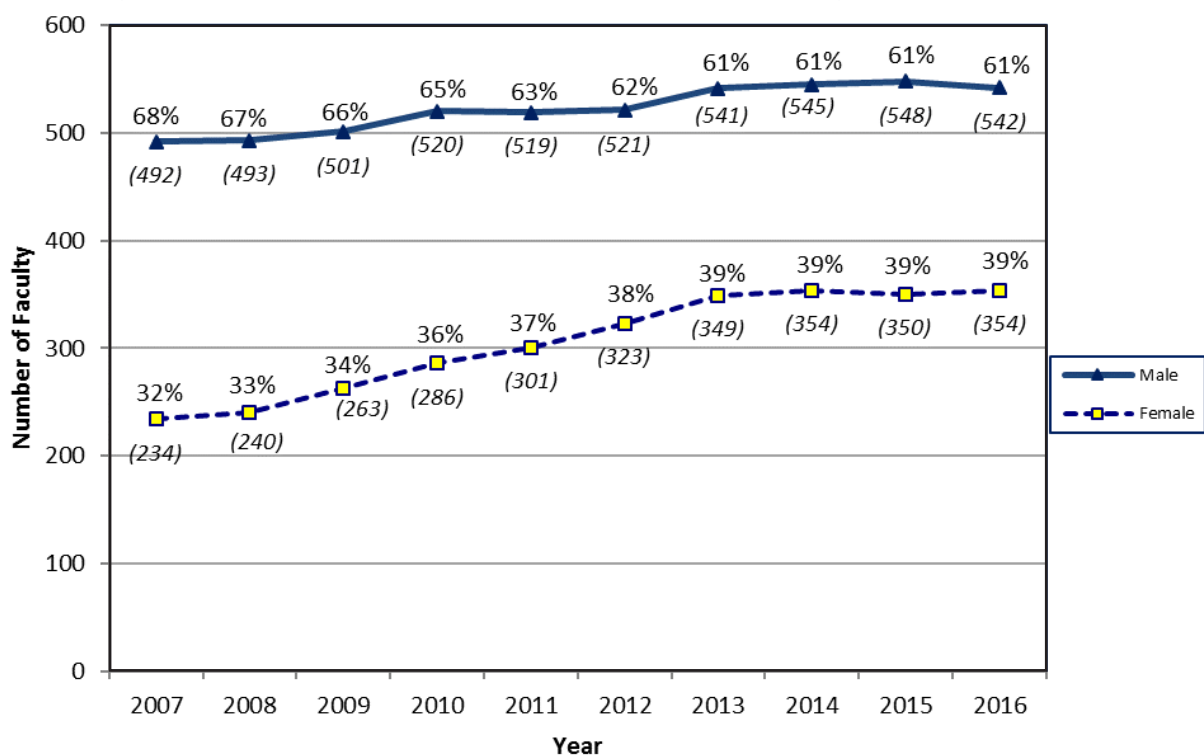
**Focus on the undergraduate student experience.** Significant efforts have been undertaken in recent years to improve the educational experience of undergraduate students at GW. Among these are the establishment of the [University Teaching and Learning Center](#); a revision of the general education curriculum, which is now regularized across all undergraduate programs; the promotion of cross-school minors; enhanced curricular flexibility so that students can take advantage of the full spectrum

**Figure I.1 Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty by Race/Ethnicity\* from 2007-2016**



\* Includes deans and associate deans.

**Figure I.2 Tenured/Tenure-Track Female and Male Faculty\* from 2007-2016**



\* Includes deans and associate deans.

of the GW curriculum; the establishment of a retention office; and, most recently, the launching of a STEM-oriented student assistance center ([STEMworks](#)) to complement the writing support the university provides. These build upon significant advancements that the university has recently made in [Veteran Services](#), [Career Services](#), and [Mental Health Services](#). GW has also undertaken (or will soon do so) a number of technological innovations to further enhance the student experience. These include the creation of a “what if” feature within the electronic advising system ([DegreeMAP](#)); the launching of class rosters containing photos of students registered for the course; and the future launch of official transcripts in electronic form.

The opening of Science and Engineering Hall and the GWSPH building, both mentioned above, not only boost GW’s research capabilities, the two structures also greatly enhance the educational experience of students in those fields. Likewise, the new buildings occupied by the Textile Museum and the Albert Small Washingtoniana collection obviously benefit students in the museum education

programs at the university. But they also enrich the experience of students in a variety of other fields. For example, the Small Collection is particularly valuable to students in history and American studies. The establishment of the Corcoran School within the Columbian College has also increased the educational opportunities for students in the arts. Furthermore, the renovation of the Flagg Building is providing art students with access to state-of-the-art facilities.

Recently, the improvement of undergraduate graduation rates has become a priority. This effort has included identifying students most at risk and increasing support systems and outreach for these students. Of particular concern are the experiences encountered by both international and first-generation students. Cognizant that the success of GW’s academic programs is who graduates, not who enrolls, and the quality of the experience of those who do graduate, the university is examining its current programs to ensure that it is making every effort to support both academic and social success for all students.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> This is discussed in more detail in the report for Standard IV.

**Access and affordability.** The university is committed to bringing a GW education within the means of all students. The university continues to keep undergraduate tuition increases to a minimum in support of its affordability goals. It has held the annual rate of increase of undergraduate tuition to around 3 percent since fiscal year 2013. The university has also continued its fixed tuition policy under which the tuition that entering students pay remains fixed throughout their undergraduate education.<sup>8</sup> This program provides families with financial assurance and predictability when planning for college tuition. The university has also continued to increase its undergraduate financial aid budget in recognition of the growth in the number of financially needy students. In addition, GW has developed several innovative degree completion programs in partnership with community colleges that address the issues of affordability, access, and mobility directly through a combination of discounted tuition rates as well as scholarships.<sup>9</sup>

The university recognizes that it must maintain a competitive undergraduate financial aid program in order to improve access to and the affordability of a GW education. It has had to make important trade-offs to do so by balancing the increased investment in financial aid with cost savings and efficiencies in other areas of the budget.<sup>10</sup>

### **The Goal of Ensuring Financial Stability**

GW's financial health remains strong with robust enrollments at both the graduate and undergraduate level, growing research expenditures, and dynamic new partnerships. As mentioned in the introduction, the university recently completed its capital campaign, "[Making History: The Campaign for GW](#)," which ultimately netted \$1.2 billion.

At the same time, however, it is important to note that the university has clearly seen the need to invest in student support at both the graduate and undergraduate level. Whereas at one time the university was able to utilize tuition adjustments to

fund innovation, it is clear that families are no longer able or willing to support this. To fund investments in aid, research, and even its physical plant, the university has worked to increase enrollments and to control costs to ensure expenditures are in line with revenues.

The university moved to a new budget model in fiscal year 2016 to provide new incentives for schools to grow graduate enrollments, to develop innovative programs with new revenue streams, to enhance research, and to have more transparency and autonomy about how best to allocate resources. In the first couple of years of the new budget model, there have been improvements in graduate enrollments, the development of new programs and curricular innovations, and new modes of instructional delivery. A key intention of the new budget model was to garner more resources for the schools to invest in their strategic priorities, and that is happening.

### **Periodic Assessment of Mission and Goals (Criterion 4)**

While the university's mission statement has successfully guided the university for the past 20 years and has proven to be useful in shaping the strategic plan, the university should nevertheless revisit it in the near future to assess its relevance. Likewise, although *Vision 2021*, GW's strategic plan, reflects the current aspirations of the university, the arrival of a new president on campus provides the GW community the opportunity to review this important blueprint for the university's future.

### **Recommendations**

1. The university should reevaluate its mission statement to confirm that the mission and strategic goals are clearly defined, well-aligned, relevant, and achievable.
2. A review of the strategic plan should be undertaken now that the new president has taken office and the capital campaign has been completed.

<sup>8</sup> The tuition is fixed for five years in case a student cannot complete his or her degree in four.

<sup>9</sup> See the section on "Contractual Relationships" in the *Verification of Compliance with Accreditation-Relevant Federal Regulations*.

<sup>10</sup> This is discussed in more detail in the report for Standard VI.

## Standard II: Ethics and Integrity



*Ethics and integrity are central, indispensable, and defining hallmarks of effective higher education institutions. In all activities, whether internal or external, an institution must be faithful to its mission, honor its contracts and commitments, adhere to its policies, and represent itself truthfully.*

A commitment to ethics and integrity is an orienting principle for everything the George Washington University does. In its official "[Statement of Ethical Principles](#)," the university directs that:

...trustees, senior officials, faculty, principal investigators, staff, student employees, and others acting on behalf of the university should strive to maintain the highest level of ethics in all of their actions on behalf of the university, and must comply with university policies as well as external laws and regulations.

The twin goals of ethics and integrity are highlighted on the university's website under the banner "[Encouraging a Culture of Integrity and Ethical Behavior](#)." Users of the website are invited to click on "What Would George Do?", a guidance document that seeks to inspire members of the university community to "conduct our activities with the highest standards of conduct in mind." This factsheet denotes responsibilities of community members including, respect ("[one should] exercise respect for the rights and dignity of others"), accountability, and the importance of speaking up ("[one should] speak up in the event of violations of law and/or university policies"). The responsibility to speak up is buttressed by the "Statement of Ethical Principles," which stipulates that "All trustees, senior officials, faculty, principal investigators, staff, student employees, and others, acting on behalf of the university, are expected to *report violations of laws, regulations or university policies* to appropriate university officials" (emphasis original). While this duty is not in the form of an honor code, it does stress an individual's responsibility beyond one's own behavior.

Numerous policies and programs have been put in place to foster an atmosphere of ethics and integrity

in research, education, and service activities in support of the university's mission. These include:

- Affirming its commitment to academic freedom, freedom of expression, and respect for intellectual property rights;
- Creating a climate that fosters respect among members of the GW community;
- Ensuring fair and impartial hiring and treatment of employees;
- Providing robust grievance processes for faculty, staff, and students;
- Ensuring the avoidance of conflicts of interest; and
- Guaranteeing the ethical treatment of human subjects in research activities.

## **Academic Freedom, Intellectual Freedom, Freedom of Expression, and Respect for Intellectual Property Rights** *(Criterion 1)*

Academic freedom, intellectual freedom (which is defined in this document as freedom of investigation), and freedom of expression are intertwined and together are the hallmarks of any successful research and educational institution. These rights are protected for both students and faculty.

The university's "[Guide to Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)" contains strong protections for "freedom of expression" for students:

Student organizations and individual students shall be free to examine and to discuss all questions of interest to them and to express opinions publicly and privately. . . . The students have the rights and responsibilities of a free academic community. They shall respect not only their fellow students' rights but also the rights of other members of the academic community to free expression of views based on their own pursuit of the truth and their right to function as citizens independent of the University.

Similarly, the [Faculty Code](#) affirms and protects academic freedom, intellectual freedom, and freedom of expression in the classroom for faculty. In 2015, the Board of Trustees revised the language of this provision by accepting recommendations approved by the Faculty Senate in 2014. The code revisions were drafted by the senate's Committee on Professional Ethics and Academic Freedom (PEAF) and were revised by the senate during its regular public meeting. The revised language makes clear that academic freedom applies in all classroom settings, including the "virtual classroom," that is, wherever classes are offered, including foreign locations. It also indicates that such freedom comes with certain responsibilities: "Consistent with academic freedom, faculty members should show respect for the opinions of others and foster and defend intellectual honesty, freedom of inquiry and instruction, and the free expression of ideas."

At the December 2016 [meeting](#) of the Faculty Senate, following the U.S. presidential election, one faculty member asked then-President Knapp about protections for faculty who might appear on a "watch list" of professors with "leftist" views. He reassured the senate that "the university certainly would not in any way infringe upon the academic freedom of someone because they were identified as having a particular set of opinions."

In early 2017, the PEAF committee became concerned that disruptions of the kind that have occurred at recent public forums on university campuses could lead to similar disruptions in a forum or a classroom at GW where controversial topics were presented. Furthermore, there were indications that outside groups had sent anonymous members into GW classrooms to record lectures and class discussions secretly in order to gather material for potential complaints against faculty members on "watch lists" created by those outside groups. Consequently, a resolution calling on the university to issue guidelines to further elaborate the principles of academic freedom and freedom of expression embodied in the Faculty Code and other university policies was put before the

Faculty Senate at its April 2017 [meeting](#). The resolution passed unanimously, and the university administration is working on the next steps toward its implementation.

The university is respectful of the intellectual property rights of its faculty. According to its copyright [policy](#):

The university encourages the creation and publication of scholarly, technical, literary, and artistic works as part of its educational mission. Generally, when by his/her own initiative a faculty member, librarian, or student, in pursuit of normal scholarly, professional, or academic responsibilities, including normal use of the university's physical facilities, create copyrightable works, the copyright and any resulting royalties may be claimed by the faculty member, librarian, or student as author of the copyrighted work.

Exceptions are made when the work qualifies as "work made for hire" or when "substantial use" of university resources is involved. In such cases, the copyright is owned by the university.

Students are expected to respect the intellectual property rights of their faculty as well as other scholars. That expectation is articulated in GW's [Code of Academic Integrity](#) that is included within the Guide to Student Rights and Responsibilities. All GW students, including students taking online courses, are bound by the Code of Academic Integrity with the exception of the students in the Law School (GWLaw), which has its own [code](#) of academic integrity.

Currently, all GW undergraduates are taught what plagiarism is and how to avoid it in their freshman year in a mandatory University Writing [course](#) (UW 1020). In addition, the School of Business (GWSB) has academic integrity staff members visit its first-year development course, BADM 1001, to lecture on and discuss academic integrity. Furthermore, academic integrity policies, procedures, website information, and contact information are posted for students on Blackboard's "student services"



section. A web page created by [GW Libraries](#) is also dedicated to plagiarism: "Plagiarism: What it is and how to avoid it."

Efforts to educate all GW undergraduate students about academic integrity have been intensified recently. Incoming students participate in an "Academic Success" session at [Colonial Inauguration](#) (the university's summer orientation for incoming undergraduates) that addresses academic integrity, among other topics. Incoming students are also required to complete an online academic integrity module. Their comprehension of this module is tested with content-based questions; students must satisfactorily complete the module before they register for courses.

Graduate programs also educate their students about academic integrity. GW School of Nursing (SoN) students view a filmed module on academic integrity. Customized academic integrity exercises are completed by Milken Institute School of Public Health (GWSPH) and GWSB graduate students as part of their orientations. At GWLaw, incoming students are given a lecture on academic integrity and are given a pamphlet on "Citing Responsibly."

Online test proctoring solutions are in place to support identity verification and academic integrity in online courses. As of January 2015, the university has a campus agreement with [Software Secure](#) to provide services for online exam proctoring via their [Remote Proctor Now](#) application.<sup>11</sup>

## **Campus Climate and Diversity** **(Criterion 2)**

GW is committed to maintaining an open and respectful campus climate. As mentioned earlier, the university has prioritized investment in diversity and inclusion. As attested by a university [Statement](#)

[on Diversity and Inclusion](#), diversity is crucial in the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, and service across all constituents and in the communities GW serves. The university underscores the importance of inclusion by holding all university members accountable for respectful interactions, civility, and a shared responsibility for the well-being of others. Additional policies on [religious accommodation](#), [disability accommodation](#), [equal opportunity hiring](#), and [sexual harassment and sexual violence](#) reinforce these values in policy and procedure.

A climate of inclusion and respect accords with the university's strategic plan, particularly in the themes of globalization and citizenship. The plan states, "Our university is committed to reflecting the nation's diversity, and we are finding new ways to focus on building an inclusive culture." The university has invested significant resources to foster a climate of respect by creating [positions](#) of vice and associate provosts for diversity, equity, and community engagement. They lead a robust office, the Office for Diversity, Equity, and Community Engagement (ODECE), which supports a variety of programs that foster diversity, inclusion, civic engagement, Title IX compliance, [disability support](#), [multicultural student services](#), and others.

Among other things, ODECE has provided funding through its Innovation in Diversity and Inclusion grant program. This internal grant program allows students, faculty, staff, and units to apply for funding to support innovative ideas that advance GW's commitment to diversity and inclusion. To date, 29 projects have been funded including a hiring initiative for individuals with disabilities, support for students who are military veterans, and mentoring programs, to name a few. The office also sponsored its second annual [Diversity Summit](#) in the spring of

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<sup>11</sup> Programs and schools at GW have been using remote proctoring solutions for several years. The Medical Laboratory Sciences online program in SMHS has been using Software Secure's Remote Proctor Now platform in its online courses since 2013. Other programs in the Health Sciences division have recently started using remote proctoring for their online programs as well. SoN also uses the same vendor to provide remote proctoring for its online programs. The School of Engineering and Applied Science Engineering Management program have recently started using remote proctoring for its online courses. GWSPH does not use proctoring services as most of its assessments are higher level assessments where the students are submitting individual papers or projects. In the few situations where online proctoring is required, instructors use web conferencing solutions like Adobe Connect to monitor the test. In these scenarios students are required to be "on-camera" during the session, which is monitored by the instructor.

2017. The summit offered a full day of high-quality programs on gender, sex and trans identities, non-traditional students, diversity in science, unconscious bias, and institutionalized racism in our society, among others. ODECE received dozens of proposals for presentations and more than 350 people registered for the [summit](#). In addition to the well-attended voluntary training programs, the university has also established an on-line training module for faculty and staff on preventing sexual harassment and discrimination. GW has also made great strides in increasing the diversity of its faculty.<sup>12</sup>

In 2015 and 2016, the [Title IX office](#) and ODECE engaged the university community in two [campus climate surveys](#). One focused on diversity and inclusion and the other on unwanted sexual behavior. Results of the former (2015) were generally positive. However, the survey revealed some areas that could be improved, including more attention to diversity and inclusion in the classroom setting. ODECE plans to launch a working group to develop resources and training programs for faculty on creating and sustaining inclusive classrooms.

Information gathered from the Unwanted Sexual Behavior Survey has also motivated ODECE to increase its trainings on abuse and sexual assault in the GW community. Furthermore, ODECE improved [Haven](#), the website featuring resources aimed at heightening awareness and aiding victims of abuse and harassment. Additional staff positions in ODECE (in the Title IX Office) have also been created to support the needs of students, in particular, a Title IX case manager to improve efficiency, case tracking, and communications and a Title IX investigator to increase the office's capacity to investigate Title IX cases in an efficient and timely manner. Over time, the Title IX office has grown, and enforcement of Title IX has occurred via the judicial proceeding conducted by the [Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) (SRR). To ensure that the university's Title IX processes are best serving the needs of the

community in an area where legal standards and expectations are evolving, the university is in the midst of a comprehensive [review](#) of how it handles Title IX.

Recently, GW joined [#YouAreWelcomeHere](#), a national campaign to show support for all, regardless of race, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, or gender identity. More than 100 colleges and universities participate in the initiative. Among other things, the university displayed posters around campus saying "You Are Welcome Here" in multiple languages. As then-President Knapp explained in a message to the GW community, these signs help to "reaffirm our values and our commitment to educating citizen leaders equipped to thrive and to serve in our increasingly diverse and global society." Furthermore, he promised, "We will continue to do everything in our power to ensure that all members of our university community enjoy an environment conducive to civil discourse, free from expressions of hatred and acts of intimidation." As part of the [#YouAreWelcomeHere](#) campaign, the university released a "[You Are Welcome Here](#)" video in spring 2017 that sends a message of inclusivity to international students around the world.

## **Grievance Policies**

### ***(Criterion 3)***

The university has robust grievance procedures for faculty, staff, and students. For faculty, the right to invoke the grievance procedures is provided by the Faculty Code.<sup>13</sup> The Faculty Code is easily accessible; it appears on several GW websites, including the Faculty Senate website and the website of the provost.

Each year, the Faculty Senate elects a chair and fills positions on a 15-member Dispute Resolution Committee. Faculty grievances are heard by a hearing panel drawn from the Dispute Resolution Committee (comprising tenured faculty), and appeals are brought to the full committee.

<sup>12</sup> See Figures I.1 and I.2 in the report for Standard I.

<sup>13</sup> The right to invoke the grievance procedures is provided in Part X.b (p. 17) of the Faculty Code and Part E (pp. 25-30) of the Procedures for Implementation of the Faculty Code.

Decisions of the committee are in the form of recommendations to the administration to uphold, reverse, or modify as appropriate. The Faculty Code provides that the decision of the committee “shall be implemented by the university” unless the administration “determines that there are compelling reasons not to” implement it.

The university’s [staff grievance process](#) addresses alleged unfair treatment in work assignments, promotion, transfer, discipline, or termination or from alleged discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, or other grounds prohibited by law. The staff grievance process is laid out in the electronic [Employee Handbook](#), which is available on the university Human Resources (HR) website.

Staff members at the university have access to both an informal and a formal [grievance process](#). The informal process is designed to resolve problems in their early stages. If a grievance is not resolved informally, a grievant may request that a formal grievance hearing committee review his or her request for a formal grievance hearing. In a formal grievance hearing, the committee listens to the grievant and respondent together with witnesses called by either party, provided the testimony is relevant to the issues under consideration. The grievant and respondent are entitled to question all witnesses appearing at the hearing and to present written statements and/or other evidence.

Regardless of the outcome of the complaint, grievants, their witnesses, and their advisers are protected from retaliation for participating in the grievance process.

The university’s [student grievance procedures](#) enable students to bring complaints against faculty, staff, or registered student organizations if they believe they have been the object of discrimination on the basis of protected class. Students receive

information about the grievance procedure at Colonial Inauguration, the summer orientation for incoming students. The residence halls’ resident advisors (RA) can also guide students through the process. Students are also encouraged to contact the Division of Students Affairs (DSA) at any time using the email address [students@gwu.edu](mailto:students@gwu.edu). DSA staff follow up with students who email about grievances. Recently, students have also begun using Twitter to connect with DSA staff about grievances. DSA staff reach out to the authors of such tweets. Grade appeals, unlike other student grievances, are not handled centrally. Any student who believes that he or she has been unfairly graded has recourse to an appeal process within that student’s school.<sup>14</sup>

## Avoidance of Conflicts of Interest

### (Criterion 4)

The university is committed to identifying and managing both actual and apparent [conflicts of interest](#). There are written policies for trustees, university officials, faculty and investigators, and non-faculty employees. Every year, university officials complete a questionnaire about matters that could result in a conflict of interest. Board of Trustees members also complete an annual questionnaire. These questionnaires are reviewed by the [Office of Compliance and Privacy](#) and, where necessary, by the [Office of the Senior Vice President and General Counsel](#). University faculty and staff all complete questionnaires about potential conflicts of interest every three years (and in the interim, faculty and staff must promptly disclose any change in circumstance that does or may involve a conflict). Additionally, there is a School of Medicine and Health Sciences (SMHS) [policy](#) on conflicts of interest related to clinical care. The university has communicated these policies, and there is a process for disclosure, review of disclosures, and implementation of a conflict management plan, if required.

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<sup>14</sup> Information about grade appeals are typically found on the individual school’s website. The policies for each school are listed in the Verification of Compliance Document (in the section titled, “Institutional Records of Student Complaints”).

Part-time faculty members are covered under the university's conflict of interest policy for non-faculty employees, but are not required to complete a periodic questionnaire. Possible changes under consideration include the requirement that part-time faculty complete such questionnaires.

There have been recent initiatives to revise the conflict of interest policy for faculty and investigators. The efforts to produce a final revised policy have not succeeded so far as there are different viewpoints as to what is necessary to be disclosed. Currently, the vice provost for faculty affairs is partnering with the university's Compliance Office, the Office of the [Vice President for Research](#), and the Office of the Senior Vice President and General Counsel to prepare an updated draft of this policy. As part of the revision process, this group is conducting external benchmarking of peer institutions' conflict of interest processes and considering changes to policy language to enhance the disclosure and conflict management processes.

Although the university's internal audit function has long been contracted out, the university had, until recently, managed the functions of conflict of interest management, compliance, and privacy internally. As validated by our external audit partner, a trend exists to combine the functions of internal audit and compliance to ensure a coordinated view, identification, and consensus of risk and controls across the institution. Given this trend and GW's success with the outsourcing of internal audit, the decision to combine the functions under the firm [Baker Tilly](#) was approved by the Board of Trustees' [Committee on Finance and Audit](#) in October 2016. This arrangement enables the university to take advantage of the broad expertise and experience that the firm provides in the areas of conflict of interest, policy management, and management of the reporting of compliance protocols. The privacy function was assumed within the university's [Division of Information Technology](#).

The reorganization at the university level is expected to improve compliance functions in several ways.

A regularized cycle has been created for periodic updates and five-year comprehensive reviews of all of the [university-wide policies](#) (over 150 in number). There is also a stronger emphasis in the management of GW's "Report a Concern" hotline and compliance websites (both to be discussed in more detail below) to continuously improve the review of reported concerns and to enhance training of university stakeholders on compliance and reporting. In addition, a better method of communicating university policies to employees is being considered as is a more efficient way to provide ongoing training.

## **Fair and Impartial Hiring and Treatment of Employees** *(Criterion 5)*

The university is an equal employment opportunity (EEO)/affirmative action employer and is committed to a diverse workforce and the fair treatment of all members of the GW community. The university's HR division has three primary functions regarding [EEO](#) and [employee relations](#): It ensures the university is in compliance with applicable federal and local EEO laws; it oversees a formal and informal grievance process to address all staff equal opportunity concerns; and it assists managers, supervisors, and regular, unionized, and research employees in the resolution of performance or behavior concerns.

The procedures for hiring, tenuring, and promoting faculty are laid out in the Faculty Code as are the various grades of academic personnel and an explanation of faculty responsibilities. In June 2015, [revisions](#) to the Faculty Code expanded the mandate of the school-wide personnel committee (SWPC) in each school. Previously, the SWPCs were advisory bodies only; each had the authority to consider all recommendations for tenure, promotion, or appointments with tenure and to make recommendations to the dean. The revised code endows the SWPC with the authority to issue its own concurrence or non-concurrence with the faculty recommendation.<sup>15</sup> As a result of the initiative, the university review process now

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<sup>15</sup> A key purpose of this initiative was to ensure "comparable quality and excellence across the school" in departmentalized units in which recommendations originate in the departments.

comprises three reviews of a departmental faculty recommendation: by the SWPCs, the relevant deans, and the provost, all of whom are charged with ensuring that faculty recommendations:

are consistent with the standards of excellence, including the promise of continued excellence, stated in this Faculty Code and with published criteria; are supported by substantial evidence; and preserve the schools' and the university's interest in building a distinguished faculty.

A non-concurrence by a SWPC, dean, or the provost must be supported by "compelling reasons" as defined in the Faculty Code.<sup>16</sup> The non-concurrence process is applied in a comprehensive fashion to include both individual faculty proposed for tenure and individual faculty for which the recommending faculty have voted against a tenure case.

In cases of variant or non-concurring recommendations by the SWPC or the appropriate administrative officer, the complete file and the supporting reasons are sent to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC) for further review of the conflicting positions in the case, and it may issue a recommendation.<sup>17</sup> If concurrence cannot be achieved, the entire record of the faculty recommendation, recommendations of administrative officers, and report of the FSEC are transmitted to the president for a final decision. Whenever the dean or provost issues a concurrence or non-concurrence, that fact is communicated to the relevant department and SWPC. In addition, in the event of a non-concurring decision against tenure and promotion by the provost, the provost provides the candidate a written summary of the reasons for non-concurrence. Revisions to this process were put into effect in fall 2015.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Part IV.E.1.

<sup>17</sup> The FSEC contains one representative from each school represented in the senate.

<sup>18</sup> Before the 2015 changes to the Faculty Code, the FSEC had become concerned whether the non-concurrences issued by deans and school-wide personnel committees, in some instances, adequately identified the "compelling reasons" needed to support a non-concurrence. Thereafter, new guidelines for non-concurrences were devised by the provost and the FSEC to ensure that non-concurrences were being justified and were appropriately documented according to the record of the relevant faculty member. The written guidelines were provided in the form of two templates for submitting non-concurrences: (1) a template for SWPCs and (2) a template for deans. The templates have been credited with being effective in changing the way non-concurrences were submitted. The 2015 changes to the Faculty Code now expressly include guidelines for a non-concurrence (see Part IV.E.1).

<sup>19</sup> One of these cases did not result in a FSEC recommendation because the application for promotion was withdrawn after the case was sent to the FSEC.

The FSEC seeks to carry out its work with sensitivity to the uniqueness of each school. The FSEC considered nine cases in the 2015-2016 academic year and six cases during 2016-2017. Each case received an extensive review.<sup>19</sup>

The FSEC chair and the provost have made periodic reports to the Board of Trustees Academic Affairs Committee as to how well the new process is working. Although in a perfect academic world, departments and even candidates would properly calibrate and there might not be any need for non-concurrences, there is a general recognition that the multiple opportunities for higher-level concurrence or non-concurrence is a healthy and valuable part of the tenure and promotion system and is leading to more consistency across the university. The FSEC plans to conduct an evaluation of the new procedures after five years of full operation.

## **Public Relations, Affordability, and Transparency Concerning Funding Sources for Students**

### ***(Criteria 6, 7)***

The university has made significant progress toward greater transparency in its dealings with both external audiences (particularly potential students) and the GW community. The university's efforts in these areas are discussed in detail in the report on Standard IV, "Support of the Student Experience."

## **Compliance with Federal, State, and Commission Policies**

### ***(Criterion 8)***

The university is committed to complying with all federal, District of Columbia laws, MSCHE policies, and MSCHE's requirements of affiliation. The university's efforts in these areas are discussed in detail in the Verifications of Compliance reports.

## Ethical Treatment of Human Participants in All Research Activities

GW and the [Office of Human Research](#) are dedicated to the ethical treatment of human subjects in all research activities conducted under the auspices of this institution and assume responsibility for safeguarding their rights and welfare. The university's policy for the protection of human participants is guided by ethical principles, federal law, and institutional standards. The guiding ethical principles are embodied in the [Belmont Report: Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research](#). Compliance with this policy provides protections for human participants as mandated by applicable laws, regulations, and standards of local, state, and federal government agencies concerning the protection of human participants, including the *U.S. Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)*:

- [Title 45](#) CFR 46, Protection of Human Subjects, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and
- [Title 21](#) Title 21 CFR 50, 56, 312, 600 and 812 of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA)

The university's policy for the protection of human participants also meets high institutional standards in its ethical principles and regulations. [Institutional requirements](#) are detailed on a site dedicated to investigator guidelines and are mandated for all research, not just federally-funded research.

All GW investigators and non-GW investigators conducting research under the auspices of the GW Institutional Review Board (IRB) must demonstrate and maintain sufficient knowledge of the ethical principles and regulatory requirements for protecting human subjects, through the completion and periodic renewal of the web-based human subject protection training called [Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative \(CITI\)](#). CITI training requirements apply to research staff who interact with potential or enrolled subjects. They include, but

are not limited to the following: obtaining consent, recruiting, data collection, and intervention, or viewing, obtaining, analyzing, or otherwise handling identifiable research data.

The university is currently reviewing electronic compliance systems as part of its commitment to optimizing and managing processes around animal operations, research conflicts of interest, IRB procedures, and activities of institutional research safety committees.

## Periodic Assessment (Criterion 9)

The university periodically assesses its commitment to ethics and integrity as evidenced by several recent policies and programs, some of which are described above:

- Revision of the university Faculty Code with a new statement about academic freedom in 2015;
- Establishment of the President's Council on Diversity and Inclusion in 2010 resulting in a new Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Engagement with a commitment to ensuring that the campus environment is one that meets the standards mandated by federal law;
- Routine use of campus surveys to monitor what is occurring on campus and ensuring compliance with federal and District of Columbia standards;
- The university's ongoing review of its Title IX processes;
- The university's embrace of technological solutions to ensure academic integrity through online proctoring;
- Programming to educate the student body about policies and programs related to sexual behavior and to address barriers to reporting unwanted behavior;
- The university's current efforts to revise its conflict of interest policies;
- Transitioning the university Compliance Office to Baker Tilly in 2016 in order to benchmark its compliance efforts with peer institutions and ensure best practices;

- Recent revisions of the Faculty Code to expand the role of school-wide personnel committees in the tenure and promotion processes and to standardize across the university procedures for non-concurrences; and
- The 2017 proposal of the Faculty Senate to establish Guidelines for Exercising and Defending Academic Freedom.

## **Recommendations**

1. The faculty conflict of interest policy should be reviewed for potential updates.
2. The development, dissemination, and implementation of most policies and programs relevant to Standard II pertain to regular full-time faculty. It is recommended that the administration review how well university policies are communicated to specialized and part-time faculty through the Faculty Handbook or other means.
3. Although largely positive, campus climate needs to be improved so that students, regardless of background or circumstance, feel welcome and supported.
4. The university should complete its review and implementation of Title IX policies as well as GW's corresponding Sexual Harassment and Violence Policy.

## Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience





*An institution provides students with learning experiences that are characterized by rigor and coherence of all program, certificate, and degree levels, regardless of instructional modality. All learning experiences, regardless of modality, program pace/schedule, level, and setting are consistent with higher education expectations.*

Student learning is at the heart of GW's mission:

The George Washington University . . . dedicates itself to furthering human well-being...by fostering excellence in teaching... [and by offering] outstanding learning experiences for full-time and part-time students in undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs in Washington, DC, the nation, and abroad.

Similarly, GW's strategic plan, *Vision 2021*, puts student learning at its core:

[GW] undergraduate students acquire the skills and knowledge that are the hallmark of a strong liberal arts education and enable them to address the challenges and seize the opportunities they will encounter throughout their lifetimes. . . . [S]tudents in professional programs acquire the essential grounding to be effective in their chosen fields and the ability to learn as their professions evolve. . . . [G]raduate students master the professional and research skills that will allow them to be innovative thinkers who are leaders in their respective areas.

The pedagogical skills and research expertise of its faculty alongside the university's location together offer students a truly unique educational experience, an experience that blends classroom learning, research opportunities, and internship experiences in a way that prepares GW students to be future leaders, scholars, and policymakers.

Among GW's strengths are:

- A unified and intellectually coherent undergraduate educational experience that fosters a range of core competencies including creative and critical thinking, information literacy and technological proficiency, quantitative reasoning, an appreciation for diverse cultural

values and perspectives, and the strong communication skills—both oral and written—that facilitate the translation of learning into effective action;

- A full range of graduate and professional programs that combine both academic excellence and real-world experiences, and that provide students with the knowledge and tools they need to excel;
- Its Washington, DC location, a location that provides students with unparalleled access to nationally and internationally known leaders, scholars, and government officials who engage students on timely and relevant issues; and
- A faculty that is well-respected for both scholarship and teaching.

## **The Range and Quality of GW Programs**

*(Criterion 1; ROA 8, 9)*

GW promotes the advancement of human knowledge in many disciplines through its three campuses, 10 schools, more than 70 research centers, 75 departments, and 400 programs. The university offers a comprehensive list of programs including approximately 110 bachelor's degree programs, 190 master's degree programs, 50 doctoral programs, and 70 certificate programs. Bachelor degree programs require a minimum of 120 credits that fulfill general education requirements and at least one major course of study. Master level programs demand 30 or more credits; and certificate programs range from 12-18 credits. The number of credits required for doctoral programs varies depending on both the field and the nature of the doctorate (i.e., whether a professional or research-based doctorate). All guidelines for certificate and degree programs are well documented and can be easily accessed through the [provost's website](#).

Structures are in place to ensure a high-quality educational experience for all students. Each of GW's 10 schools has an active curriculum committee (or its equivalent) that ensures careful oversight of new and continuing academic programs. In order

to safeguard a meaningful and coherent student learning experience, all new or revised courses require a course description; a list of prerequisites (if applicable); three to five learning outcomes; a syllabus based on a [template](#); and course attributes (if applicable). [Course proposals](#) require approval by the department, school (curriculum committee and appropriate associate dean), and the associate provost for academic planning and assessment.

New [program proposals](#) also go through rigorous review. All proposals for new programs (or program revisions) must include a description and rationale for offering the program; three to five learning outcomes; and a curriculum map. Proposals are first reviewed by the faculty in the relevant department or program. Once approved, they are reviewed by the school's curriculum committee and associate dean. Final review and approval resides in the Office of Academic Planning and Assessment; there the associate provost reviews the proposal and the curriculum map. If the program offers a well-constructed student learning experience that is appropriate for the level of the degree, the proposal is approved, and its curriculum is entered into the *University Bulletin*.

At all levels, GW fosters a coherent learning experience through its use of learning outcomes for courses and department or program educational objectives for degrees.<sup>20</sup> In addition, the university promotes the synthesis of student learning by offering capstone courses, learning communities for both undergraduates and graduate students, and opportunities for mentored research.<sup>21</sup> Finally, it advances its mission of "offer[ing] outstanding learning experiences for full-time and part-time students in undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs in Washington, D.C., the nation, and abroad" by encouraging students to bridge their classroom learning with practical

applications. GW students and faculty, for example, conduct behavioral research with orangutans at the [National Zoo](#), scrutinize original historic documents at the [Folger Shakespeare Library](#), develop solar conversion methods to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, and devise new systems to support clinical diagnostics and the monitoring of food processes. Furthermore, GW students participate in [service learning, study abroad](#) (both semester-long and short term), and education through [internships](#).

While GW continues to capitalize on its many strengths it is nevertheless constrained by enrollment restrictions imposed by the District of Columbia [Board of Zoning Adjustment](#) (BZA). The BZA limits the student headcount at both GW's Foggy Bottom and Mount Vernon Campuses; it also regulates program growth on its DC campuses. The BZA requires that the "'Foggy Bottom student headcount' not exceed 20,000 students and a 'Foggy Bottom student full-time equivalent' not exceed 16,553." Furthermore, the plan requires that "the University...make beds available on-campus for 70 percent of the full-time undergraduate population, plus one bed for each additional undergraduate student in excess of 8,000."

Similar constraints are imposed on the [Mount Vernon Campus](#), where the daily on-campus headcount is limited to 1,725 students. In recent years, the Foggy Bottom enrollment has typically hovered around 99 percent of the cap, and the daily Mount Vernon Campus headcount around 90 percent.<sup>22</sup>

While the cap has created tremendous management challenges, it has also provided the opportunity for GW to consider how it can offer "outstanding learning experiences" in less traditional settings. Through its off-campus and online programs, GW has been able to broaden its outreach by delivering high-quality degree

<sup>20</sup> See the report for Standard V for a more complete discussion.

<sup>21</sup> Opportunities for undergraduate research include the following: the Sigelman Undergraduate Research Enhancement Award; the newly instituted Cisneros Undergraduate Research Fellowship; and the recently created Loeb Institute Undergraduate Research Fellowships. The Columbian College of Arts and Sciences offers the Luther Rice, Kwitken and Ruggles Fellowships, and the Elliott School of International Affairs created an Undergraduate Scholars program. In addition, a number of undergraduate research programs are funded at the department level.

<sup>22</sup> The cap is also discussed in the report for Standard VI.

programs to qualified learners all over the world, making course material accessible anytime and anywhere.

## Online Programs

A new position of vice provost for online education and academic innovation, established in 2013, was created to develop strategies that use technology to construct innovative and effective high-quality online programs for students. The vice provost formed a strategic planning committee for online education, which met for the better part of a year. The final report of the committee, completed in 2014, noted that GW had over 70 online degree and certificate programs across the GW schools, many of which were developed with for-profit vendors, while others were designed in-house. After an extensive review of the then-current practices, the committee concluded that the continued use of for-profit vendors created challenges both in developing cross-disciplinary programs and accommodating students interested in taking both online and face-to-face courses. Therefore, the committee recommended first, “that GW move to a model whereby the principal course-creation activity is performed in-house by university personnel, subject to strong pedagogical standards” (p. 1) and, second, that the university expand its digital education office. As a result, the university expanded its [eDesign Shop](#) to include a team of instructional designers, videographers, and multimedia specialists who could work with faculty to develop online educational materials.

In 2016, the oversight of online education and academic technologies was entrusted to the recently hired [university librarian](#), and her title was changed to dean of libraries and academic innovation. One of the major achievements of her new office was to have GW accepted as a member institution of the [National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements](#) (NC-SARA). GW’s membership in NC-SARA ensures that its online programs meet the requirements

for all participating states.<sup>23</sup> The dean also engaged the [Online Learning Consortium](#) (OLC)—a leading professional organization devoted to advancing quality online learning—to conduct a comprehensive review of the current state of GW’s online infrastructure and programming to make recommendations about ways to move online enrollment forward. Finally, the dean created a standing committee for online education. This committee includes a high ranking administrator from each school, the deputy provost, the vice provost for finance and budgeting, the vice provost for enrollment management, the senior associate dean for innovative teaching and learning, and the associate provost for academic planning and assessment. The committee was charged with creating a new plan for online learning. The OLC’s review was completed in October 2016, and since then, many of its recommendations have been or are in the process of being implemented. Among these recommendations was the reaffirmation of the earlier suggestion that GW move away from outside vendors (as contracts expire) in favor of the in-house design of courses and programs.

Currently, most of the instructional designers working at GW are certified in Quality Matters or other nationally recognized course review standards (e.g., OLC). The Innovative Teaching and Learning office now offers centralized services for supporting online education including course design and production, faculty instructional technology support, learning management support (Blackboard), video storage support, 24/7 student help desk support, and captioning services. Significant progress has been made in designing online training modules for faculty teaching online courses.

In April 2017, the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate established a task force to investigate the quality of online and off-campus degree programs. In October 2017, the chair of the task force presented a [preliminary report](#) to the senate. That preliminary report concluded that

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<sup>23</sup> NC-SARA standards are the same as those recommended in the “Interregional Guidelines for the Evaluation of Distance Education (Online Learning).”

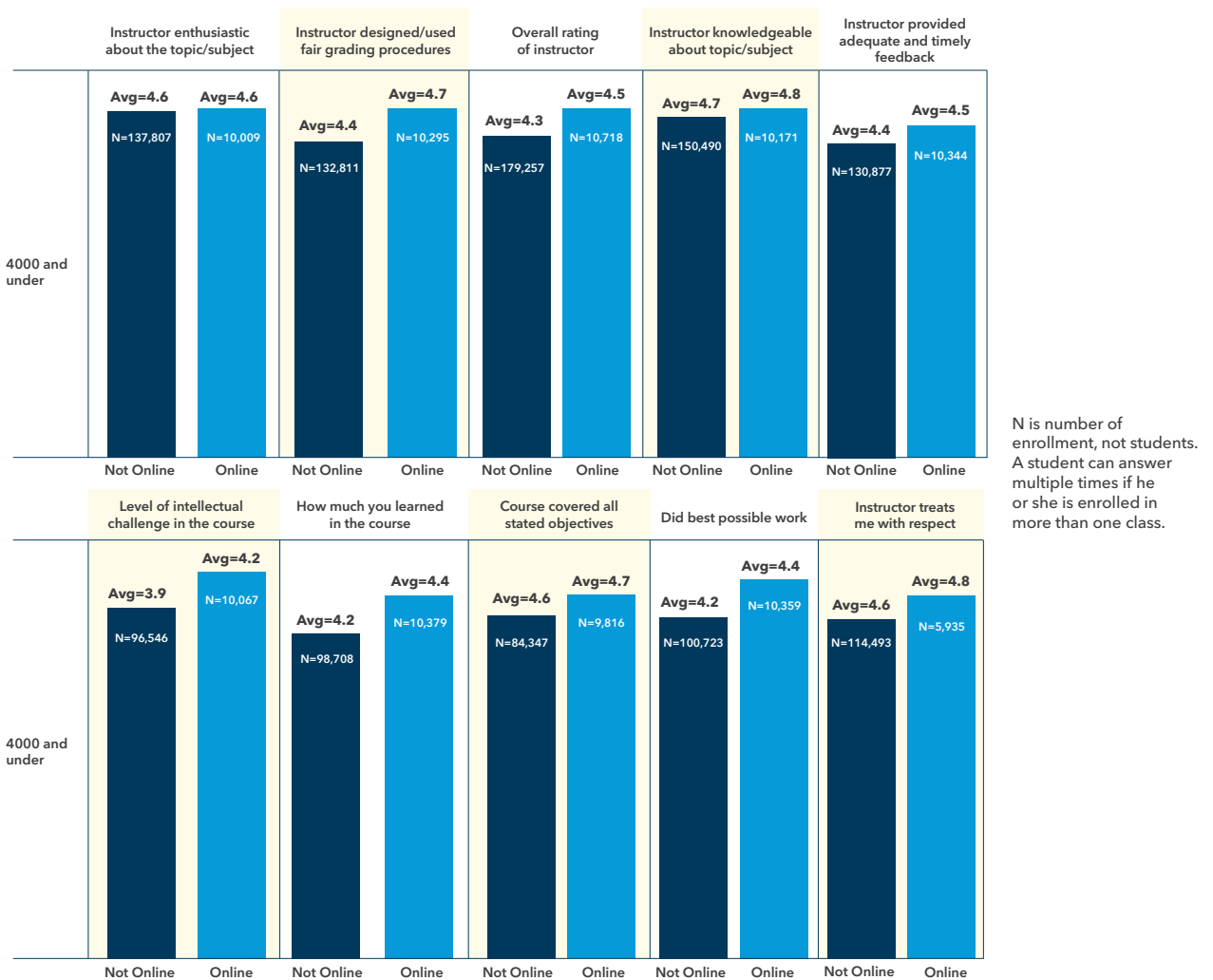
the university had not, as yet, developed uniform guidelines on how online programs should be developed, designed, and taught. The committee also claimed that it could not determine if online courses/programs were equivalent in quality and content to what was offered in face-to-face settings. In light of the fact that online courses and programs are currently overseen by the different GW schools (as are face-to-face courses and programs), the preliminary report called for increased central administrative oversight of the burgeoning online program offerings.

In response to concerns raised in the preliminary report the university has:

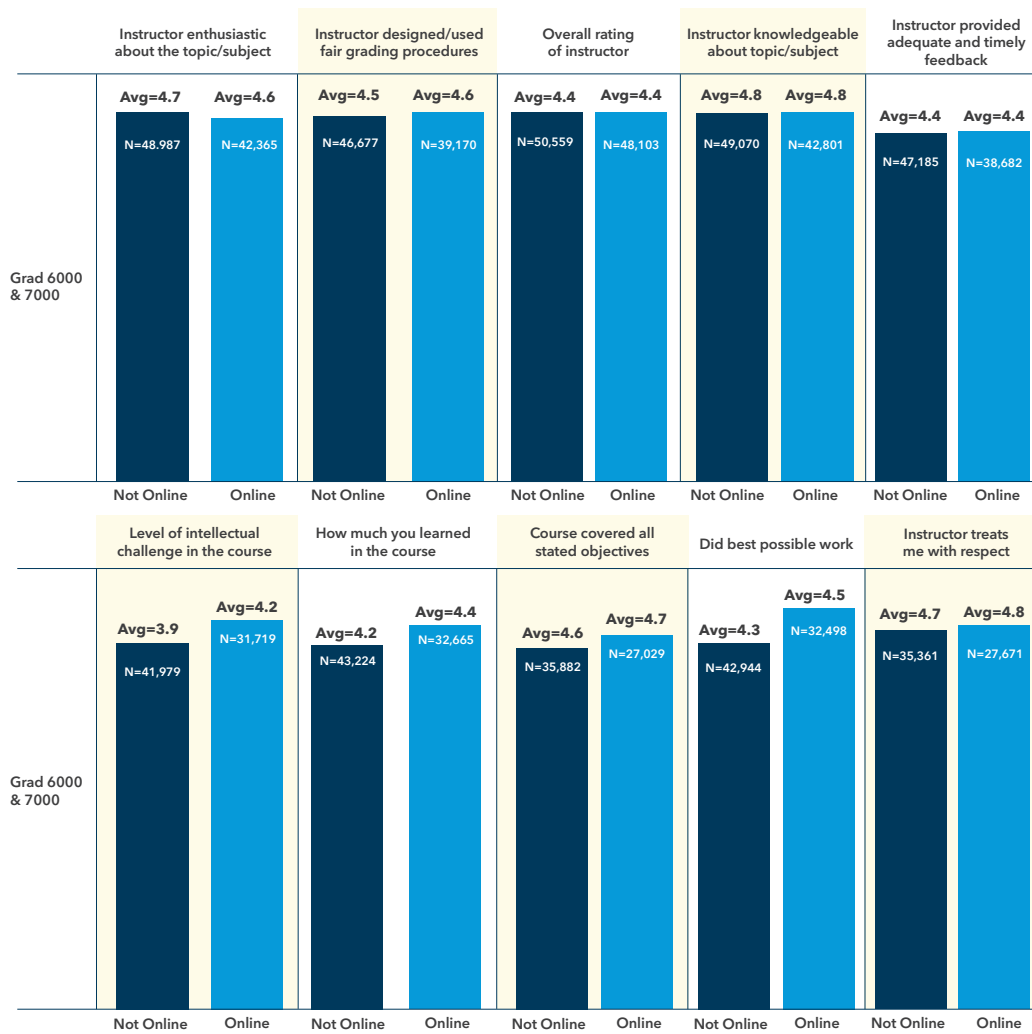
- Reviewed the requirements of programs offered across multiple modalities to ensure they are the same;

- Revised Academic Program Review guidelines to include all online, face-to-face, and hybrid programs. This will ensure that all online programs are assessed at regular intervals;
- Added questions to the student course feedback survey that relate specifically to online courses;
- Asked the online committee to develop questions specifically geared to online courses and programs to be added to the graduation surveys; and
- Added "online" filters to undergraduate and graduate student graduation survey dashboards so that student comments about online courses and programs can be compared to student comments about their face-to-face counterparts.

**Figure III.1. Undergraduate Student Course Evaluations by Course Delivery Mode: Spring 2015 - Spring 2017**



**Figure III.2. Graduate Student Course Evaluations by Course Delivery Mode:  
Spring 2015 - Spring 2017**



N is number of enrollment, not students. A student can answer multiple times if he or she is enrolled in more than one class.

The university has made great strides in moving online programming forward in the past few years. Since 2014, the number of online programs offered by GW has more than doubled. Currently GW offers over 150 **online** programs: approximately one-third are post-baccalaureate or post-master’s certificates, and about two-thirds are degree-granting programs. Student course evaluations completed between spring 2015 and spring 2017 indicate that the quality of online instruction is either comparable or slightly higher compared to the instruction in face-to-face settings (see Figures III.1 and III.2). Moreover, students taking graduate and undergraduate courses online rated the amount they learned in the course and the effort they put into doing their best work higher compared to students taking face-to-face courses.

As more online programming is considered, it is important that the university develop a strategic plan for online education that includes guidelines on how programs are designed, developed, and taught; that there is adequate planning for and allocation of resources to support online course and program development and infrastructure; and that assessment of student learning is embedded in all programs, regardless of modality, to ensure that GW continues, as its mission states, to “offer outstanding learning experiences for...[its] students.”

## Faculty (Criterion 2; ROA 8, 15)

Faculty represent the soul of the institution, passionate about their discipline, challenging and

Table III.1. Full-Time Faculty by School, Rank, and Tenure Status: Fall 2016

School	Professors		Associate Professors		Assistant Professors		Instructors	
	T/TT	NTT	T/TT	NTT	T/TT	NTT	T/TT	NTT
CCAS	151	12	140	36	78	62	0	0
GWSB	43	0	35	0	21	0	0	0
GSEHD	12	2	21	14	14	9	0	0
SEAS	41	2	24	1	17	0	0	0
ESIA	28	5	15	5	8	1	0	0
SMHS	38	4	12	9	21	22	0	1
SoN	5	0	8	1	12	7	0	1
CPS	0	2	0	8	0	9	0	1
GWSPH	21	12	31	8	18	3	0	0
GWLaw	62	4	11	1	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>

motivating students to grow intellectually and think broadly, and advancing human knowledge with their research. It is through its faculty that GW's mission of being "a center for intellectual inquiry and research...emphasiz[ing] the linkage between basic and applied scholarship, insisting that the practical be grounded in knowledge and theory" is achieved.

GW has 1,129 regular full-time faculty, of which 79 percent are tenured or on a tenure-track.<sup>24</sup> Table III.1 provides the distribution of faculty by tenure status across schools. In compliance with the [Faculty Code](#), the proportion of regular faculty serving in non-tenure track appointments does "not exceed 25 percent in any school, nor [does] any department have fewer than 50 percent of its regular faculty appointments either tenured or tenure-track."<sup>25</sup>

Approximately 91 percent of the faculty members have terminal degrees.<sup>26</sup>

The most recent undergraduate student (FTE) to faculty ratio is 13:1; full-time faculty teach 63 percent of on-campus undergraduate seats, and 61 percent of on-campus graduate seats.<sup>27</sup>

Because of its location, GW has been able to draw together an outstanding cadre of part-time faculty to enhance the educational experience of its students. Former ambassadors, State Department officials, politicians, accomplished journalists, and other noted professionals from the area regularly teach GW students.

Faculty rigor and effectiveness are monitored through annual reviews and course evaluations.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>24</sup> The number does not include 69 special service faculty, 10 regular faculty not associated with a school, 89 research faculty, and 61 visiting faculty. It also excludes 11 Corcoran faculty hired due to the merger, and 966 full-time affiliated medical faculty.

<sup>25</sup> The policy does not apply to the SMHS, SoN, GWSPH, and CPS.

<sup>26</sup> The *University Bulletin* lists [faculty degrees](#) and the institutions where degrees were awarded.

<sup>27</sup> A breakout of full- and part-time faculty, by school, can be found in the Introduction, Table 1.

<sup>28</sup> The Office of Faculty Recruitment and Personnel Relations (FRPR) provides Information about the [faculty recruitment process](#) and encourages search committees to advance faculty excellence and recruit a diverse faculty. Additional information related to faculty hiring policies can be found in the [Faculty Handbook](#).

All regular faculty members<sup>29</sup> complete an annual report that includes a comprehensive self-assessment focused on teaching effectiveness, research productivity, and service to the university. That self-assessment is then reviewed by both their department or program chair and respective dean. The reviews are used as the basis for annual merit increases and serve to identify faculty who are in need of mentoring or training.<sup>30</sup> The reviews are also used in tenure and promotion decisions.

Student feedback is also used to evaluate the quality of faculty teaching. A new course feedback system, SmartEvals, was introduced in 2014-2015. This system enables easy customization of questions as well as quick analysis of the data. Course evaluations are used for annual merit increases as well as in tenure and promotion decisions. Table III.2 provides two years of mean scores on selected questions from the feedback system.<sup>31</sup>

In 2015, the Faculty Senate revised the promotion and tenure review process articulated in the [Faculty Code](#), which resulted in raising the standard for tenure and/or promotion.<sup>32</sup> The revision aligns university criteria with standards of excellence already applied in many GW schools and departments. Departments, school-wide personnel committees, deans, and the provost are each entrusted with ensuring that faculty recommendations concerning tenure and/or promotion are consistent with standards of excellence for teaching.<sup>33</sup>

## Teaching and Learning

### (Criterion 2)

#### GW Libraries and Academic Innovation

In early 2016, GW's provost moved multiple units focused on support for academic success under the authority of the GW Libraries, creating the [GW Libraries and Academic Innovation](#) (GWLAI) organization. GWLAI includes [Academic](#)

**Table III.2. Student Feedback Survey: Mean Scores\* for Teaching Effectiveness**

Questions	Summer 2015-Spring 2016 (n=44,639)	Summer 2015-Spring 2017 (n=51,856)
Instructor was knowledgeable about subject and course materials	4.77	4.82
Instructor was enthusiastic about the topic/subject	4.66	4.70
Instructor treats all students with respect	4.65	4.70
Instructor designed and used fair grading procedures	4.42	4.49
Instructor provided adequate and timely feedback	4.33	4.40
<b>Overall rating of the instructor</b>	<b>4.34</b>	<b>4.43</b>

\* Means are calculated using a range of 1 (not at all) to 5 (very).

<sup>29</sup> The Faculty Code defines regular faculty as “full-time faculty members with the title of university professor, professor, associate professor, assistant professor, and instructor who are tenured or tenure-track, and non-tenure-track full-time faculty members who are on a renewable contract, do not hold either a regular or tenured appointment at another university, have a nine or twelve month appointment, and who have contractual responsibilities for all of the following: research, teaching, and service” (p. 2).

<sup>30</sup> Annual faculty reviews are also discussed in the report for Standard VII.

<sup>31</sup> Standard V addresses course evaluations and student surveys in more detail.

<sup>32</sup> The word “competence” was changed to “excellence” with regard to research, teaching, and engagement in service.

<sup>33</sup> The tenure process is also discussed in the report for Standard II.

[Technologies](#), [GW Online](#), the University Teaching and Learning Center (UTLC), [STEMworks](#), and the [Center for Undergraduate Fellowships and Research](#). This realignment has resulted in a more efficient and integrated approach that provides students and faculty, regardless of the educational modality, with the services and resources needed to ensure an excellent student learning experience.

Among some of the improvements are the following:

- Faculty development opportunities in teaching and learning were extended to online faculty;
- Classroom technologies became better aligned with teaching and learning best practices;
- Support for student writing and quantitative skills are centrally located. Gelman Library now houses the [Writing Center](#) and [STEMworks](#); and
- The team supporting the Learning Management System (Blackboard) is better aligned with the academic programs that depend on it for course delivery.

GWLAI also offers many workshops on teaching and learning. These include sessions for students on research methods, working with data, programming skills, using GIS, correct citation, and career preparation. Sessions for faculty include using Blackboard, finding open educational resources, creating online lectures, incorporating media into the curriculum, and using interactive student response technology. During the spring 2017 semester GWLAI offered more than 90 workshops to support the educational needs of the GW community.

One component of GWLAI, UTLC, organizes an annual [Teaching Day](#) in the fall semester. Teaching Day is open to all GW faculty and usually draws 150-200 participants. It typically consists of a plenary address by a noted expert on teaching and learning followed by small workshops that focus on critical issues in teaching and learning led by some of GW's best teachers. In 2015, UTLC established the [Course](#)

[Design Institute](#), which provides support for course design and pedagogy to all GW faculty members. Since its inception, over 120 faculty have attended the institute.

## **Discipline-Based Education Research (DBER)**

Since fall 2012, a group of faculty and graduate students from GSEHD and CCAS have met regularly to discuss issues in STEM teaching and learning. Using a term coined by the National Research Council, the Discipline-Based Education Research (DBER) group shares research on teaching and teaching effectiveness in all stages of progress, brainstorms to develop new project ideas, invites guests from other institutions to share expertise, and develops grant proposals. The group has grown substantially since its founding and has around 60 members; it is open to all faculty and graduate students interested in STEM education.<sup>34</sup>

## **University Bulletin (Criterion 3)**

The online [University Bulletin](#) is the official source for academic program requirements and includes face-to-face, hybrid, and online programs and courses.<sup>35</sup> All past bulletins are archived for reference. Specific degree requirements are listed on departmental websites as well. The university also uses [DegreeMAP](#), an online advising and degree auditing system, which displays the requirements for a student's program of study and applies the student's individual academic history to those requirements. DegreeMAP includes in-progress courses to show how currently enrolled courses will apply to requirements. DegreeMAP also supports "What If..." audits or program scenarios, which apply students' current academic history to a different set of degree requirements. DegreeMAP has students' interests in mind, providing more information about degree requirements earlier in their academic careers, and offering a tool to monitor and track progress toward their degree.

<sup>34</sup> A list of its yearly activities can be found in the Document Roadmap.

<sup>35</sup> The Law School and the School of Medicine and Health Sciences produce separate Bulletins for their programs. Health Sciences programs are included in the *University Bulletin*.



## Academic Support Services

### (Criterion 4)

Academic support is provided by both faculty and staff through a number of venues. Incoming freshmen and transfer students participate in [Colonial Inauguration](#) (CI) in the summer prior to the start of the fall semester.<sup>36</sup> CI provides students with the opportunity to meet with academic advisors, faculty, and other incoming students; to learn about academic opportunities and responsibilities; and to discuss academic plans, majors, minors, and fields of study. At the end of the one-and-a-half day program, students register for classes with the help of their academic advisors. CI is regularly assessed and the program is adjusted accordingly.<sup>37</sup>

Academic advising at GW is school- and/or program-based at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Each school or program determines the advising structure that best meets the needs of its students. Almost all GW undergraduates are advised by professional advisors in their first year.<sup>38</sup> In some schools, they are advised by professional advisors through their senior year. But in other schools (CCAS, SEAS, and GWSPH), students are advised by faculty in their department after they declare a major. Graduate students are typically advised by faculty members in their own department or program. Academic advising is assessed each year by means of the graduating senior survey. Assessment results are forwarded to the various GW schools.

A number of auxiliary services are also available to support students' academic endeavors:

[The University Writing Center](#), mentioned above, is located in Gelman Library. Students (both undergraduate and graduate) and faculty consultants are available to work with students at any stage of the writing process. This service

is available to online students as well. After each writing appointment, students fill out an assessment form. Recently, the Writing Center (as well as the rest of the Writing Program) completed a self-study as part of its Academic Program Review. That self-study included assessment data.

[STEMworks](#), opened in the fall of 2017, also resides in Gelman Library. It provides support for students in quantitative, computational, and spatial reasoning. STEMworks delivers free support through three services to the GW community: peer coaching, consulting, and workshops. The peer coaching service, providing drop-in, small group, and one-on-one sessions, offers more than 100 hours of support each week to undergraduate students in quantitative courses, specializing in serving first-year students in introductory STEM courses. The consulting service, run by graduate students and staff members, offers project-level support for upper-level undergraduate students and graduate students, helping them with their software, coding, statistical, econometric, or data management projects. The workshop service, run by GW staff members, plans, oversees, and delivers more than 50 workshops covering a wide variety of topics relevant to students, including organizing research projects; freelancing and copyrighting their work; learning Python, R, and other software programs; and using GIS.

[SEAS Tutoring](#) provides free peer tutoring to all undergraduate students in a range of introductory and engineering-specific courses. Tutors are current SEAS undergraduates who excelled in the courses they now tutor. The three types of tutoring services include express tutoring, review sessions, and computer science study halls.

[Language tutoring](#) is available through the following departments: East Asian Languages and Literatures; Classical and Near Eastern Languages

<sup>36</sup> A special CI for international students is held right before the start of the fall semester.

<sup>37</sup> The Division of Student Affairs surveyed incoming students who participated in CI in the summer prior to their first year. The data collected indicated that students were less-than-satisfied with certain aspect of the program, including course registration and academic advising. The data was used to create better opportunities for practice registration and to work with the different schools' advising offices to improve the advising process at CI.

<sup>38</sup> Exceptions are students in SEAS and GWSPH.

and Civilizations; and Romance, German, and Slavic Languages and Literatures.

**Other tutoring** is available through various schools, departments, and programs.

**GW Disability Support Services (DSS)** promotes GW's broader diversity and inclusion initiatives. It works collaboratively with students, faculty, and staff across the campus to foster a climate of universal academic excellence. DSS offers support for a number of accommodations including alternative text materials, assistive technology, classroom accessibility, interpreting and captioning services, note-taking assistance, and test proctoring services. Academic skills specialists are available on a regular basis to discuss students' academic concerns.

**The Center for Undergraduate Fellowships and Research (CUFR)** works to pair undergraduate students with faculty for research experiences. It also provides competitive fellowship guidance for GW undergraduates. Additionally, CUFR sponsors an annual **research day** that features both graduate and undergraduate research; the **2017 research day** included over 200 students. Finally, the CUFR staff work closely with **Career Services** to align students' career goals with research and fellowship opportunities.

The **English for Academic Purposes (EAP)** program works with students whose first language is not English. EAP is discussed in more detail in the report for Standard IV.

The recently created Office of **Enrollment Retention** works with students who are struggling academically. The Office of Enrollment Retention is discussed in more detail in the report for Standard IV.

Although there are numerous academic support mechanisms at GW and students are routinely referred to take advantage of these, coordination and record sharing among the support systems

is inconsistent. In some instances (e.g., between orientation and academic advising) there is extensive coordination and collaboration. In other instances, however, data are not systematically shared.

## **General Education** *(Criterion 5; ROA 8, 9, 10)*

General education represents a vital component of the educational experience of all GW undergraduates. It is designed to provide students with the critical thinking and analytic skills that will enable them to address the challenges they will encounter throughout their lifetimes.

One important recommendation from GW's strategic plan was to:

Create a more unified and intellectually coherent undergraduate educational experience that fosters a range of core competencies, including creativity, critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, an appreciation for diverse cultural perspectives, and strong communication skills necessary to translate learning into effective action.

The plan envisioned a rigorous common core of undergraduate general education requirements that would be standard across all schools.<sup>39</sup> At the time that the plan was being developed, each of the five schools with undergraduate programs had its own set of general education requirements. This made it difficult for students to transfer schools or to pursue a second major outside of their home school.

The Council of Undergraduate Deans took the lead in articulating a university-wide general education curriculum that would pass muster with the faculty of the five schools that enroll undergraduates.<sup>40</sup> After a great deal of deliberation both within the schools and among the council, the curriculum was implemented during the 2015-2016 academic year. Students who were already at GW were grandfathered under the previous requirements.

<sup>39</sup> A list of the approved courses, mapped to the university general education requirement can be found in the *Bulletin*. School-specific lists are available through the respective schools advising offices. The Registrar's Schedule of Classes also includes general education attributes for specific courses.

<sup>40</sup> In some instances, the new university-wide general curriculum required approval of the faculty of the degree-granting school. In other instances, the university-wide requirement overlapped with previous requirements and did not require a faculty vote.

**Table III.3. University General Education Requirement**

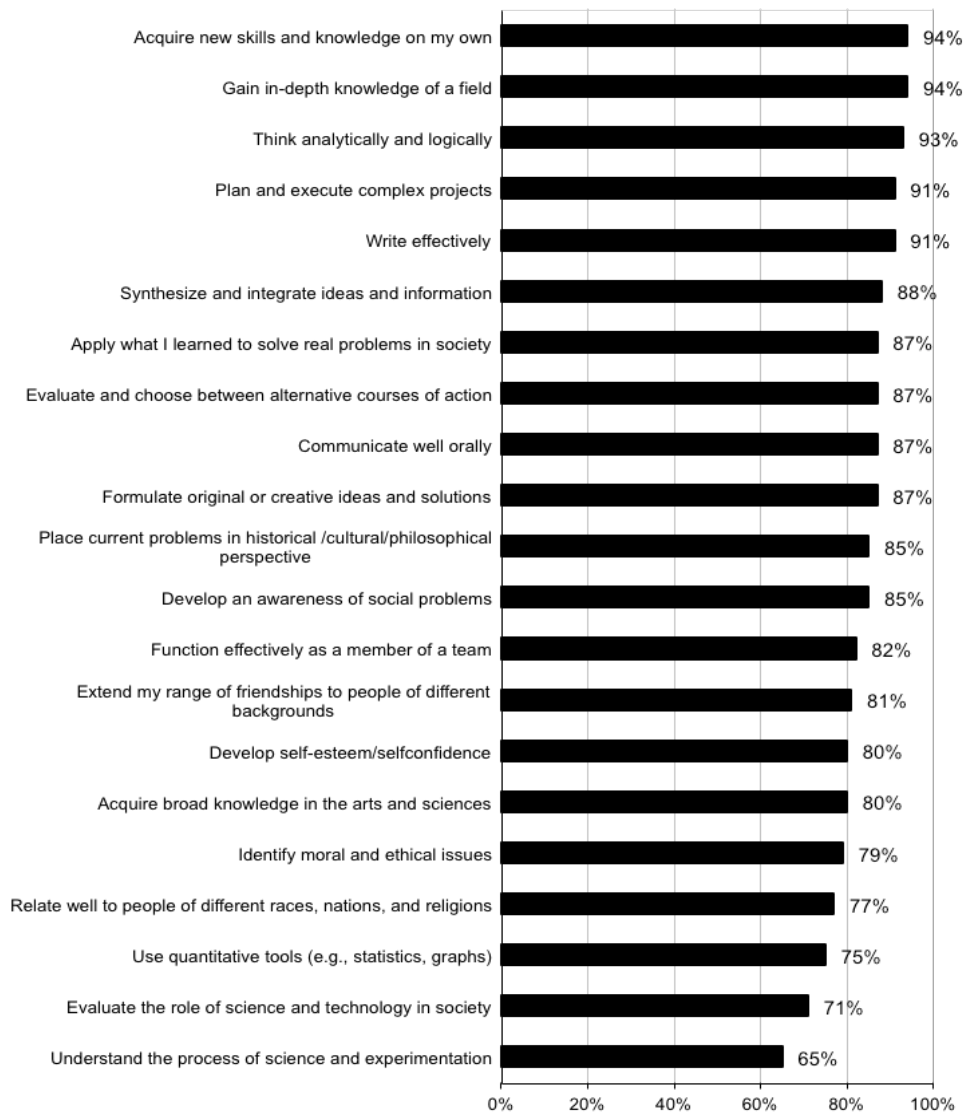
General Education Requirement	General Education Learning Outcomes
<b>Oral communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take responsibility for a significant topic with a clear thesis and persuasive argument</li> <li>• Demonstrate facility with topical and disciplinary knowledge via well-crafted, audience-appropriate language</li> <li>• Demonstrate vocal qualities and physical behaviors that augment content and maintain audience interest</li> </ul>
<b>Written communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate and analyze evidence and assumptions in complex argumentative texts, including their own writing</li> <li>• Use research questions to frame and develop an argument</li> <li>• Apply appropriate rhetorical principles and stylistic conventions for the genre in which they are writing</li> <li>• Find and incorporate sources from appropriate academic databases in their essays and cite them correctly</li> <li>• Develop, edit, and proofread their own work through a process of structured revision</li> </ul>
<b>Scientific reasoning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the hypothetico-deductive method</li> <li>• Test hypotheses using data and scientific reasoning</li> <li>• Understand how probability theory affects interpretation of experimental results</li> <li>• Understand the difference between causation and correlation</li> </ul>
<b>Quantitative reasoning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Represent mathematical information symbolically, visually, numerically, and verbally</li> <li>• Articulate precise mathematical definitions and propositions and draw inferences from them</li> <li>• Use algebraic, geometric, or statistical calculations to solve problems</li> <li>• Interpret and explain information represented in mathematical forms (e.g., graphs, equations, diagrams, tables)</li> </ul>
<b>Critical analysis and reasoning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyze and evaluate abstract information</li> <li>• Understand and analyze scholarly literature and argument, particularly with respect to theoretical orientation and sources of support</li> <li>• Formulate a logical argument based on that analysis</li> </ul>
<b>Global perspective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyze an issue in terms of its global implications</li> <li>• Frame questions, gather evidence, analyze evidence, and draw conclusions about an issue in terms of its global implications</li> </ul>
<b>Cross-cultural perspective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and analyze the impact of diverse experiences and/or cultures upon human behavior, thought, and expression</li> <li>• Use cultural comparison as a tool for understanding how social, cultural, or economic contexts shape understanding and behaviors</li> </ul>
<b>Local/Civic engagement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyze a social issue or civic concern</li> <li>• Propose an intervention or solution based on broader theoretical knowledge</li> <li>• Balance diverse perspectives in deciding whether to act</li> <li>• Distinguish the multiple consequences and implications of their actions</li> </ul>
<b>Information literacy and technological competency (First-year writing objectives)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to explore information resources—through both traditional library and emerging technological sources—to use them effectively, and to acknowledge them correctly</li> </ul>

The [university-wide general education curriculum](#) is designed to enhance students' analytical skills, strengthen their oral and written communication abilities, and familiarize them with various modes of inquiry (see Table III.3). The resulting curriculum includes at least 19 credits of approved courses in writing, natural or physical science, mathematics or statistics, the social sciences, and the humanities. Two writing-in-the-discipline courses are also required.<sup>41</sup> While all schools expect students to develop an appreciation for diverse cultural perspectives and strong communication skills,

each school was given the option of creating its own discipline-specific courses instead of using the designated general education course options.

The assessment of learning outcomes for general education using student artifacts will be discussed in the report for Standard V. It is important to note that at the time of their graduation most students indicate that their skills and abilities in the core liberal arts competencies are stronger or much stronger compared to when they first entered college. Figure III.3 includes five years of graduating seniors' self-reported assessment of

**Figure III.3. Graduating Senior Survey 2012 - 2016:  
Percent Change\* in Skills/Abilities Since Entering College**



\*Indicates skill/ability is stronger or much stronger since entering college.

<sup>41</sup> Each of the undergraduate schools has additional general education requirements that are appropriate to that school's mission.

what they learned in college. Around 90 percent of the undergraduates thought that their ability to think analytically and logically, write effectively, synthesize and integrate ideas and information, and communicate well orally was overall stronger compared to when they first arrived at GW. Over three-quarters indicated that their knowledge in the arts and sciences, ability to identify moral and ethical issues, use quantitative tools, and relate well to people of different races, nations, and religions were stronger.

## Graduate Education (Criterion 6; ROA 8, 9, 10)

GW graduate education is designed and facilitated by highly qualified faculty.<sup>42</sup> The graduate faculty advise and mentor their students while, at the same time, they nurture their students' scholarship and encourage their independent thinking.

The graduate curriculum, like that of GW undergraduates, is closely monitored. All new or revised master level proposals or programs are approved by the process outlined above. Newly proposed doctoral programs, however, go through an additional vetting process that includes approval by the provost and the [Council of Doctoral Studies](#), a committee comprising one dean from each doctoral degree-granting school.<sup>43</sup> Once the proposal has been approved by the respective department, curriculum committee, and dean, the dean and a representative from the department proposing the doctorate meet with the council to discuss the merits and feasibility of such a program. The council ensures that the department has both the resources to successfully run the program (e.g., faculty, facilities, grant potential, and financial support), and a rigorous curriculum. Upon recommendation of the council, the provost either

Table III.4. Graduate Student Graduation Survey 2016:  
Evaluation of Academic Quality of Program and Environment

Program quality questions	% rating excellent or very good
Intellectual quality of faculty	83%
Integration of current development in my field	78%
Academic standards in program	77%
Overall quality of program	68%
Overall quality of graduate curriculum	68%
Intellectual environment questions	% rating strongly agree or agree
Program content supports research/professional goals	87%
Program activities foster sense of intellectual community	83%
Intellectual quality of fellow graduate students	72%

<sup>42</sup> The Faculty Code, which serves as the university's governing document, clearly delineates grades of academic personnel, professional responsibilities, and processes for appointment, reappointment, promotion, and tenure of the faculty teaching in those programs.

<sup>43</sup> This committee includes representatives from all relevant schools, including the Law School and the School of Medicine and Health Science; the deans from ESIA and CPS are not included as their schools do not offer doctoral degrees.

approves the program or sends it back for further revision. Recently, in response to several proposals for professional and research doctorates, the council determined that criteria differentiating the two types of doctorates were necessary. Those criteria were then created and made [available](#).

GW offers three major funding opportunities for graduate students: graduate research assistantships, graduate teaching assistantships, and fellowship awards. Most fellowships and scholarships are offered through the academic departments, although some are offered through the [Office of Graduate Student Assistantships and Fellowships](#). The office's website provides general information about school and departmental funding opportunities.

At the time of graduation, all graduate students are asked to complete an exit survey that includes questions about their experience at GW and their career plans. In 2016, almost 70 percent of the graduates completed the survey. As Table III.4 indicates, 87 percent of the students strongly or very strongly agreed that the program content supported their research and/or professional goals, and over 75 percent thought the academic standards in the program and the intellectual quality of the faculty were excellent or very good.

In addition to the graduation survey, all graduate programs are assessed, although different schools have divergent methods of assessment.<sup>44</sup>

## **Programs Provided by Third-Party Vendors**

*(Criterion 7)*

All GW credit-bearing programs are designed and taught by GW personnel. However, third-party vendors provide technical support and some provide career services or mental health services. For more on third-party vendors, see the report for Standard IV.

## **Program Assessment**

*(Criterion 8; ROA 8, 9, 10)*

The annual graduating senior survey asks students to indicate their satisfaction with student services and resources, advising, major, mentored research, and how their skills and abilities were enhanced by the undergraduate experience. Similarly, the graduate student graduation survey includes questions about academic quality, coursework and instruction, campus climate, and student services and resources. Up until 2015, each department received a summary of its students' responses to the surveys. Beginning in 2016, five years of survey data were made available on a dashboard that can be sorted by year, school, degree, and program. This is available to all faculty, department chairs, and deans. As part of the guidelines for academic program reviews, departments and programs are asked to indicate how they have used this data to inform the curriculum and student experiences.

## **Recommendations**

1. An overall strategic plan for online education should be created in order to better plan for centralized support services and coordinated offerings.
2. Student services and support should be enhanced by employing a university-wide constituent relationship management system that would be used by all of the academic support services (e.g., advising, Writing Center, STEMworks, and Disability Support Services). Such a tracking system would facilitate communication and enhance analytical capabilities to further facilitate improvement of student services.
3. Continue to increase graduate student and faculty development opportunities to improve teaching and learning at all levels.

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<sup>44</sup> See report for Standard V for more on assessment.

## Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience



*Across all educational experiences, settings, levels, and instructional modalities, the institution recruits and admits students whose interests, abilities, experiences, and goals are congruent with its mission and educational offerings. The institution commits to student retention, persistence, completion, and success through a coherent and effective support system sustained by qualified professionals, which enhances the quality of the learning environment, contributes to the educational experience, and fosters student success.*

Students are at the center of GW's mission and priorities. As noted on its [website](#), "From tutoring and disability accommodations to cultural events and volunteer activities, we work to reach and support community members of all interests and backgrounds." Over the past five years, the university has made major changes to its administrative structures and student services with the purpose of admitting a well-qualified and diverse student body and ensuring its success, both on campus and after graduation. These changes reflect goals put forth in the strategic plan, [Vision 2021](#), and include the following initiatives:

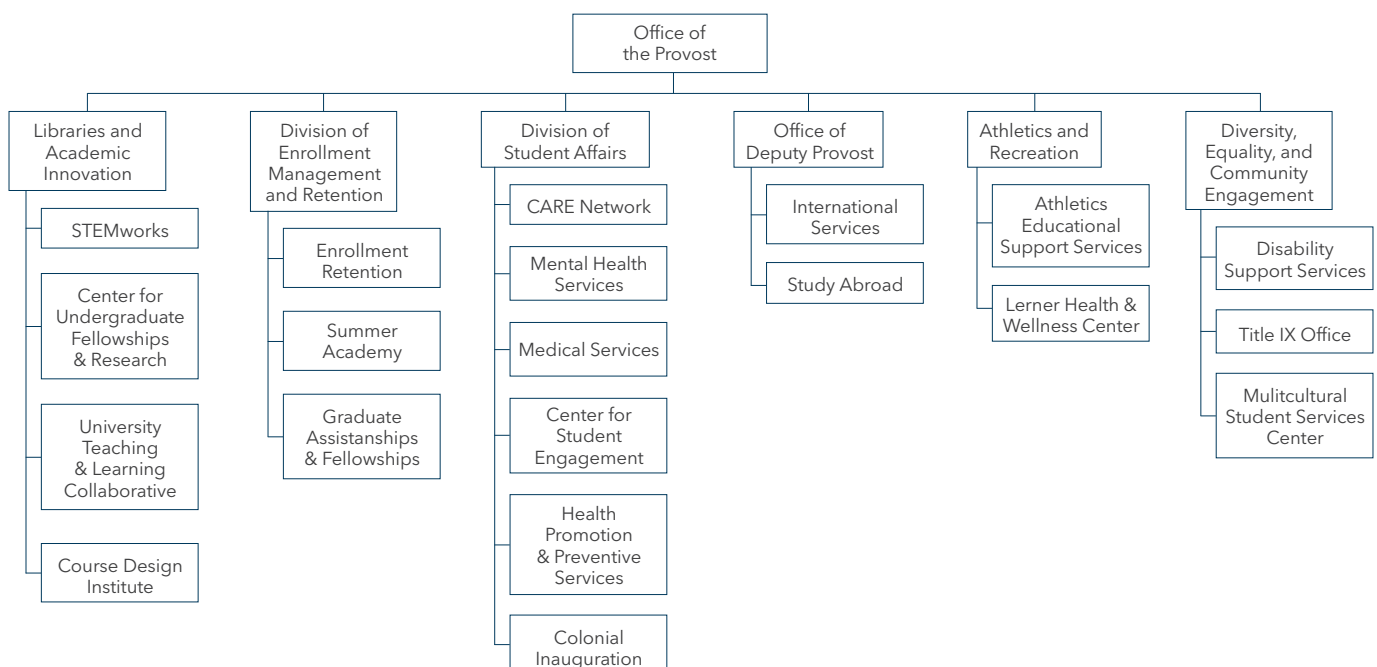
- Established a Division for Enrollment Management and Retention to more holistically and collaboratively examine the relationships

among admissions, financial aid, registrar, summer sessions, graduate enrollment and aid, and student retention and graduation;

- Expanded access to more socioeconomically and geographically diverse and underrepresented undergraduate students through implementing a test-optional application process;
- Revamped administrative infrastructure of the International Services Office to improve support and services for international students and faculty;
- Increased offerings of [English for Academic Purposes](#) (EAP) courses to support the growth in international student enrollment at the undergraduate and graduate levels;
- Formed a wellness hub, providing medical, mental health, health prevention and promotion services in the Marvin Center, a central location on campus; and
- Reorganized and doubled central [Career Services](#) administrative staff to integrate career development and experiential learning into relevant portions of the academic curriculum and to use the Career Center to develop expanded opportunities for job and internship opportunities in the Washington, DC metropolitan community and around the world.

Currently, the structure of student support services is illustrated in the following chart. All offices mentioned below report to the provost.

**Figure IV.1. Reporting Structure for Student Services**





In the following pages, these administrative changes are highlighted to demonstrate that the university has “clearly stated ethical processes to admit, retain, and facilitate the success of students whose interests, abilities, experiences, and goals provide a reasonable expectation for success and are compatible with [the institution’s] mission . . .” (Criterion 1). Later in this chapter, however, attention is also directed toward the university’s policies and procedures regarding transfer credit (Criterion 2), the safe and secure maintenance of student information (Criterion 3), the principles guiding extracurricular activities (Criterion 4), the management of student support services delivered by third-party providers, and the assessment of the effectiveness of programs supporting the student experience (Criterion 6).

## Access and Success (Criterion 1)

The GW [Mission Statement](#) indicates that “the university provides a stimulating intellectual environment for its diverse students and faculty.” In order to achieve this the university has stressed:

- Ethical and transparent admissions and financial aid decisions;
- Accessibility and affordability of a GW education to all qualified students; and
- Support services to enable students to achieve their educational goals.

The work of the admissions office is guided by the ethical standards of the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) as presented in the [Statement of Principles of Good Practice](#). NACAC’s ethical standards clearly align with the institutional priorities as set forth in GW’s mission statement and in *Vision 2021*.

In 2013, to eliminate confusion among prospective undergraduate students and provide more consistent and accurate application data, GW simplified its admission process by moving to accepting the [Common Application](#) only. Previously, high school students were able to apply for admission using either the Common Application or

a two-part GW application. In addition, the Office of Student Financial Assistance began including the Federal Shopping Sheet, which provides information about cost of attendance, including grants and scholarships, work, and loans, which are customized to the specific student’s profile.

At the graduate level, the collaborative enrollment management structure provides robust support for the university’s graduate and professional students. The [Graduate Admissions](#) website serves as a central resource for prospective and newly admitted students to research graduate programs and admission requirements, directing them to university-wide information on costs, financial aid, and student support services, as well as to school-based sites that provide details on academic areas of focus, faculty, research opportunities, and program-specific support services. A centralized online application system, personalized to the individual needs of the schools and programs, is used for nearly all graduate programs; students interested in law, medicine, or public health apply through discipline-specific national application systems.

Furthermore, GW has worked to simplify the pricing structure for graduate programs. The provost’s office recently collaborated with the graduate schools to create a limited number of tuition bands based on demand, benchmarking of market basket schools, and other variables. GW has also introduced a more streamlined process to apply for educational loans for the 2017-2018 academic year, reducing or eliminating several forms that were previously used to certify loan applications.

## A Focus on Access

Following its participation in the [January 2014 White House College Opportunity Summit](#), the university created a Task Force on Access and Success to identify and recommend actions that would advance GW’s commitment to making higher education accessible and affordable to all students, including the recruitment, enrollment, and graduation of undergraduate and graduate

students from diverse backgrounds, as set forth in *Vision 2021*.

As a result of the task force, partnerships were developed with the [Posse Foundation](#) and [Say Yes to Education](#) to enable students who might not otherwise have the opportunity to attend GW. Furthermore, in partnership with the [Cisneros Hispanic Leadership Institute](#) (an institute on campus sponsored by GW alumnus Gilbert Cisneros and his wife, Jacki), the university committed to providing college scholarships to select students—named Cisneros Scholars—who enroll at GW and demonstrate a commitment to leadership and service, with aspirations to give back to the Hispanic community. Finally, the university created the [District Scholars Program](#), a program designed to help high school students from Washington, DC attend GW regardless of their families’ financial circumstances.

Each of these programs provides both targeted financial aid awards and additional cohort advising to enroll and graduate a more socioeconomically diverse student body. These new cohort programs stand alongside the [Trachtenberg Scholars](#) program, established in 1989, which covers tuition, room and board, books, and fees for the best

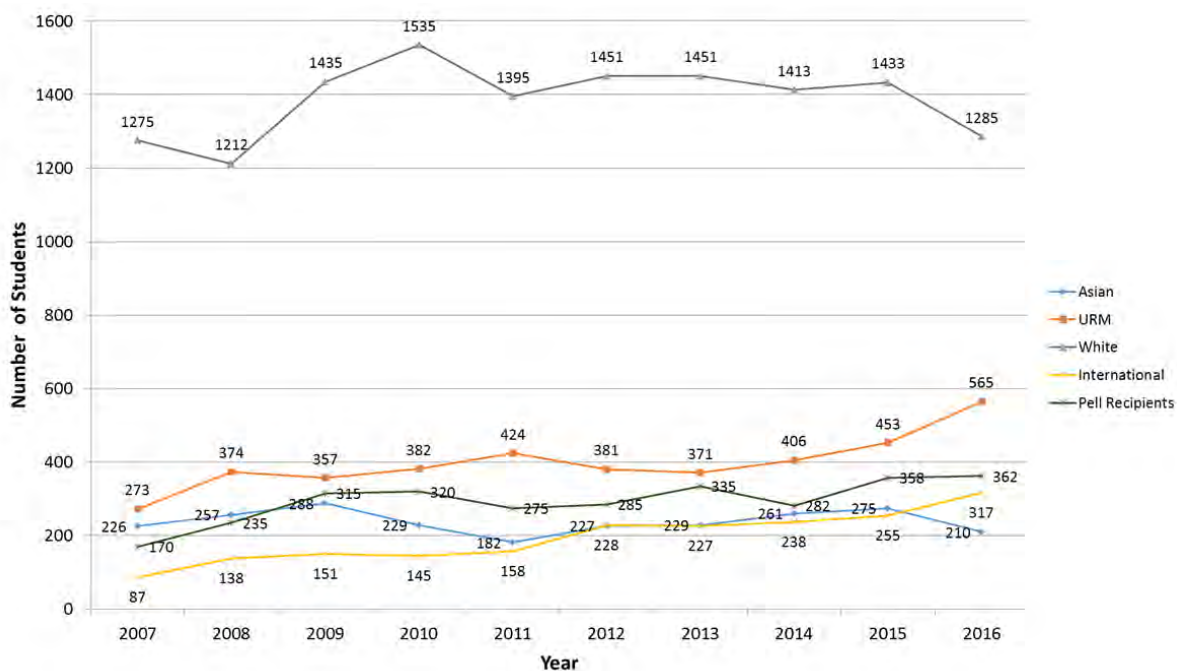
and brightest youth in the nation’s capital and the longstanding partnerships the university has had with [YES Prep Scholars](#), the Gates Foundation, and the [Chicago Scholars](#) program.

Besides the university’s efforts to provide access for a diverse population of undergraduates, it has also directed resources toward graduate students by creating doctoral diversity fellowships. *Vision 2021* called for the creation of these to strengthen GW’s doctoral programs by:

- Enrolling and eventually graduating students from backgrounds traditionally underrepresented on campus;
- Enhancing its programmatic reputation by securing faculty positions for these students; and thereby
- Helping address the national challenge associated with building diverse faculty populations.

In addition, after a year reviewing current policies and national research that consistently pointed to a student’s high school performance rather than test scores as the best predictor of success in college, GW decided to become “[test-optional](#),”

**Figure IV.2. Diversity of First Year Students**

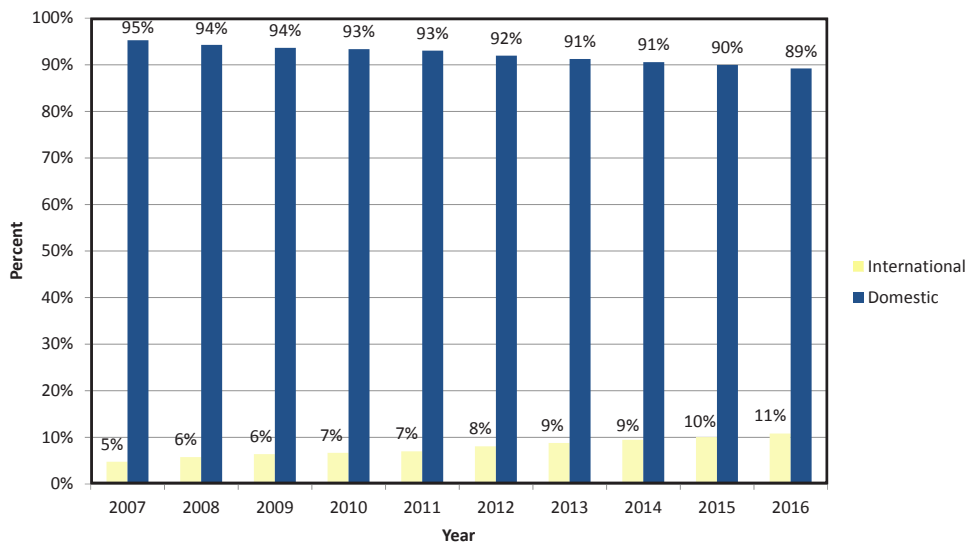


by eliminating, for most students,<sup>45</sup> the submission of SAT or ACT scores as part of the undergraduate admissions application. The university anticipated that dropping this requirement would result in a more diversified pool of applicants, particularly given the historic patterns of standardized test score disparities related to family income, parental educational attainment levels, and race/ethnicity. In the first year of being test-optional (fall 2016 entering class), first-year applications increased by

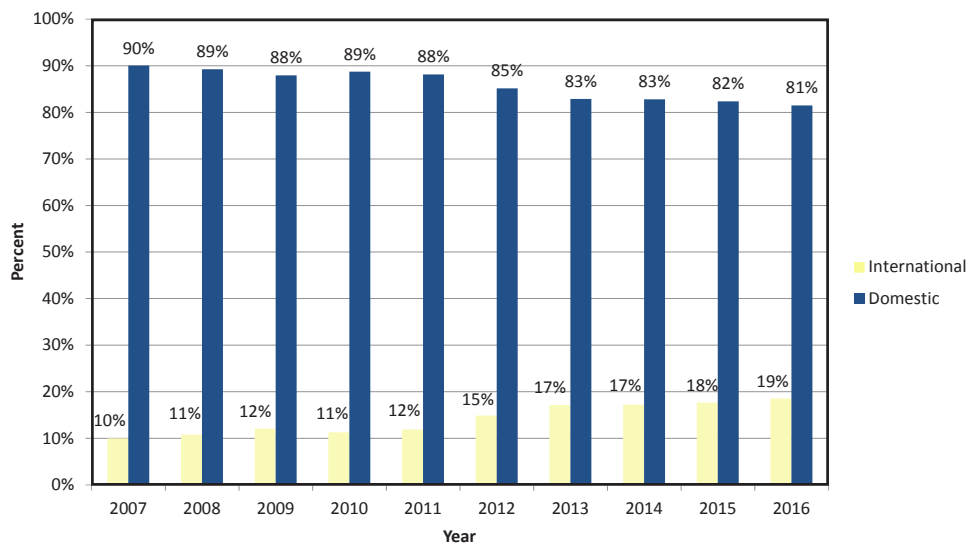
close to 29 percent, and enrolled students from underrepresented populations increased by 25 percent.

Although there was some initial concern about the retention of students in this more diversified incoming class, the data indicate that the first to second year retention rates are comparable among students who submitted test results versus those who did not.<sup>46</sup>

**Figure IV.3. Comparison between Domestic and International Undergraduate Students**



**Figure IV.4. Comparison between Domestic and International Graduate Students**



<sup>45</sup> Those applicants applying to the accelerated Seven-Year B.A./M.D. Program; applicants who are homeschooled or who attend an online high school; applicants who attend secondary schools that provide only narrative evaluations rather than some form of grading scale; and recruited NCAA Division I athletes are required to submit standardized test scores.

<sup>46</sup> Some of the credit for the comparable retention rates is due to the Office of Enrollment Retention which recently put in place summer programs to assist students who had struggled in their first year at GW. The efforts of this office are discussed below in the section on student success.

The university has also made significant strides in enrolling more international students, another goal of *Vision 2021*. As Figures IV.3 and IV.4 indicate, both the undergraduate and graduate international student populations have increased dramatically. The university has made progress toward reaching its goal of 12-15 percent international undergraduate students and 25-30 percent international graduate students.<sup>47</sup> However, the population of international students is not as geographically diversified as hoped.<sup>48</sup> The next goal is the increase in the diversification of international students.

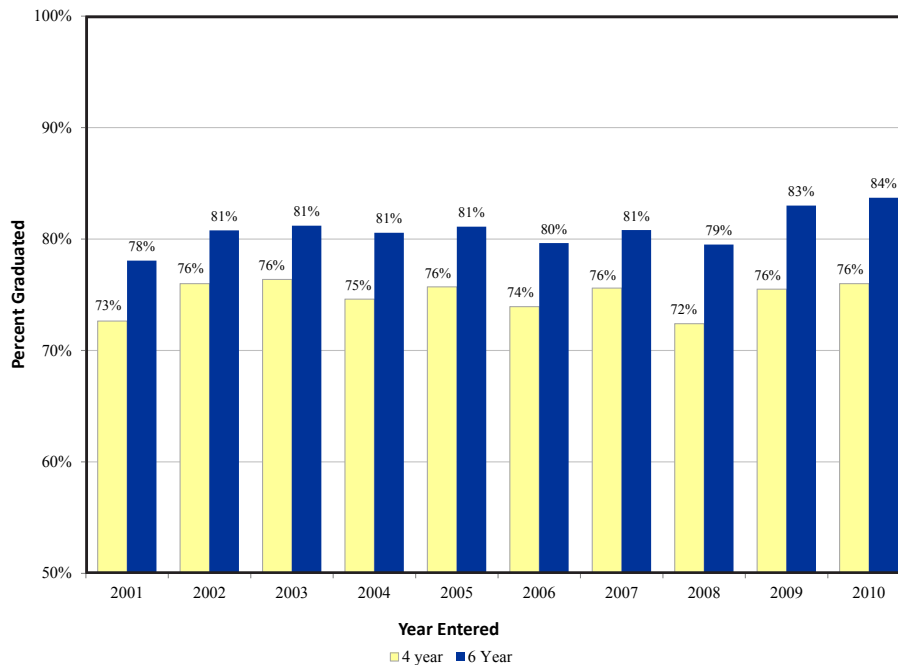
### Student Success (ROA 8, 9, 10)

Obviously, the great strides that GW has made in admitting a talented and diverse student body mean little if the students do not graduate. Consequently, in the last few years, retention has become a priority. While GW retention and graduation rates are higher than most colleges and

universities in the country, the six-year graduation rate falls short of what the university aspires to, based on the quality of GW’s students.<sup>49</sup>

**Undergraduate Success.** To improve its six-year graduation rate, the university established an Office of **Enrollment Retention** (ER) in 2016, hiring an Executive Director and Assistant Director. This office is tasked with developing data-driven strategies to enhance retention and graduation for undergraduate students. ER analyzes admission data, data about students’ academic performance at GW, and survey data, collected at various points in students’ early career at GW. These data are then used to identify which combinations of factors (e.g., connections with peers, faculty, academics, campus resources, involvement in activities on and off campus) contribute to student success, both socially and academically. The data serve two specific purposes. First, they are used to assess programs that have been implemented. Second, they are used to develop risk models to ensure that students who need the help and attention are receiving it.

**Figure IV.5. Four- and Six-Year Graduation Rates**



<sup>47</sup> In 2016, the undergraduate percentage was 10.8 percent and the graduate percentage was 18.5 percent.

<sup>48</sup> In 2016, 41 percent of the international undergraduate population came from China; 55 percent of international graduate students were from China.

<sup>49</sup> The university believes that its graduation rate should be 85 percent. Currently the six-year graduation rate is 83.7 percent.

In the summer of 2016, a pilot program was launched to leverage the collective efforts of the university to improve retention, persistence, and progress through a summer-study program for targeted incoming and matriculated students, identified as either special interest, falling behind, or at-risk. The program was branded as Summer Pathways. The goals of the program were:

- To strengthen GW's institutional response and commitment to student access and success;
- To enhance opportunities for students to persist through graduation through enrollment in summer programs; and
- To engage targeted student groups with the university community through cross-divisional programs and support strategies that integrate the university's collective resources.

Participating students were provided with tuition funding (tied to the student's need level) and a \$100 bookstore voucher. Incoming students completed a seminar focused on college transition and developing leadership skills; continuing students participated in a seminar focused on reinforcing academic skills and improving coping mechanisms.

In the summer of 2017, Summer Pathways was rebranded [Summer Academy](#) and shifted its focus slightly to emphasize academic support for students who experienced academic difficulty with certain courses having a higher-than-average percentage of D's, F's, and withdrawals (e.g., mathematics, economics) or who were not making adequate progress toward degree completion. While the primary goals of Summer Academy remained similar to those of Summer Pathways, support mechanisms proven to aid in student success were also added. In addition, other elements were included to meet the social support needs of students. Specific courses were selected for tuition funding, and the program collaborated with faculty teaching those courses to determine the nature of the specific support needed for the students.

Preliminary results for the program have been encouraging. In the summer sessions of 2017, 83 percent of participants in Summer Academy earned a grade of C or higher in their courses.

**International Student Success.** In response to and in line with one of its strategic goals, the university committed resources to expand the administrative infrastructure of the [International Services Office](#) and the English for Academic Purposes (EAP) program to help international students succeed. Many of these changes were based on international students' responses to questions on the [International Student Barometer](#) (ISB), an online survey first distributed to international students in 2011.<sup>50</sup> In addition, in 2012, the university formed the [Committee for International Student Success](#), which was tasked with "promoting campus-wide understanding of issues that impact the success of GW international students and providing appropriate support services that assist in the successful experience of the international student." Other examples of improved services include an [International Student Ambassador](#) Board to improve the arrival experience for international students, and an employer guide for international students. In addition, the library staff recently compiled a [guide](#) with information and resources for international students.

The EAP program offers courses to develop international students' capacity for university-level academic writing and research. Over the past five years, the number of EAP courses has increased from 27 in summer 2011-spring 2012 to 67 in summer 2016-spring 2017; the number of international students participating in EAP courses during the same time period has more than doubled: from 337 in the 2011-2012 year (summer 2011-spring 2012) to 811 in 2016-2017 (summer 2016-spring 2017). Additional support services for international students who may not be fully proficient in English or need assistance acclimating to an American university were developed in

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<sup>50</sup> The survey asks students about their satisfaction with a range of indicators, including the admissions process; arrival at GW; academic, living, and support experiences; and overall satisfaction with GW. Moreover, the ISB allows GW to compare its data with the responses of international students at colleges and universities from around the world.

collaboration with a number of GW offices, with a particular emphasis on offering EAP courses to admitted international students during the second summer session, helping them acclimate to the campus before fall classes begin.<sup>51</sup>

There is some evidence that the EAP courses have helped international students succeed at GW. A correlation has been found between grades in EAP's required academic writing course (EAP 1015) and the first-year writing course required of all GW undergraduates (UW 1020). Furthermore, data indicate success among graduate students who complete EAP's intensive summer Applied English Studies (AES) program (for pre-matriculated international graduate students whose TOEFL score falls below the normal threshold for graduate admission). In the two semesters following the summer program, the students who had participated in the AES program performed significantly better than international students who had not participated. Former AES students have also maintained relatively high GPAs in their particular programs of study. Although at this point the assessment data is not extensive, the EAP program has plans to create a dashboard in Tableau (an interactive data visualization tool) to better track the success of international students who have completed EAP courses and programs.

## Orientation and Advising

Orientation and advising are addressed in detail in the report on Standard III.

## Support Services for Students

**The Wellness Hub.** In response to a compelling case made by [GW Student Association leaders](#) to co-locate student health services and the counseling center in a more accessible location in the middle of campus, a wellness hub was created in the [Marvin Center](#), the student center. Previously, each service occupied separate leased office spaces

on K Street, three blocks from campus. Their new location, on the entrance level and main floor of the Marvin Center, which replaced GW's campus store, offers significantly expanded square footage and increased accessibility to serve the needs of the student community. The newly named [Colonial Health Center](#) (CHC) provides mental health support, medical services, and health promotion programs to students.<sup>52</sup>

**The CARE Network.** In 2012, the [Division of Student Affairs](#) (DSA) implemented a [CARE Network](#) that allows parents and any member of the GW community to [identify students](#) who may need additional support. The CARE Network then checks in with the student and offers assistance. The university also utilizes [Protocall Services](#), a 24-hour, on-call clinical counseling service designed to supplement in-person clinical services after business hours and on weekends. Based in Portland, Oregon, all clinicians are fully licensed to treat and assess students.

**Disability Support Services (DSS).** [Disability Support Services](#) offers accommodations in accordance with [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#) and the [Americans with Disabilities Act](#). Working collaboratively with students, faculty, and staff, DSS seeks to foster a climate of universal academic excellence, while also promoting GW's broader diversity and inclusion initiatives. DSS is also discussed in the report for Standard III.

**Title IX Office.** GW's Title IX Office is discussed in the report for Standard II.

**Career Services.** *Vision 2021* called for the university to "enhance . . . students' internship experiences to clearly link them to relevant portions of the academic curriculum and utilize the Career Center as a repository for an expanded list of internship opportunities in the Washington, DC community and around the world." Career Services was tasked with helping students develop skills to enhance their particular educational goals. Since 2011, GW

<sup>51</sup> EAP also developed elective courses in oral academic communication and in academic skills.

<sup>52</sup> Although students at the VSTC campus have access to the Colonial Health Center (via the shuttle), the School of Nursing (located on the VSTC campus) is discussing the possibility of making mental health services available to students on site. Because of its large online population, GWSPH employs a third party vendor to provide mental health support for its students.

has more than doubled its Career Services staff; in 2013, it hired an [inaugural assistant provost](#) to lead Career Services and to chair a university-wide Career Services Council; it added career coaches who focus on career assessment, exploration, skill building, and industry expertise; and it hired employer development consultants to establish and/or enhance employer partnerships. Between 2013-2014 and 2015-2016, student and alumni utilization of career services increased by 56 percent. Employer engagement at GW increased by 28 percent over that same time period.<sup>53</sup>

In spring 2016, the office launched a [Career Outcomes Data Visualization](#) tool, which highlights the first destination (six months after graduation) outcomes of GW baccalaureate graduates from 2014 and 2015. Data can be searched by academic school and major and provides graduate school and employment outcomes including name of school/ employer, geographic distribution, and salary. The [Graduate Student Career Series](#) was launched in fall 2016 to increase university-wide access to career programs, and the data outcomes dashboard went live for graduate students in late fall 2017.

## Policies Regarding Transfer Credit

### *(Criterion 2)*

GW policies regarding transfer credit are discussed in the Verification of Compliance report.

## Maintenance and Release of Student Information and Records

### *(Criterion 3)*

The security of student information is a priority at GW. A key component of GW's information management strategy is its [Information Security policy](#). That policy explains how the information in the custody of a given office is to be identified and how it must be secured. The policy highlights the:

- Categorization of information assets (Regulated, Restricted, Public);
- Appropriate data security requirements for information per its categorization; and
- Roles and responsibilities of individuals, schools, divisions, and university administration in the custody and control of this information

The Banner Enterprise Resource Planning System, which stores student records, is backed-up overnight into a static database and a quality control database. The data are stored at both the Foggy Bottom and VSTC campuses.

As a result of the agreement between [GW and the Corcoran College of Art + Design](#), the Office of the Registrar became the custodian of the academic records for all current and former Corcoran College students. In addition to taking possession of the paper records, the electronic records within the PowerCampus system needed to be preserved. Through a lengthy process of data validation and field mapping, the data from the PowerCampus system was migrated into the Banner Student Information System (SIS).

GW adheres to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ([FERPA](#)) regulations regarding the release of student information. Protected information is released only with consent from the student unless the student's parents file appropriate documentation showing that the student was declared a dependent for federal tax purposes, or if a subpoena is submitted to and appropriately vetted by the university's [Office of General Counsel](#). When a student submits a consent form granting records access to other individuals, most often parents, that access is recorded in the Banner records system so that administrative staff, such as advisors, can confirm access exists before discussing confidential academic information. To train staff members on FERPA regulations, the university has provided a self-paced training module, "FERPA for Higher Education." Moving

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<sup>53</sup> Although the Career Services office serves students and alumni of all schools at GW, the GWSB Executive MBA program and GWSB alumni who have been graduated in excess of one year have access to Right Management, a third-party vendor.

forward, the Office of the Registrar will offer in-person training sessions, as well as recorded training modules through Human Resource's new talent management system.

All third-party requests for enrollment and degree verification are referred to the [National Student Clearinghouse](#), which follows FERPA requirements. Any record uploaded with a confidentiality flag requires a signed release from the student before the clearinghouse will verify the request. When the clearinghouse refers a request to GW for additional information, the existence of a confidentiality flag is included with the enrollment or graduation data provided.

## **Extracurricular Activities** *(Criterion 4)*

All extracurricular activities on campus are regulated by the same academic, fiscal, and administrative principles and procedures that govern other GW programs.

### **Athletics**

Athletic and academic excellence are inseparable goals for student-athletes at GW. The university is committed to the academic success and graduation of students participating in its athletic programs. The [Department of Athletics and Recreation](#) supports this commitment with [educational support services](#) in order to maximize the potential for success of every student-athlete. By virtue of its membership with the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), GW is responsible for ensuring complete compliance of all constituencies with all [NCAA rules and regulations](#). Specific guidance for GW athletes is provided by the [Student Athlete Handbook](#). The Handbook, published yearly, lays out GW's expectations for student-athletes, and it also provides valuable information on such issues as NCAA compliance, educational support services, financial aid, and sports medicine.

## **Student Organizations**

Student organizations play an important and vibrant part of student life at GW. With more than 475 registered student organizations that are assembled under an array of causes and interests, student organizations create the most frequently attended and highly anticipated events on campus and offer endless opportunities for involvement and leadership. Approximately 82 percent of all undergraduate students at GW are involved in at least one student organization during their time at GW.<sup>54</sup> Student organizations fall under the purview of the [Center for Student Engagement \(CSE\)](#) of the Division of Student Affairs. Various guides, including the [Student Organization Policies and Guidelines](#), the [Student Organization Handbook](#), and the [Code of Student Conduct](#) are available on the [CSE website](#).

### **Greek Life**

There are 39 active Greek-letter men's and women's organizations on the GW campus. The self-governing, self-supporting bodies of the fraternities and sororities are the [Interfraternity Council](#), the [Multicultural Greek Council](#), and the [Panhellenic Association](#). These groups coordinate events, provide educational programs, establish community-wide regulations, and implement policies for their member organizations. In addition, all recognized social fraternities and sororities are expected to uphold the [policies](#) and regulations of the university.

## **Student Support Services Provided by Third-Party Vendors** *(Criterion 5; ROA 8)*

Third-party vendors are typically used either by one of the GW schools or the Division of Student Affairs.<sup>55</sup> Such vendors include:

[2U](#) is used by the [Milken Institute School of Public Health \(GWSPH\)](#) for admissions, recruitment, and classroom support for GWSPH's online programs.

<sup>54</sup> These data come from the 2016 undergraduate student engagement survey.

<sup>55</sup> Although the university does have a handful of large corporate online partners (most notably 2U and Wiley) that are paid based upon enrollment, the university does not hire recruiting agents. Its partners have contractual obligations that require they be in compliance with federal regulations that prohibit commissions based upon enrollment.



Oversight is rigorous. GWSPH personnel have weekly meetings with 2U's key people; 2U collects student satisfaction data every term and presents them to the appropriate GWSPH administrator. At that point any changes requested by GWSPH are made by 2U. Furthermore, a 2U vice president meets every other month with the dean of GWSPH to discuss any relevant issues, problems, and successes. At that time, the dean can also propose changes.

#### **Blackboard Technology Help Desk Services**

provides after hours support for students taking courses online. GW began using Blackboard's help desk in the spring of 2017. There are plans to begin assessing Blackboard's Help Desk Services in early 2018.

**Pearson-Embanet:** The College of Professional Studies (CPS) has had a contract with Pearson-Embanet for over a decade. Pearson-Embanet provides online platforms for CPS courses and helps with the recruiting of students. The company also provides 24/7 technical support. In the courses taught on the Pearson-Embanet platforms, CPS provides the faculty and the intellectual content. The college's student support staff works closely with the student services personnel at Pearson-Embanet, provides administrative ongoing student services, and implements student evaluations.

**Everspring:** CPS has the same arrangement with Everspring as it has with Pearson-Embanet. In addition, both companies do their own assessments and provide the information to CPS administrators.

#### **Perspectives Behavioral Health Management**

provides GWSPH students with mental health services. Since GWSPH just began using Perspectives, no assessment has yet been undertaken.

**Protocall Services** is used by the Division of Student Affairs to provide after-hours and weekend mental health support. Protocall has been under contract with GW since 2006 and has recently been renewed. Assessment occurs on an ongoing basis as follows: when Protocall receives a call from a GW student, clinicians assess for immediate safety and then liaise with GW clinical staff during the next business

day or by phone. The efficiency of the service is assessed daily by DSA staff members who debrief with clinicians following any calls that are received during off-hours.

**Right Management** is used by students in the **School of Business (GWSB) World Executive MBA Program**. It is also available to the alumni of GWSB who have been graduated in excess of one year. Right Management provides a full suite of services including group and one-on-one support; an online platform for research, webinars and resources; and networking events. GWSB has utilized Right Management for one year. The partnership with the MBA program will be assessed yearly based on student feedback. The alumni assessment is ongoing.

**Wiley Educational Services:** The **Graduate School of Education and Human Development (GSEHD)** began using Wiley Educational Services in 2015. Wiley does marketing for most of GSEHD online programs and also for admissions to some of its programs. The company was selected as part of a competitive process among multiple vendors. Wiley provides frequent updates on the status of its marketing efforts. In addition, the **GSEHD Office of Student Life** has regular meetings with representatives from Wiley, and GSEHD academic program directors receive updates and meet with representatives from Wiley.

The Health Sciences Division of the **School of Medicine and Health Sciences (SMHS)** began using Wiley's marketing and admission services in the fall of 2014. SMHS reviews and approves all student communication plans and scripts between vendor and students. The school also reviews and approves all marketing material. There is an annual programmatic review, which includes discussion of and data related to items such as student intake, quality of students, retention rates for students recruited by vendor, and success of marketing efforts. Each semester, there is an audit of admission records. SMHS also reviews information from the **admitted graduate student questionnaire** in order to obtain student feedback on their experience with Wiley.

## Assessment

### (Criterion 6; ROA 8, 10)

As demonstrated throughout this document, GW has made assessment a key component of institutional and programmatic review to ensure that programs are effectively supporting students and the mission of the institution. For example, the Division of Student Affairs (DSA) routinely collects usage, satisfaction, and learning data from students and other stakeholders about their interactions with the division's programs and services. The division's assessment committee reviews, discusses, and critiques the results to ensure the quality of student interaction with DSA. In the last two years, DSA has completed program reviews (see Document Roadmap) on the offices responsible for student organizations, Greek life, Colonial Inauguration, and health promotion and prevention services.

Assessment data also comes from surveys completed at key times during students' tenure at the university (see the Document Roadmap for copies and findings for many of them). These data are shared either through summary reports or through interactive dashboards. The data from these surveys have been used to enhance the experience of GW students. A number of examples follow:

- The Office of Enrollment Management and Retention created and administered a connections survey to all first-year students in spring 2016, and a revised iteration was administered to first-year students in spring 2017. Among other things, the surveys showed that students who felt connected to their peers in the classroom appeared to fare better academically. The office has since been meeting with groups of faculty in order to encourage the latter to provide opportunities in the classroom for students to actively engage with one another. Additionally, survey responses to questions about student employment led the office to form a team to further research the impact of work-study and on-campus work on students' academic performance.
- The university's graduating senior survey has been used by the [Center for Undergraduate Fellowships and Research](#) to determine the

scope of undergraduate research activity on campus. It found that about 20 percent of GW undergraduates engaged in some significant project (summer research, senior thesis, etc.). It also learned that between 86 to 93 percent of the students were satisfied or very satisfied with learning content, acquired technical skills, and developed relationships with faculty. The center is now planning to try to identify relative satisfaction within different majors, and in so doing, gain insight into the practices that effectively engage students as individuals and as cohorts. This will enable departments and programs with successful academic majors to share their best practices with others.

- In 2015 and 2016, the Title IX office and the [Office for Diversity, Equity, and Community Engagement](#) (ODECE) completed two campus climate surveys. One focused on diversity and inclusion and the other on unwanted sexual behavior. Results of the former (2015) revealed that more attention could be given to diversity and inclusion in the classroom. Consequently, ODECE is developing resources and training programs to enable faculty to create more inclusive classrooms. Data gathered from the unwanted sexual behavior survey motivated ODECE to improve [Haven](#), a website featuring resources aimed at heightening awareness and aiding victims of abuse and harassment. ODECE also plans to increase its trainings on abuse and sexual assault in the GW community (see recommendations for Standard II).<sup>56</sup>
- The personnel at Colonial Central (a "one-stop shop" where students can register for classes, pay their tuition bills, and obtain information about financial aid) noticed that students were often making uninformed decisions about significant financial matters such as the amount of student loan debt they were taking on. As a result, Colonial Central partnered with the Office of Survey Research and Analysis and the Global Financial Literacy Excellence Center (an institute in GWSB) to survey students about their financial knowledge and situation. The survey results indicated that many students lacked awareness about many important financial matters. Consequently, a working group was formed to strategize about the best ways to address the problem. In the meantime, Colonial Central now

<sup>56</sup> The campus climate surveys are also discussed in the report for Standard II.

has a person on staff who is certified to meet with students to provide financial education.

- Career Services uses data from the [graduating senior survey](#) to learn which seniors are still seeking employment at the time of graduation. The survey asks students still looking for jobs if they desire individual help from Career Services. Those who choose that option are invited to schedule an appoint with one of Career Services career coaches. The office also sends students targeted information about resources.
- Longitudinal analyses of graduating senior survey data coupled with discourse among students, faculty, and administrative staff over many years indicate that, although GW undergraduates are satisfied with their academic experience, they are less satisfied with their overall undergraduate experience. Students have articulated concerns that span operational areas and include things such as the sufficiency of the meal plan, affordability, the quality of some of the housing options, and the course registration process that occurs during orientation. Consequently, a task force has been established to examine the undergraduate student experience at GW. Furthermore, GW's new president has indicated that improving the undergraduate experience is one of his primary goals in the coming years.

## Recommendations

1. Although the university has made great strides in its recruitment of international students, it should now turn its efforts to diversifying the nationalities of international students.
2. The university should continue its efforts to improve the overall undergraduate experience for its students.

# Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment



*Assessment of student learning and achievement demonstrates that the institution's students have accomplished educational goals consistent with their program of study, degree level, the institution's mission, and appropriate expectations for institutions of higher education.*

GW's mission and its strategic plan emphasize the importance of educating students. GW's mission statement (originally written in 1997) focuses on teaching: "By fostering excellence in teaching, the university offers outstanding learning experiences for...[its] students." The strategic plan, *Vision 2021*, reflects the more recent outcomes-based approach, which focuses less on teaching and more on student learning.

Our undergraduate students acquire the skills and knowledge that are the hallmark of a strong liberal arts education. These critical thinking and analytical skills enable them to address the challenges and seize the opportunities they will encounter throughout their lifetimes. At the same time, our professional programs enable all our students to acquire the grounding they need to be effective and innovative leaders in their chosen fields.

While good teaching and student learning go hand-in-hand, GW cannot simply assume that students are learning what is being taught. Rather, it is through the assessment of student learning and achievement that GW is able to demonstrate that its students have accomplished educational goals consistent with their program of study, their degree level, and the institution's mission, and have met the appropriate expectations of institutions of higher learning. Since the last self-study, the university has defined and assembled a range of evidence to demonstrate that students are receiving a quality education.

The assessment of student learning has coalesced into an organized and sustainable effort across all schools. Academic programs are doing program

and/or general education assessments annually, and they are undergoing academic program reviews every five years or undertaking systematic evaluations of their curriculum as part of their professional accreditation self-studies or some combination of these assessments. These reviews provide an opportunity for faculty to reflect upon and improve their programs and increase student learning. The most important component of many of these reviews is the action plan put into place demonstrating how the evidence is being used to strengthen the quality of student learning.

While these processes have been in place for many years, a number of factors implemented in the last five years have contributed to the sustainability of assessment efforts across schools:

- A new online catalog management system, implemented in 2013, requires that all new and revised course and program proposals clearly articulate learning goals and outcomes, without which the course or program will not be approved;
- Streamlined assessment processes and improved outreach to and training for faculty have created a more organized assessment process and simplified venue to store assessment information;
- Creation of dashboards for enrollment, student satisfaction survey data, and post-degree plans in Tableau, an interactive data visualization tool, which can be used as indirect measures of assessment.
- A new course feedback system which makes course-specific survey data available to faculty, program chairs, and deans for use in their assessments; and
- Education and involvement of doctoral students in the assessment process.

In addition, as part of its review, the working group that drafted this report, conducted a comprehensive and systematic audit of program assessments for all schools and of general education (G-PAC)<sup>57</sup> courses to ascertain how each school is currently assessing

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<sup>57</sup> The fundamental elements of G-PAC or General education are Perspective, Analysis, and Communication.

student learning and how it is using the evidence to improve student learning.<sup>58</sup>

## **Institutional and Educational Goals**

*(Criterion 1; ROA 8, 9, 10)*

In the last five years, several factors contributed to the university's focus on assessment of student learning. These included the 2015 revision of the [Faculty Handbook](#). This revision reinforced the importance of including learning outcomes on the syllabi, stating that all syllabi should incorporate "learning objectives that state descriptions of behaviors or skills that students will be able to demonstrate at the end of the class or unit" (p. 24, 2.7.3.4). Furthermore the conversion of the course and program approval process from a paper-based procedure to an online catalog management system, [CourseLeaf](#) (2013), provided the opportunity to revise the approval processes for new courses and programs. This revision ensured that learning outcomes would be stored digitally and be easily accessible to faculty, chairs, and deans.

New general education [course proposals](#) must contain not just learning outcomes but also a general education assessment plan, including assignments and rubrics to be used in assessing the course's effectiveness. [New program proposals](#) must enumerate program goals, as mentioned above, and they must include a [curriculum map](#), demonstrating how courses align with program goals to create a coherent and meaningful curriculum.<sup>59</sup>

While every college or school has its own review process, each also has an active curriculum committee (or equivalent) that encourages faculty involvement in the determination of educational goals. The review process helps ensure that all

program goals and outcomes meet the standards of the department, school, and university; foster an environment of intellectual curiosity, creativity, and the creation of knowledge; and prepare students for their careers. The school-based review committees also ensure that program goals and outcomes in the professional schools correspond to the standards of their respective accrediting agencies.

## **Organized and Systematic Assessments**

*(Criterion 2; ROA 8, 9, 10)*

All schools now have an associate dean who is responsible for overseeing assessment efforts in his or her respective school. In recent years, four schools have created positions or offices overseeing assessments. For example, in 2012, the Graduate School of Education and Human Development (GSEHD) established the Office of Professional Preparation and Accreditation, centralizing staff and data systems involved in field placement, licensure, accreditation reporting, and assessment. This office succeeded in promoting increased staff and faculty collaboration to meet new professional accountability requirements. In 2015, the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences (CCAS) hired an associate dean for academic assessment and support to work full-time on these issues. The Elliott School of International Affairs (ESIA) also created a new position for this function, a coordinator of curriculum development and assessment. Finally, the Health Sciences programs in the School of Medicine and Health Sciences (SMHS) created an associate dean for academic planning and assessment. The creation of these positions has facilitated the organization and sustainable assessment efforts in the respective schools.

GW schools conduct organized and systematic assessments of educational effectiveness primarily through four processes:

<sup>58</sup> The Division of Student Affairs complements the assessment activities of the university's schools and departments by systematically collecting, analyzing, and utilizing data to evaluate and enhance co-curricular programs and services. (More information about its assessment activities are in the report for Standard IV).

<sup>59</sup> The associate provost for academic planning and assessment reviews all new and revised program and course proposals. Curriculum maps and learning outcomes are carefully examined before final approval is granted. All information is then stored in CourseLeaf and is accessible through CourseLeaf's reporting functions. For a discussion of the course and program approval processes, see the general education section in the report for Standard III.

- Annual program assessment;
- General education assessment;
- Accreditation processes in the professional schools;<sup>60</sup> and/or
- Periodic academic program review.<sup>61</sup>

### Annual Program Assessment

While schools vary in their expectations for and frequency of program assessment, all programs have goals and are assessing them regularly. For example, CCAS, ESIA, and the Health Sciences programs in SMHS assess their goals on an annual basis. CCAS and ESIA departments and programs also complete a self-study for their academic program review every five years. GSEHD and the Milken Institute School of Public Health (GWSPH) require program assessments on a five-year cycle for non-accredited programs, and the College of Professional Studies (CPS) requires all programs

to complete a self-study every five years. The remaining schools (as well as some programs in schools mentioned above)—School of Engineering and Applied Science (SEAS), School of Business (GWSB), the School of Medicine and Health Sciences (SMHS), Law School (GWLaw), GSEHD, School of Nursing (SoN), and GWSPH—use the self-studies created for their respective accrediting agencies<sup>62</sup> as a means for both evaluating their program goals and assessing student learning, as will be discussed below.

GW schools also vary in how assessments are conducted (see Table V.1). For example, in CCAS, CPS, and ESIA, chairs or academic program directors are responsible for articulating learning outcomes and then implementing and interpreting the assessments. In GSEHD, the Accreditation Office monitors each academic program and collects assessment data. Each undergraduate department

**Table V.1. Types of Assessment by School**

College or School	Annual Program Assessment	General Education Assessment	Academic Program Review (Five Years)	Professional Accreditation
CCAS	X	X	X	For some programs
SMHS (Health Sciences)	X			For some programs
SMHS (Medicine)				X
SEAS			X	X
GSEHD	X		X	For some programs
ESIA	X		X	
GWSB			X	X
GWLaw				X
CPS	X		X	
GWSPH			X	X
SoN	X			X

<sup>60</sup> The *University Bulletin* includes a list of all [accreditations](#) by school and by program.

<sup>61</sup> More information about the academic program review process can be found in the report for Standard VII.

<sup>62</sup> Self-studies for professional accreditation are available upon request.

in SEAS conducts a thorough review of its respective undergraduate programs every six years as part of its ABET accreditation; designated curriculum committees monitor these programs in-between accreditation cycles.

Since 2011, GW has used [TaskStream](#), an assessment management system, as a repository for its annual program and general education assessments, and for academic program reviews. TaskStream's reporting functions enable the university to track when reports are completed and identify programs that need prompting to complete their assessments. In addition, GSEHD uses TaskStream's learning achievement tools to manage student-level data for its educator preparation accreditation agency, Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), and the specialty program associations that evaluate whether a program has met CAEP's Standard I.

## General Education Assessment

Virtually all of the general education courses for the undergraduate population at GW are taught by Columbian College faculty. Therefore, the university directs its assessment of student learning in general education toward CCAS. When the college introduced a new general education curriculum ([G-PAC](#)) in 2012, it was determined that course-by-course assessment was the best way to evaluate student learning in the general education curriculum. Any course proposed as a G-PAC course was therefore required to have an assessment strategy. Although this was a good beginning, it became clear within a few years that more standardization was needed in the course-by-course G-PAC assessment. Consequently, there was an effort (which is ongoing) to standardize both [learning outcomes](#) and [rubrics](#) in G-PAC courses.

As mentioned above, in 2016, CCAS hired an associate dean whose primary responsibility was overseeing the assessment of student learning. In her first year in the position, the associate dean worked to improve the assessment of all program offerings and particularly general education

courses. She developed numerous information packages and asked departments to develop five-year assessment plans for each G-PAC course and degree program, detailing which learning outcomes would be assessed each year.

In order to address faculty displeasure at having to do assessment, the associate dean asked department chairs and program directors to complete a survey to better understand their experiences reporting assessments and using TaskStream. Based on the feedback, the annual assessment reporting form in TaskStream was revised. This involved the creation of a separate general education template in TaskStream and the revision of the assessment templates used to collect information about G-PAC courses and program assessments. Department-based training on the use of TaskStream was also initiated. In addition, the associate dean began a series of assessment visits to departments and convened small groups with chairs and program directors to address areas of confusion. Finally, each department or program in CCAS was asked to identify at least one assessment/TaskStream coordinator, who would be responsible for inputting information into TaskStream.

## Accreditation Processes in the Professional Schools

For many of the professional schools, the accreditation process prompted the explicit articulation of educational goals and learning outcomes. For example, as part of its accreditation for the American Bar Association (2016), GWLaw identified program-specific learning outcomes and mandated that syllabi must include course-specific learning outcomes. For its 2013 Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accreditation review, GWSB developed learning goals and outcomes for each of its academic programs. Currently, GWSB is considering revising its learning goals and outcomes for its fall 2018 accreditation review. Learning outcomes for programs in GWSPH have been informed by professional competencies expected in the public health field. Through a collaborative and inclusive



process, GWSPH program directors and faculty have carefully reviewed the curricula and created curriculum maps with competencies and detailed learning objectives for all degree programs.

In SEAS recent ABET accreditations (2016),<sup>63</sup> the external reviewers identified a required action in response to an observed concern; the bachelor's program cited has been responsive to these requests (this will be discussed further below). While SEAS graduate programs are not accredited by ABET, the school and individual departments monitor educational effectiveness carefully through the graduate curriculum committee that meets and reflects on the state of the curricula as needed. As a result, several departments have recently undergone updating and restructuring of master's and doctoral degree programs. In addition, departments track criteria such as teaching effectiveness and student employment success through course evaluations and graduation surveys.

## Academic Program Review

The [Academic Program Review](#) (APR) process enhances the annual assessments of educational effectiveness by encouraging academic programs and departments to integrate the achievement of different educational goals and to develop and evaluate action plans over a five-year time period. The APR process is discussed in more detail in the report for Standard VII.

## Course Evaluations and Student Surveys

The new [course feedback system](#), SmartEvals, instituted in 2014-2015, makes it easier to customize questions and analyze data, resulting in an increase in the number of courses using the system. New [questions](#), recommended by the Faculty Advisory Board of the University Teaching and Learning Center, were added to the form and include the degree to which the course covers its stated objectives; the type of teaching methods and approaches that contribute significantly to student learning; and the type of cognitive efforts

(i.e., memorizing facts, synthesizing ideas, applying theories) students are asked to demonstrate in the course. Findings from these data are used as indirect measures in many general education assessments.

Annual graduation surveys, required for students participating in graduation and hooding ceremonies, collect information about students' academic experiences (including an assessment of how their skills and abilities improved), their satisfaction with student services, and their future plans. In past years, the program-specific information was shared with each department. Recently, five years of data from the graduating senior survey and the graduate student graduation survey were made available in Tableau, a data visualization tool. This enabled faculty and staff to visualize and analyze the graduation data, create their own visuals, and share their findings in a relatively short period of time. These data are used and discussed in their respective APRs. Similarly, as mentioned in the Standard IV report, GW launched the [First Destination](#) visualization, which provides post-baccalaureate career and graduate school information about students six months after their graduation. The visuals provide students, alumni, parents, and employers information that can be organized by major, employment sector, name and place of employer, salary, and graduate program. Similarly, a new visualization has been created that provides information about [graduate students' activities](#) six months after their graduation. Copies of some of the visualization pages can be found in the Document Roadmap.

The most recent visualization in Tableau provides semester-by-semester grade distributions, which provides information by department, course, and instructor over a five-year period. Deans and department chairs use these data to analyze grading trends and summarize the information in annual reports and academic program reviews. For example, the associate dean in CCAS had conversations with department chairs about their

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<sup>63</sup> The BS programs in civil, mechanical, electrical, and computer engineering are accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission of ABET. The BS computer science curriculum is accredited by the Computing Accreditation Commission of ABET.

respective grade distributions. Department chairs also take grade distribution data into account when writing faculty annual reports.

## **Use of Assessment Results for Improvement**

*(Criterion 3; ROA 8, 9, 10)*

The various assessment modalities (annual assessments, accreditation processes, and academic program reviews) have been utilized to improve existing academic programs and courses. A few noteworthy examples of how assessments have led to action plans that enhance educational effectiveness are discussed below. Examples from a variety of GW schools clearly demonstrate that assessment has become a priority throughout the university.

### **Principles of Micro and Macro Economics (CCAS)**

The multi-year assessments of introductory micro and macro economic principles courses have led to major changes in the teaching of introductory economics. The two principles courses (ECON 1011 and 1012) are required for all students in ESIA, GWSB, those majoring in economics, organizational science, and for several majors in SEAS and GWSPH. Close to 1,500 students register for ECON 1011 in the fall semester; another 300 take it in the spring. Of those students who score below 12 points (out of 20) on the economics placement exam and do not drop the course by the end of the add/drop period, over half will earn a grade of D, F, or W. (See "Economics Principles Committee Report Academic Year 2016-2017," in the Document Roadmap for more information.)

In academic year 2013-2014, the Economics Department developed a new course, ECON 1001: Principles of Mathematics for Economics, to serve as a safety net for students who did not meet the cutoff in the economics proficiency test. The course provides intensive training and review in pre-algebra and Algebra I. In fall 2016, the Economics Department offered the course to all students who did not pass their math placement test in ECON 1011.

The effectiveness of ECON 1001 was assessed in the spring 2017 ECON 1011 course, which included students who had passed the placement exam (and had not taken ECON 1001) and those who took ECON 1001 in the fall semester (because they had failed the placement exam). The final exam scores of both groups were compared: The final exam average test score for students who took ECON 1001 was 64 percent compared to 74 percent for those who had not taken ECON 1001 (i.e., those who had passed the placement examination). Students who had passed ECON 1001 with a grade of B or better had an average final exam score of 72 percent; those who passed ECON 1001 with a final grade of C or better had an average final exam score of 67 percent. Comparatively, in 2015, only 50 percent of the ECON 1011 students who had failed the placement test earned a final exam grade of 60 percent or above; only 27 percent earned a final grade of 70 percent or above. (See "Presentation to Economics Department," in the Document Roadmap for more information).

### **STEM Placement and Tutoring**

Along with the two principles courses, many students have difficulty in the four introductory calculus courses, traditional entry points for many STEM majors. The Economics Department, SEAS, and the Math Department have seen improved math proficiency when students use ALEKS, a web-based artificially intelligent assessment and learning system, as a mathematics learning platform. They recommended that ALEKS be used for placement and tutoring for all students enrolling in introductory calculus and economics courses starting in the fall 2017 semester. Those not earning the required score were given provisional registration and free access to ALEKS' online tutoring platform over the summer to refresh and increase their knowledge of mathematical principles. These students were tested a second time, at the beginning of the fall semester.

### **The Department of Fine Arts and Art History (CCAS)**

The Department of Fine Arts and Art History responded to weaknesses in the quality of work

that their students produced for their senior exhibitions by requiring a second-year seminar to build in practice and experience in exhibiting work. The rationale for the requirement was that such weaknesses are difficult to address over one semester; repetition, reevaluation, and multiple iterations of student presentations are requisite for high-quality exhibitions. By bringing these components into the curriculum earlier, students are able to experiment with new types of work.

### **American Studies (CCAS)**

In their senior capstone course, students majoring in American Studies are expected to write a thesis demonstrating their ability to “conduct and create original research on American culture.” Students present their papers at the annual department conference dedicated to student research.<sup>64</sup> While the instructor of the capstone course was satisfied that students were able to conduct original research using primary sources and other untapped materials, the instructor also thought that students needed more assistance articulating the originality of their projects in relation to the existing scholarly literature. In other words, they struggled with placing their own work in the context of a broader scholarly debate. As a result, the department is currently considering expanding the course over two semesters; the first semester would be dedicated to historiography, research methods, and the development of a research prospectus; and the second semester would be focused on research and writing.

### **School of Nursing (SoN)**

In its 2013 review, SoN found that a significant number of students struggled with the math skills needed to do medication calculations. This problem became apparent in high stakes testing for critical competencies. As a result, the lab director developed a progressive math program in 2014, and medication calculation education was revised to include earlier identification and remediation using a dedicated math tutor. The results indicate

a significant increase in students’ success in their mastery of medical mathematics.

### **Educational Technology Leadership (GSEHD)**

The assessment of a summer course taught in the master’s program in Educational Technology Leadership indicated that, for the most part, students were meeting the learning outcomes for the program. A deeper analysis, however, demonstrated the need to communicate to students the time commitment needed to do well in the course as well as the support available to improve their research and writing skills. The action plan included the recommendation that faculty advise students to take only one course during the summer if they are working full-time, ensure that students schedule sufficient time during the summer term to complete assignments and readings, and remind students to communicate with their professors if or when they experience any challenges or changes in their schedules that impact their ability to complete assignments.

### **Asian Studies (ESIA)**

The M.A. Asian Studies program in ESIA requires students to complete a capstone project that demonstrates their ability to research and analyze a complex issue related to Asian politics, society, and culture, a skill set they will need as international affairs professionals. The rubric used to evaluate their project consists of nine dimensions, with weights for each dimension. The assessment of student performance is based on an evaluation of the grades students received for their projects and a discussion of the rubric used to grade the assignment. The average grade for the capstone project was 3.71 (out of 4), indicating that students were performing well. In its discussion of the rubric, faculty noted that research skills count for only five percent of the total score, and that the evaluation of research skills is based primarily on the number of citations in the paper. Thus, they determined that the rubric was not an adequate measure of

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<sup>64</sup> The faculty as a whole were very satisfied with students’ ability to make an argument that was supported with qualitative and quantitative evidence gathered from archives and the field.

students' ability to use the qualitative or quantitative methods learned in the capstone course. Going forward, the faculty plan to revise the rubric to give research more weight and to include a dimension that measures students ability to apply quantitative or qualitative research skills in their analysis of a complex issue.

### **Paralegal Studies (CPS)**

CPS used assessment results to make improvements in its Paralegal Studies program. As part of an internal assessment grant, the faculty in the master's program convened a full-day workshop to review the program's curriculum and to conduct research about the local job market for those completing their program. They learned that the top things employers sought in new hires were the ability to communicate in writing and orally, work in a team, and manage multiple projects simultaneously. Pursuant to these findings significant changes were made in the program: Writing assignments were added to each course; an oral presentation requirement was added to the independent research course; and group projects with multiple simultaneous deadlines were added to the curriculum.

### **MBA (GWSB)**

One of the MBA program's assurance of learning (AoL) goals is that students should possess strong communication skills. Since its last AACSB review in 2013, a few shortcomings in the assessment of this AoL emerged. For example, oral communication was being assessed only at the start of the program, which did not demonstrate how (or if) communication skills were enhanced by the MBA program. Going forward, GWSB will assess oral presentation skills at the start of the program, and again during the presentation of the capstone projects, enabling the program to measure changes in this skill. In addition, GWSB has incorporated a module on presentation skills (delivered by an outside expert) in the pre-program institute taken by full-time MBA students.

### **Systems Engineering (SEAS)**

In its evaluation of the new Systems Engineering program (BS), the Engineering Accreditation Commission of ABET noted that the professional component of the curriculum did not meet the requirement of including one-and-one-half years of engineering sciences and engineering design courses appropriate to the student's field of study. In response to this concern, the Engineering Management and Systems Engineering (EMSE) Department developed new courses and tightened course sequence requirements to ensure that all students would graduate having achieved sufficient knowledge in all engineering topics, regardless of their concentration choices. In response to this corrective measure, ABET granted the program six years of accreditation, which is the maximum number of years a program can be accredited without review.

### **Periodic Assessment of the Effectiveness of Assessment Processes**

#### ***(Criterion 5; ROA 8, 10)***

Starting in fall 2016, a comprehensive and systematic audit of the effectiveness of student learning assessment was undertaken by the committee drafting this report. It addressed program assessment in all schools as well as the assessment of general education courses. The audit had three purposes: (1) to determine the frequency with which programs and G-PAC course instructors were assessing student learning; (2) to evaluate the quality of the assessment; and (3) to provide both the schools and their faculty with suggestions to improve their assessments. Feedback rubrics for [G-PAC](#) and for [program assessments](#), respectively, were developed that encompassed the following criteria:

- Clarity of learning goals and outcomes;
- Articulation of an assessment plan, including at least one direct measure for each outcome;

- Comprehensiveness of information/data collected and interpretation of findings; and
- Development and implementation of an action plan.

A summary of the audit for program assessment and G-PAC course assessment follows.

All schools are engaged in reviews that provide opportunities for reflection on student learning and use these reviews to reflect on curricula and improve student learning. A summary of these assessments indicated that most faculty were adept at articulating program goals, creating appropriate measures, and summarizing their findings; however, the interpretation of their findings and creation of action plans have not been as robust as the earlier components of their assessments. These findings suggest the need for targeted training about the interpretation of findings and the creation and implementation of action plans.

These findings have been shared with the appropriate deans, department chairs, and faculty. Small and more tailored workshops on how to use assessment findings to improve learning are being offered during the 2017-2018 academic year.

A common criticism of the annual program assessment requirement has been that feedback on these reports has been intermittent, resulting in faculty perception that the reports merely function to meet accreditation requirements but have little or no relevance to their teaching. While the APR includes a section to summarize and analyze five years of annual assessment reports, faculty prefer to receive feedback more frequently.<sup>65</sup>

While this evaluation of the effectiveness of program and G-PAC assessment was limited to program submissions in academic year 2016-2017 and G-PAC submissions completed for academic years 2015-2016 and 2016-2017, it became apparent that a long-term, sustainable process was needed. After some thought and discussion,

<sup>65</sup> As noted above, a number of schools have recently created assessment positions so that assistance and feedback can be provided more routinely.

<sup>66</sup> The faculty member was the economics professor who designed ECON 1001.

the Office of Academic Planning and Assessment designed a pilot program that ran in summer 2017 that, if successful, would meet that need. The pilot program offered training grants to doctoral students interested in learning more about assessment. It also hired a faculty member to help plan the summer program and serve as the group's faculty mentor.<sup>66</sup> In addition to serving the needs of the university, the program was designed to provide select GW doctoral students with the skills needed to:

- Undertake course and program assessment;
- Evaluate assessment measures to make sure they align with course or program objectives;
- Employ rubrics to evaluate the assessment process;
- Obtain insight about effective ways to analyze, report, and use assessment data to improve student learning; and
- Provide assistance to the graduate students' home departments to improve future assessment efforts.

During the six-week program, four doctoral students met with faculty members from a number of different departments (including Fine Arts and Art History, Chemistry, Mathematics, Physics, Biology, Economics, and Religion). These meetings were intended to help the graduate students better understand faculty concerns both with the assessment process and with TaskStream. As a result of these discussions and their analyses of the assessments, the graduate students suggested revisions for the general education curriculum (G-PAC) and program assessment templates and feedback rubrics to make them more user-friendly for faculty. They also modified some of the templates in TaskStream to simplify the input of assessment information. A summary of their findings can be found in the Document Roadmap. Overall, the pilot program was very successful.

## Recommendations

1. GW should build on the progress made during the last 10 years in the assessment of educational effectiveness by:
  - a. Further institutionalizing protocols and procedures;
  - b. Continually offering training for faculty and staff involved in assessment;
  - c. Providing more timely feedback on assessments; and
  - d. Focusing more on the use of assessment data to improve student learning.
2. An annual award for assessment excellence should be created.
3. The university should continue and further develop the assessment program that was piloted in summer 2017 by training a new group of doctoral students to provide assistance in evaluating program and G-PAC assessments, thus educating future educators on doing effective assessments.

## Standard VI: Planning Resources and Institutional Improvement



*The institution's planning processes, resources, and structures are aligned with each other and are sufficient to fulfill its mission and goals, to continuously assess and improve its programs and services, and to respond effectively to opportunities and challenges.*

The George Washington University educates approximately 11,000 undergraduates and 16,000 graduate students and conducts research in the medical and natural sciences, social sciences, the humanities, and professional fields including law, medicine, engineering, and business. All of these activities are supported by an annual operating budget of more than \$1 billion and an endowment of more than \$1.7 billion. While university finances are strong, as evidenced by its high credit rating, the university depends mainly on undergraduate and graduate tuition for revenue.

This report focuses on the university's institutional compliance in the following areas:

- Financial resources and planning;
- Human resources;
- Information technology and physical plant resources; and
- Research.

These areas of focus were chosen because they are critical to the enhancement of GW's long-term sustainability and self-reliance in support of its core mission of academic excellence in teaching and research.

## **Financial Resources and Planning** *(Criteria 1, 8; ROA 10, 11)*

### **Planning Environment and Budget Model**

Since its last reaccreditation in 2008, the university has made significant efforts to improve its financial strength. It launched and successfully completed a \$1 billion capital campaign (a year early); it made significant investments in both its physical

and administrative infrastructure; and it improved both the efficacy and transparency of its budget and planning processes. Since the budget is the primary instrument that converts strategic planning into resource allocation decisions, the long-term financial health of the institution is key to achieving the goals of the strategic plan. *Vision 2021* explicitly called for the adoption of a new budget model that would both ensure this and accomplish the objectives of the plan. More specifically, the new budget model was intended to return more money to the schools. This would enable them to pursue their own individual goals that align with the strategic plan. For example, the Elliott School of International Affairs was able to create a multi-disciplinary [Institute for African Studies](#), which provides a hub for students and the more than 50 faculty with expertise or engagement in Africa to research, debate, and study African issues.

Given the size of its endowment relative to its employee and student headcount, GW is and will remain a tuition-dependent institution. As such, it has two significant financial constraints: (1) the distribution of income within the United States has put tremendous pressure on GW's capacity to raise the net price of attendance; and (2) the District of Columbia [Board of Zoning Adjustment](#) (BZA) has imposed an enrollment cap for both its Foggy Bottom and Mount Vernon Campuses.<sup>67</sup> These two factors have limited the possibility of increased revenue from tuition and made it imperative to put in place a resource allocation system that would enable the university to use all of its available resources strategically. Thus, GW recently implemented a new budget model (fiscal year 2016) that allows for improved budget planning, transparency, and predictability by:

- Centralizing decisions about undergraduate tuition allocation in recognition that this is a collective university responsibility;
- Providing efficient central administrative support for shared services;

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<sup>67</sup> Recently, Foggy Bottom enrollments have hovered around 99 percent of the cap. See the report for Standard III for a further explanation of the enrollment constraints on Foggy Bottom and Mount Vernon Campuses.



- Holding schools accountable for mutually agreed upon student credits taught and putting in place expense controls;
- Rewarding increases in graduate program enrollments; and
- Promoting research growth and return on investment for schools, departments, and researchers.

In addition, the budget model builds in several key objectives:

- Incentivizing revenue generation within the schools;
- Providing schools with the flexibility to match revenues and expenses with changing demands; and
- Rewarding innovation by promoting online, off-campus, and executive education-type programs to compensate for enrollment cap constraints.

The new model allows GW to standardize incentives for innovation and revenue generation. It also positions the university to align budgets with strategic priorities, and it provides incentives for collaboration.

Seven of GW's 10 schools operate under the budget model: College of Professional Studies (CPS); Columbian College of Arts and Sciences (CCAS); Graduate School of Education and Human Development (GSEHD); School of Business (GWSB); Elliott School of International Affairs (ESIA); School of Engineering and Applied Science (SEAS); and School of Nursing (SoN). These seven schools, known as "open schools," work with the provost to develop their budgets to support priorities and cover operating expenses. In addition, the university provides centralized services to support the open schools' financial aid, study abroad, human resources/payroll, safety and security, facilities, etc.

The GW Law School (GWLAW), the School of Medicine and Health Sciences (SMHS), and the Milken Institute School of Public Health (GWSPH) are financially self-sufficient and as such are referred to as "closed schools." These schools receive all

revenues they generate, and they reimburse the university for any services provided.

The new model was created with a multi-year planning horizon (five-year plan) in order to support the priorities of the university's strategic plan as well as the individual priorities of the different schools. Included in the implementation plan in 2015-2016 was the commitment to maintain the new financial planning parameters for three years (fiscal year 2016 through fiscal year 2018) in order to give the model time to work. Also planned was a post-implementation review after two years to determine whether the model was meeting its objectives.

### **The Budget Planning Process** *(Criteria 2, 3, 9; ROA 8, 10, 11)*

The budget planning process, as of 2015, happens as follows: All schools and administrative divisions develop a five-year financial plan using enhanced data analytics and tools to drive informed decision-making. Based on the budget plans developed by the schools and administrative divisions, the university develops its consolidated five-year budget plan. Preparation of the five-year budget plan is facilitated by the use of a systematic framework for projecting principal sources of revenue as well as analysis of important categories of expense. GW's budget reflects a consolidated all-funds view of the university's budget, including both general fund and designated funding sources, to provide a comprehensive summary of the university's financial position. The financial objective of the multi-year plan is to balance enrollment growth, cost management, and reserve utilization while maintaining academic quality, enhancing the student experience, and growing GW's research portfolio.

GW's multi-year financial planning reflects the capacity of the institution to rely on dependable sources of revenues and to ensure academic quality and services to students. GW's budget supports short-, near-, and long-term planning with a budget process that allows institutional leaders to understand the financial implications of their

decisions. The framework consists of a one-year budget for the upcoming fiscal year, combined with budget plans for the succeeding four years. The one-year budget for the immediate fiscal year sets the actual budgetary parameters under which the university operates in each fiscal year. The budget plan for the four years beyond the next fiscal year provides a framework for multi-year budget planning; this part of the five-year budget is adjusted each year to reflect changes in internal and external opportunities and constraints.

Annual resource allocation decisions are based on a fall planning process to set strategic direction, followed by a spring budget approval process incorporated into the five-year planning horizon. Quarterly budget forecasts are reviewed with all schools and divisions. New forecasting and budget development tools are either in place or in the process of being implemented. Monthly budget reports are provided, and new end-user-driven financial reports from the data warehouse supply more specific financial information. Model testing, ongoing refinement of planning parameters, data, system, and reporting capabilities are all built into the budget model. Thus, the model includes a continuing process of implementing, refining, evaluating, and adjusting.

## **Oversight** *(Criteria 5, 7; ROA 8, 11)*

All divisions and schools have assigned finance directors who have principal responsibility for budget planning, financial management, and operations to ensure consistency with university financial policies and internal controls. The work of the finance directors is augmented by GW's external auditors, Baker Tilly, who have instituted an annual cycle of reviews of schools and divisions to ensure adequate financial controls, provide proactive trend analysis, and recommend process improvements to enhance operations and financial stewardship. All fiscal policies, including those related to budgeting, investment, insurance, risk management, contracts

and grants, debt financing, fundraising, and other development activities are clearly stated in writing and policy. The Board of Trustees reviews and approves GW's budget based on multi-year analyses and financial forecasting.

GW is focused on enhancing its long-term financial sustainability and commitment to academic excellence in the face of multi-year financial challenges. It is not immune to the higher education "new normal" of continuous constrained revenue growth. Therefore, in addition to immediate budget reductions, GW is working on longer-term strategic initiatives that will fundamentally change its operating and organizational structures and processes so that the university can continue to support the academic and research mission as efficiently as possible. As a tuition-dependent institution, its primary revenue drivers are the schools, and they continually examine their cost structures to maximize net revenues and to enhance opportunities for new revenue streams.

The new budget model introduced a new level of financial transparency and accountability for the seven open schools. Schools assess their portfolio of academic programs for net revenue, demand, and opportunities for new revenue-generation; they also identify areas for disinvestment or consolidation. In addition to looking for cost savings and operating efficiencies, schools are encouraged to use strategic enrollment management to improve student yield. The incentives built into the budget model have spurred the development of new online, hybrid, and compressed graduate programs.<sup>68</sup> Schools are encouraged to expand enrollments in current graduate programs and to develop and launch new ones, particularly those to be offered either online or off-campus. The incentives built into the budget model also encourage interdisciplinary partnerships among schools.

A key performance metric for all schools is the ability to maintain or replenish their reserves and to balance their operating budgets without the

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<sup>68</sup> Schools receive 70 percent of the tuition revenue for on-campus programs, 80 percent for off-campus programs, and 85 percent for online programs.

use of reserves. The goal has been to increase the financial self-reliance of each school. Schools now have more autonomy with their respective budgets, and as long as they meet their enrollment targets and balance their budgets, they have much more say than previously about how best to allocate their resources.

Although new revenues will continue to be generated by the schools, the university nevertheless recognizes the need to cut the rate of growth of its expenses over time. Consequently, the size of the central administration's budget has been reduced to align expenses and revenues over the long term. As part of the five-year budget planning process (and in light of an unanticipated drop in graduate enrollment in fiscal year 2014 and fiscal year 2015), administrative (non-school) units have been asked to make annual cost reductions of 5 percent. The university's top priority has been to minimize the impact of budget cuts on students and faculty and to have a larger portion of the budget allocated to the academic enterprise than in the past, while finding efficiencies in service delivery.

The university's current financial situation is well-summarized by the assessment of university finances by the bond-rating agencies. The fact that the rating agencies gave the university a high rating indicates that the overall state of GW's finances is solid and stable. The most recent [S&P's Global Ratings report](#), issued in August 2017, affirmed GW's A+ long-term rating and stated that the "outlook is stable."

To quote from the report:

[S&P's] rating reflects [S&P's] belief that GWU's enterprise profile is extremely strong as a comprehensive research university, with more than half of its enrollment coming from its graduate and professional programs in the health sciences (law and engineering, among other disciplines), and with a total enrollment that has grown over the past five years. Also, the rating reflects our view that the university's financial profile is

strong, characterized by modest operating profitability in most years (although negative most recently), ample available resources, and moderate to high debt.

Although S&P notes moderate to high debt, its opinion is that "the 'A+' rating better reflects the university's more limited expendable resources (ER) to operations and ER to debt in comparison with medians and those of peers."<sup>69</sup> GW's growth in debt—from \$600 million in 2008 to \$1.7 billion in early 2017—was necessary to facilitate the financing of significant investments both in the endowment and in academic infrastructure. However, in recent years, the university has taken advantage of favorable interest rates to refinance existing debt and lengthen the maturity structure of debt. Among the results of this debt management strategy are a lower overall weighted average cost of capital of 3.95 percent, and an extension of overall average maturities to 19.1 years. Based on current financing plans, the amount of debt outstanding in fall 2017 is expected to decline to just over \$1.5 billion.

Recent efforts to right-size revenue and expenses address concerns about declining operating surpluses. However, especially relative to the aspirations expressed by the university in its strategic plan, university resources are constrained due to a number of factors. These include the increased discounting of tuition revenue by competitors and, perhaps most notably, the District of Columbia enrollment cap. Future improvements in quality and stature of programs will therefore require careful planning, as well as a willingness to reallocate resources away from lower priority to higher priority programs. The five-year budget plan provides a framework that has enabled such reallocation.

## **Fundraising** **(Criterion 8)**

The constraints on GW's revenue growth obviously point to the importance of garnering additional resources from philanthropic giving. [Making History: The Campaign for GW](#), the university's first \$1 billion

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<sup>69</sup> The most recent rating by Moody's (July, 2016) was A1.

fundraising initiative, officially began on July 1, 2011, and was publicly launched on June 20, 2014. The campaign was scheduled to run until mid-2018. However, in May 2017, the university announced that the Making History campaign had surpassed the \$1 billion goal—more than a year ahead of schedule. Over 65,000 donors contributed to the campaign, of which over 41,000 were GW alumni. The campaign’s overarching case for support was developed directly from *Vision 2021*. Examples of the types of support received for each of the four pillars of the strategic plan can be found in the Document Roadmap.

While the campaign achieved its targets, it is important to note that the most significant gifts required that the university undertake new, albeit mission-consistent, activities. These gifts included the assets received as a result of the university’s acquisition of the Corcoran College of Art + Design, the Milken Institute and Sumner Redstone gifts to the School of Public Health, and the Albert Small and Textile Museum gifts to the George Washington University Museum. As the university moves forward, it needs to consider lessons learned from this campaign and how to structure its development organization to maximize the return on investment in the future.

## **Business Intelligence** **(Criterion 8; ROA 8, 10)**

In 2012, GW created an Office of Business Intelligence (BI) with the objective of increasing GW’s analytics capabilities. By leveraging existing data warehouse services and expanding their content by adding research, financial information, financial aid data, and data from various other sources, BI has created interactive dashboards using Tableau, a data visualization tool. Consequently, the BI unit has transformed the way the university does business. A data governance committee, composed of GW data stewards, is responsible for the identification and resolution of data quality and data integrity issues and the governance of shared data.

The committee also ensures that data definitions are consistent and accurate.

Currently, over 30 [dashboards](#)<sup>70</sup> are in use; they are accessed regularly by hundreds of users from all functional areas. These include school and division finance directors, enrollment management staff, principal investigators, deans, the provost, and other university faculty and staff. The dashboards enable their users to make data-driven and actionable decisions in a timely fashion.

One of the early dashboards created provides access to GW enrollment statistics by school, student level, location (U.S. and international), student demographics, and more. It is used to review and analyze student application trends and status by application term, as well as to compare cumulative application counts over the same term as the previous year. Enrollment management decision-makers have access to the status of applications on any date they select; the application count can then be compared against three historical numbers: applications from the previous year, the average number of applications for the last four years, and the enrollment target. Enrollment management leaders can then assess whether applications are above or below target and better plan to bring in the right size incoming class.

The dashboard for financial directors provides key information and metrics on course registration, tuition/fees revenue, compensation, and financial aid, providing data that span multiple years. This interactive tool allows its users to manage their budgets more effectively. The General Ledger Balance Trend Analysis Visualization dashboard uses general ledger data from the Enterprise Accounting System (EAS) to provide trends for revenues, expenditures, and other changes in net assets over the previous five fiscal years.

The dean’s dashboard brings together several high-level metrics from different business areas across the university (e.g., enrollment, research, finance,

<sup>70</sup> Two dashboards that are publicly available are the [Enrollment Dashboard](#), which provides a navigable database of 10 years of census data including enrollment by campus, student level, gender, race/ethnicity, and nationality; and the First Destination Survey [visualization](#), which provides a navigable database of post-baccalaureate outcomes of students who graduated beginning in 2014.

human resources, fundraising). Subscribers to this dashboard receive an email at the beginning of each week that points them to the most current information in the data warehouse.

The priorities for developing new dashboards are guided by the GW Business Advisory Committee. This committee is composed of university leaders representing administrative and academic units who have a vested interest in institutionalizing business intelligence capabilities throughout the university.

## Human Resources

*(Criterion 4; ROA 8, 10, 11)*

The most important asset of any university is its people. The mission of human resources at GW is to serve as an effective business partner by attracting, developing, rewarding, and retaining a talented and diverse workforce in order to support the university's mission of fostering excellence in teaching and research. At GW, staff are served by [Human Resources](#) (HR); students are served by [Student Employment](#), located in the Center for Career Services; and faculty are served by the [Office of Faculty Affairs](#) (OFA).

Currently, GW has almost 4,000 full-time (non-faculty) employees<sup>71</sup> who offer support and administrative services across the university and its three campuses. HR supports telecommuting and flexible work schedules where appropriate, staff paid parental leave, and employee assistance and wellness programs to increase staff satisfaction and retention.

## Compensation

In 2016, GW overhauled its staff compensation and classification system in order to improve transparency, consistency, and competitiveness in compensation. Most staff jobs at GW were mapped to GW's new "[Career Path](#)," which serves as a tool for employees to plot out a career trajectory, based on an employee's specific interest, skills, and qualifications.

Staff compensation is benchmarked against the median of various markets, depending on the job, according to GW's classification structure. A 2015 analysis by Towers Watson concluded that GW's rate of compensation for staff salaries is approximately 103 percent of the median. Health, retirement, and tuition benefits are benchmarked and reviewed on an annual basis as well. A Benefits Valuation Report, conducted by Mercer in 2015, ranked GW eighth out of 18 peer institutions with respect to total benefits.

Although the report suggested a benefit package comparable to the market basket, it is important to note that there is always an "apples and oranges" element to the comparison of benefits, and many employees, both faculty and staff, are concerned that the overall benefits offered have deteriorated as healthcare inflation has far exceeded and tuition has slightly exceeded the annual growth of the benefit pool. Until recently, GW held its fringe rate constant and thus increased its benefit pool by the same percentage as the merit pool.<sup>72</sup> As a result of the inflationary pressure on the benefit pool, GW has slightly reduced the tuition benefit for university employees. Unfortunately, uncertainty in the healthcare market and a new compensation tax that the District of Columbia appears likely to impose in 2020 could further strain the benefit pool. Recently, the university has incorporated into five-year plans an adjustment to the fringe pool that slightly exceeds the anticipated changes to the wage pool.

Faculty pay is benchmarked on an annual basis against the 80th percentile of American Association of University Professors (AAUP) data. The AAUP benchmarking began several decades ago and has been closely monitored by both the administration and Faculty Senate. The most recent [report](#) to the Faculty Senate (in March 2017) showed that, on average, faculty at the rank of professor and associate professor are paid at a rate slightly above the 80th percentile, while faculty at the rank of assistant professor fall slightly below. As a result, the

<sup>71</sup> Information about the number of faculty employed at GW can be found in the report for Standard III.

<sup>72</sup> GW has recently allowed units to adjust wage compensation by up to 3 percent. GW does not allow units to have an inflationary adjustment. All raises are based upon an assessment of performance.

Faculty Senate has recommended that the Board of Trustees agree to increase assistant professor salaries to meet or exceed the 80th percentile.

These benchmarks indicate that GW's base pay programs and benefits support the recruitment and retention of qualified faculty and staff; it is hoped that these benchmarks are also an important antidote to concerns staff have felt as they have watched cost-cutting initiatives across the university. Cost-cutting initiatives began first as six-month hiring delays and directives to reduce staff travel and training expenses. The university also began restructuring benefits programs due to the rise in healthcare costs. Finally, administrative units were provided individual budget reduction targets, which are expected to be achieved by July 2018. In many instances these targets have resulted in reductions in force.

In order to streamline HR processes, more effectively onboard staff, and promote a culture of continuous training and opportunities for staff professional development, in summer 2017, GW launched a new **talent management** system suite that provides a more holistic management of the workforce, including onboarding, recruiting, learning, performance, and compensation. In addition, HR is reviewing its internal efficiency metrics such as HR expenditures/total university expenses; average time to fill open staff positions; cost per new hire; and return on investment for training to improve its operation.

## **Information Technology** *(Criterion 4; ROA 8, 10, 11)*

The university, higher education, and technology are experiencing an unprecedented time of change and opportunity. Through *Vision 2021*, GW has developed a plan to strengthen its position as a comprehensive research and teaching institution through investment and innovation across the university. The Division of Information Technology (DIT) continues to play a critical role in the pursuit and achievement of the *Vision 2021* strategic goals, giving additional focus to enhanced cybersecurity, data, and mobility demands in support of critical

education and research related functions.

To do so successfully, GW has focused on implementing distinctive differentiated IT services that meet the GW community's needs and provide measurable business value, such as:

- Offering commodity services, where possible, to deliver technology capabilities with scale, cost, reliability, and security in mind;
- Brokering for those services that the market can provide faster, cheaper, and more effectively;
- Providing shared cloud capabilities for the GW community; and
- Providing the GW community with accurate and trusted data.

Currently, GW has enterprise systems in place to support student, faculty, employee, and research life-cycles. These systems provide support to multiple units and university functions including: research administration and grants management, safety and security, development and alumni relations, library, degree audit, enrollment management, document management, budgeting, financial aid, financial management, payroll, purchasing accounts receivable and payable, identity assurance (for online courses), and access management.

Two data centers, one on the Foggy Bottom Campus and the other on the Virginia Science and Technology Campus support on-premise university systems, while other systems are maintained by cloud providers. A digital upgrade of classroom technology is in progress, having completed four years of a five-year initiative. Significant investment has been made in audiovisual, computing, and instructional technology.

GW takes a prudent, proactive approach to managing cybersecurity risks that includes best practices, policy, training and awareness, and industry standard technologies. DIT "bakes in" security in the business plans for new systems and services brought online, and offers advisory consultation for new campus technology projects

and initiatives. DIT has invested in security and compliance measures for GW's 10 schools and completed security assessment for each school. It has added more security subject matter experts to respond to increasing demands for risk assessments and the changing threat landscape. It has also begun to include the school IT organizations in its risk assessment process for new or changed services. This has minimized the risk of unmonitored changes to the university's IT service footprint.

To better manage budget resources, DIT has made a number of changes. Inventory/tracking systems, course management systems, and a new customer relationship management system in enrollment management have been consolidated. Furthermore, whenever possible, systems' efficiencies have been maximized by fully utilizing the capabilities a given system offers rather than needlessly customizing or changing systems. Finally, manual processes have been automated wherever possible.

In spring 2017, GW conducted an independent third-party assessment of its Enterprise Resource Planning System (ERP) with the objective of proposing viable options to modernize the current ERP environment, simplify and streamline business processes, decrease unnecessary duplication of effort, increase data analytics and workflow capabilities, reduce operating costs, and lower security risks. The assessment involved talking to over 100 GW faculty and staff.

Planning for and provisioning information technology services for a comprehensive research university is comparable to providing that for a small city, with similar complexities and risks. DIT pursues opportunities to help connect the dots across the enterprise, serves as a strategic partner and advisor, and guides GW in streamlining business processes and improving services while balancing mounting demands for new initiatives, transparency, accountability, and operational excellence.

## Physical Plant

*(Criteria 4, 6; ROA 10, 11)*

The university operates three campuses - the Foggy Bottom Campus, the Mount Vernon Campus (MVC), and the Virginia Science and Technology Campus (VSTC). It also has education centers in DC, Maryland, Virginia, and other localities (see annual update to MSCHE IP). Investment in facilities and infrastructure is ongoing with funding originating from both operating and capital budgeting sources. There is sufficient infrastructure to support the academic and research mission of the university.

Key investments in facilities and infrastructure during the past five years include:

- New construction of LEED-certified buildings including:
  - [Science and Engineering Hall](#);
  - [Milken Institute School of Public Health Building](#); and
- Renovations and/or construction of the following:
  - Corcoran Hall (unrelated to Corcoran School);
  - The Corcoran School's [Flagg Building](#);
  - [George Washington University Museum and the Textile Museum building](#);
  - [District House](#), a residence hall; and
  - The [Avenir Foundation Conservation and Collections Resource Center](#) on VSTC.
- [Eco Building Project](#), which consists of prioritized sustainability investments in existing campus buildings in a manner that improves GW's carbon footprint and also offers a payback on these investments from energy savings; and
- Ongoing investment in campus facilities through the university's renewal program to enhance the overall campus physical plant with a focus on residence hall updates and either upgrades or the creation of quality living and learning spaces.

Between fiscal year 2013 to the end of fiscal year 2017, the university invested approximately \$730 million in new construction and major renovation projects and approximately \$94 million in repair,

replacement, and renewal projects. In addition to general upgrades, providing enhancements to GW's residence halls has been a core focus of facilities upgrades with accelerated levels of investment over the past five years, thus enhancing the overall campus student life experience. The university will continue to invest in upgrading facilities, including its residence halls.

Like many urban universities nationwide, the university holds some real estate assets as investments. While these assets are included in the university's endowment, they are not used for institutional purposes. Rather, they are used to provide an important source of non-tuition driven revenue, which assists in funding the academic and research mission of the institution. Over the past several years, the university has entered into ground leases and other ownership structures that transfer operating risk and capital requirements to third parties while allowing GW to continue to realize income from the property and maintain long-term ownership. One example is the ground rent associated with GW's redevelopment of Square 54/The Avenue. Square 54 (the site of the former GW Hospital) was leased to Boston Properties; GW was not responsible for the construction nor is it responsible for the project's ongoing operations. However, rent received by GW supports a large portion of the debt service associated with the construction of Science and Engineering Hall.

As part of its cost-containment measures, the university moved to reduce the use of leased space (space not owned by GW and not on GW's campuses) to conserve financial resources and to concentrate its academic footprint in the campus center. In addition, because of space limitations on the Foggy Bottom Campus, a concerted effort was made to free up administrative space, making more resources available for academic and research space.

Because GW is an urban campus, active management of space will continue to be necessary

to ensure space resource allocations are aligned with mission-driven priorities.

## Research (Criterion 1)

"Advancing human knowledge in ways that open up new lines of intellectual inquiry and have significant positive effects on society" is core to GW's mission. *Vision 2021* provided guidance on how to advance this goal, resulting in an impressive growth of research expenditures in a highly competitive funding environment. According to the National Science Foundation's Higher Education Research and Development Survey, GW's ranking rose 20 spots since 2012 in the category of federal expenditures (see Figure VI.1).

This success can be attributed to intentional investments in the faculty and research infrastructure. For example, a \$275 million transformational investment in research infrastructure and facilities enabled the construction of Science and Engineering Hall on the Foggy Bottom Campus. The building's specialized labs provide faculty with the capabilities to conduct research on everything from large aerospace structures to viruses, genes, and the next generation of nanotechnology. GW's acquisition of **Colonial One** provides high-performance computing for data analysis that is open to the university community, and the **Nanofabrication and Imaging Center** features state-of-the-art instrumentation.

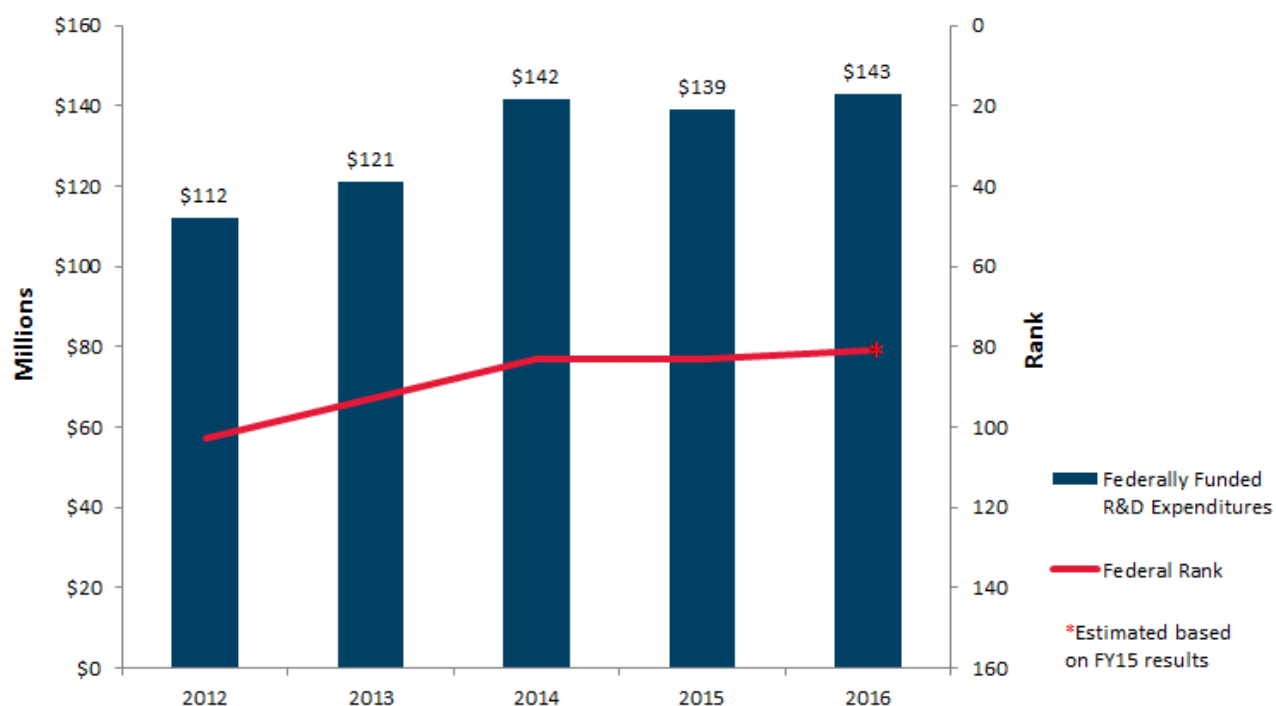
Recent revisions of tenure and promotion processes have articulated that the university expects faculty who seek to be promoted to have achieved excellence in their research scholarship. Although the precise requirements to be promoted necessarily vary by field, faculty understand that demonstrating excellence frequently requires high levels of funded research and a strong publication and citation record.<sup>73</sup> In addition, there has been a shift toward recruiting faculty with established research agendas and junior faculty with the potential to achieve the same. Increased support of opportunity hires has allowed schools

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<sup>73</sup> Further discussion of the revisions in the tenure process appears in the reports for Standards II and VII.



**Figure VI.1. GW's National Science Foundation's Higher Education Research & Development (HERD) Survey Rankings 2012 - 2015**



to hire outstanding faculty outside of the normal recruitment cycle. Many extraordinary faculty have been recruited in recent years, including national and international leaders in the fields of autism, astrophysics, cancer, engineering, international affairs, neuroscience, and public health.

Schools and central administration have partnered on a number of initiatives to support research and scholarly activity. Schools, the provost, and the vice president for research have initiated sharing the cost of start-up packages for new faculty hires, and in a few cases, two or more schools have contributed to funding faculty hires.

Other additions to the research support landscape include a burgeoning postdoctoral presence and expanded [innovation](#) and [technology commercialization](#) services. Not only has the number of postdocs increased over the past several years, but postdocs have become a part of the research culture, creating GW's first [postdoc association](#). Innovation and technology commercialization services were created and

appropriately staffed to support faculty innovation and assist with taking ideas to market.

New cross-disciplinary institutes and centers have also contributed to GW's expanding research portfolio. As part of *Vision 2021*, the university formalized three institutes, in [sustainability](#), [computational biology](#), and [global women's issues](#). Two additional institutes, in autism and neurodevelopmental disorders and in cancer research, were funded as well. National searches resulted in hiring directors who are leaders in their fields.

Research centers and institutes must demonstrate their contribution to GW's research enterprise and track their return on investment. They are fully vetted prior to launch and at regular intervals. Since 2012, the number of chartered centers and institutes has decreased as a result of the [Research Advisory Board's](#) adherence to the vision that such organizations must be research intensive and more valuable than the sum of their parts.

Finally, the university's investment in a data warehouse for all data collected in disparate systems has allowed the [Office of the Vice President for Research](#) (OVPR), in partnership with DIT, to develop and launch the [PI Dashboard](#), an online tool that gives researchers up-to-date snapshots and detailed financial information about their awards. This aids in prudent financial management of awards. OVPR also monitors all financial aspects of sponsored projects on a monthly, quarterly, and annual basis, passing along this information to senior leadership, deans, and faculty as appropriate.

The commitment to and investment in research is paying off. Table VI.1 demonstrates the increases across key metrics related to externally sponsored research.

While GW has made substantial progress in enhancing its research infrastructure, the committee charged with drafting this report determined that certain issues need to be addressed to maintain this momentum and ensure further growth:

- There is a need to plan for further growth and monitor the adequacy of the recently implemented school-based research administration system to ensure that researchers in all schools are adequately supported and that staffing keeps up with growth;
- Although great strides have been made in strengthening research compliance (fiscal, legal, ethical rule adherence) through improved research administrative services, research development support is currently stronger in some schools than in others and needs strengthening overall to better match researchers to appropriate funding opportunities and facilitate proposal development;
- A greater effort needs to be made to concentrate research interests in a way that utilizes and builds upon the infrastructure investments made;
- In the face of a likely decline in federal funding in coming years, more aggressive efforts to diversify funding by focusing more on corporate and foundation sources are required;
- Faculty who conduct research in other countries or with international collaborators have found

**Table VI.1. Externally Funded Research Activity:  
Changes from 2012 to 2016**

	Federal Sponsors	All Sponsors
Proposals	16.8%↑	16.5%↑
Principal Investigators	19.5%↑	13.9%↑
Awards	26.5%↑	20.6%↑
Research Expenditures	26.7%↑	11.8%↑
Indirect Costs	34.9%↑	26.7%↑

administrative offices overly bureaucratic and risk averse in managing the complexities of international research. Consequently, improvements in administrative support for international research are needed; and

- Although the focus here has been primarily on sponsored research, GW also needs to nurture the kinds of scholarly and creative achievements that may not attract much funding but can do much to enhance the university's stature.

## **Recommendations**

1. A state-of-the-art research environment should be created by improving research support and concentrating on existing academic strengths.
2. HR processes, policies, and priorities should be more closely aligned with the changing needs of the university. In particular, the ability to hire research staff in a timely manner should be enhanced in order to support increases in research funding.
3. Consider lessons learned from the \$1 billion campaign and build a development organization focused on enhancing the university's mission in an efficient manner.

## Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration



*The institution is governed and administered in a manner that allows it to realize its stated mission and goals in a way that effectively benefits the institution, its students, and the other constituencies it serves. Even when supported by or affiliated with governmental, corporate, religious, educational system, or other unaccredited organizations, the institution has education as its primary purpose, and it operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy.*

Education constitutes the primary purpose of GW, and its governing structure is instrumental in promoting its academic and educational mission. The university is governed by a board of trustees, which has overall legal and fiduciary responsibility for the university. The university's administration is comprised of the president, provost, vice presidents, deans, and department chairs.<sup>74</sup> All are firmly committed to ensuring a top-quality educational experience for GW students.

This report provides an overview of the following:

- A brief discussion about shared governance at GW;
- An explanation of the administrative structure of the university, including:
  - The Board of Trustees (BoT), the institution's governing body, and
  - The president and his administration, i. e., those who manage the day-to-day operations of the institution;
- A discussion of the assessment of the effectiveness of GW's governance, leadership, and administration, including:
  - The assessment of administrative units;
  - The assessment of governance documents (including a recent review of the [Faculty Code](#) and the [Faculty Organization Plan](#)); and

- The assessment of university personnel, including senior administrators, faculty, and staff.

## Shared Governance

### (Criterion 1; ROA 12)

GW is committed to shared governance. Among those contributing to the shared governance of the institution are the BoT, the faculty, and the student body:

- **The Board of Trustees:** The BoT is currently comprised of 27 [members](#), including the president of the university who is an ex officio member. The board is chaired by [Nelson Carbonell, Jr.](#) With the exception of the president, none of the trustees is an employee of the university.
- **The university administration:** GW's administration is headed by its president who is supported by eight vice presidents, one of whom is the provost. Eleven deans report to the provost.<sup>75</sup>
- **The faculty:** The members of the faculty have a role in the development, implementation, and management of educational policy and curriculum through membership in their own school's faculty and through two university-wide groups:
  - **The Faculty Assembly:** The Faculty Assembly includes all professors, associate professors, assistant professors, and instructors who are full-time employees of one of the university's degree granting schools.<sup>76</sup>
  - **The Faculty Senate:** The Faculty Senate is composed of representatives from the tenured faculty among nine out of the 10 GW schools.<sup>77</sup> The Faculty Senate Executive Committee includes one senator from each of the schools represented on the senate. The senate has 10 standing committees, each one chaired by a member of the senate. All faculty members may

<sup>74</sup> Organizational charts for administrative units can be found in the Document Roadmap.

<sup>75</sup> Although there are 10 schools that constitute the university, the Dean of Libraries and Academic innovation also reports to the provost.

<sup>76</sup> In the School and Medicine and Health Sciences, a full-time equivalent is defined by its affiliation agreements.

<sup>77</sup> The College of Professional Studies has no representation because it has no tenured or tenure-track faculty.

serve on Faculty Senate committees. In addition, there are four university administrative committees with Faculty Senate representation. The membership and function of the Faculty Assembly and Faculty Senate are described in the Faculty Organization Plan.

- **The Student Association:** The Student Association is the primary elected body representing the students of GW whose membership and function are described in its [governing documents](#). The Student Association submits reports at BoT meetings and provides input to the president and the provost.

## The Board of Trustees (*Criterion 2; ROA 12, 13*)

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the university's governance, and as a result, it is integral to determining how the university meets the challenges and opportunities that it encounters. Trustees play a key role in overseeing fiscal, academic, and physical operations. They also provide leadership for GW's strategic initiatives—all of which are designed to enhance the academic and student life on its campuses.

The BoT relies on the university president and staff to manage the day-to-day operations of the institution. The board's function is to govern, not manage, the affairs of the university, through a process that recognizes the importance of transparent and direct communication with the university's officers and administration. The board functions through a series of strategic [committees](#). Among the most significant for this report are the [Committee on Academic Affairs](#), the [Committee on Finance and Audit](#), and the [Committee on Governance and Nominations](#).

The Committee on Academic Affairs is responsible for oversight of the university's academic mission and for fostering academic excellence and the integrity of the university. This includes, among other activities:

- Maintaining clear standards of academic excellence;

- Supporting and overseeing GW's schools and institutes;
- Establishing aggressive but realistic goals to further academic excellence, and measuring the progress toward those goals;
- Verifying that faculty evaluation, development, workload, and retirements are assessed on a regular basis; and
- Guiding the establishment of new academic programs and schools.

The Committee on Finance and Audit is responsible for general oversight of the financial and business affairs of the university. This includes:

- Reviewing and making recommendations to the board regarding major financial and business matters, including the operating and capital budgets of the university;
- Focusing institutional resources toward achieving the objectives set out in the university's strategic plan;
- Having the ultimate authority and responsibility to select, evaluate, and, where appropriate, replace the firm of certified public accountants that performs the annual audit of the university;
- Assuring the independence and performance of the internal and external audit functions;
- Setting the overall tone for the quality and integrity of financial reporting, a sound system of internal controls, and sound business practices and ethical conduct;
- Considering possible conflicts of interest involving trustees; and
- Providing oversight to the subcommittee on Endowment and Investments.

Two subcommittees have been established to manage the workload of the Committee on Finance and Audit. One subcommittee focuses on audit and compliance issues, and a second subcommittee focuses on the management of the endowment.

The Committee on Governance and Nominations is responsible for contributing to and furthering the board's ability to govern the affairs of the university. Among other things, it:

- Reviews and makes recommendations on matters of BoT governance;
- Establishes and reviews procedures for trustee training, including educating trustees about the university and their responsibilities as trustees;
- Assists the chair of the board in developing trustee stewardship;
- Evaluates trustee performance;
- Evaluates board effectiveness; and
- Makes recommendations regarding the conduct of board meetings.

The BoT's Committee on Governance also seeks nominations for board membership. In particular, it seeks as trustees individuals of the highest integrity who demonstrate a strong commitment to devote their knowledge, time, and financial resources to the benefit of the university. Furthermore, the committee seeks individuals who possess, among other things, a reputation as a person of intelligence, integrity, skill, experience, and good judgment. Prior to nominating a candidate, the committee assesses the impact of any conflicts of interest (or potential conflicts of interest). The avoidance of conflict of interest for board members is also written into the [bylaws](#) of the university:

No Trustee . . . shall receive at any time any of the earnings or pecuniary profit from the operations of the University . . . and no such person or persons shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the corporate assets upon the dissolution of the University. All Trustees shall comply with the requirements of the Policy Statement Concerning Possible Conflicts of Interest for Trustees adopted by the Board, as it may be amended from time to time (Article XI).

## The President (*Criterion 3; ROA 12*)

### Duties

According to the GW bylaws, the president is the chief executive officer of the university and supervises and controls all academic activities and all business and other affairs of the university.

The president is elected by and subject to the policies and oversight of the BoT. In general, the president performs "all duties incident to the [Office of the President](#) and such other duties as may be prescribed by the BoT from time to time" (Article VII, Section 2).

### Performance Evaluation (*Criterion 2f*)

The BoT regularly evaluates the performance of the university's president. The evaluation is intended to contribute to the continuing improvement of the work of the president, and to the effectiveness of the institution's methods of governance and decision-making. The presidential assessment is based on a review of prior expectations and evaluations subject to a variety of materials and metrics and is focused on confidential individual and small-group interviews with members of the on-campus community and other key stakeholders off-campus.

The presidential evaluation process was outlined by the current chair of the board in a recent interview: Every two to three years, the full board undertakes a comprehensive presidential assessment, which provides a 360-degree review of the president. This type of assessment is common in the corporate sector and an increasingly common practice in higher education. The assessment relies on goals and best practices that have been developed and used by many different types of colleges and universities around the country, often through the work of the [Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges](#).

### The Presidential Search: 2016-2017

In June of 2016, then-President Steven Knapp announced that he would not seek to renew his contract after serving 10 years at GW. A [Presidential Search Committee](#) was named by the end of June, comprising trustees, faculty members, alumni, a student, and a staff member. The search committee was charged with presenting finalists for consideration by the BoT by January 2017. In August, an executive search firm, [Isaacson, Miller,](#)

was retained to assist the search committee. As required by the governing documents of the institution, two faculty bodies, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and the Faculty Consultative Committee, served as advisors to the board about the presidential selection. To address concerns raised by some faculty members regarding the diversity of faculty member voices in the search, the [Faculty Senate expanded membership](#) on the Faculty Consultative Committee.

The first phase of the search involved identifying the desired attributes of the 17th president of the university. The search committee participated in an offsite retreat to brainstorm an initial set of criteria and shared its findings with the BoT. The board then hosted more than 30 town hall meetings with campus and local community constituents, including faculty, students, staff, alumni, and elected officials, to refine the skills and qualities the next president should demonstrate. Following those discussions, as well as other engagement by the search firm, a [presidential profile](#) was developed that described the university and outlined the opportunities and challenges facing the next leader. According to the profile, the incoming president would be able to:

- Articulate and execute a distinctive vision for the university;
- Enhance the academic distinction of the university and improve the scholarly success of the faculty;
- Pursue opportunities for strategic and mission-driven revenue generation and for useful savings for reinvestment;
- Develop effective systems to manage a complex enterprise and to enable a culture of service;
- Deepen the sense of community and commitment to diversity and inclusion;
- Enhance efforts to improve the student experience and student success; and
- Sustain and grow fundraising.

The second phase of the search focused on developing a strong candidate pool. To find the best candidates, members of the Presidential

Search Committee solicited recommendations through numerous town hall discussions, informal conversations, and its website. More than 100 candidates were recommended by members of the GW community and by friends of the university. Recommendations were provided to the search firm for appropriate vetting.

The search ended successfully with the appointment of [Thomas J. LeBlanc](#) as the 17th president of GW. Dr. LeBlanc previously served as executive vice president, provost, and professor of computer science and electrical and computer engineering at the [University of Miami](#). There he was both the chief academic officer and the chief budget officer, responsible for the university's 11 schools and colleges; the library system; the division of student affairs; the division of continuing and international education; and undergraduate education, admissions, and financial aid.

## The Administration

### *(Criterion 4; ROA 12)*

GW's president is supported by an experienced cadre of [administrators](#), composed of eight vice presidents, one deputy executive vice president, and 11 deans.<sup>78</sup> As their biographies indicate, these individuals have the qualifications and the experience to fulfill their roles effectively (for links to the individual biographies, see the Document Roadmap). With the exception of the vice president for development and alumni relations and the interim dean of the School of Business (GWSB), all have served two years or more. Although the current governance structure has served the university well up to the present, it is expected that the new president will review and perhaps rearrange the university's governance structure.

## Enhancing Operations with Assessment Data

In the fall of 2012, the Division of Information Technology initiated its [Business Intelligence](#) unit. Dashboards were created to serve administrators across the university. These dashboards bring data

<sup>78</sup> For the administrative structure of each unit, see the Document Roadmap.



together from various GW systems to enable data-driven decision-making by administrators across the university. Besides the deans in the various schools and the provost, dashboards have been created for administrators in development, finance, human resources, enrollment management, external relations, and student affairs as well as the deans in the various GW schools and the provost. In addition, the Office of Institutional Research and Planning created dashboards that include 10 years of data from the GW Factbook, faculty data, retention and graduation data, and grade distributions by semester, school, and department; the Office of Survey Research and Analysis includes five years of undergraduate and graduate student graduation data. These dashboards are available to faculty and staff. The Business Intelligence unit is discussed in more detail in the report for Standard VI.

## **The Assessment of Administrative Units and Partnerships**

### **Evaluation of schools and academic support units.**

GW has an integrated university-wide planning and budgeting process for both schools and academic support units that includes two formal assessments during the year—a fall academic planning meeting and a spring budget meeting. The fall academic planning and spring budget meetings are part of a continuum of regular meetings throughout the year among deans, vice presidents, vice provosts, and the senior leadership team to discuss opportunities and challenges that arise during the course of the year and to evaluate progress on key metrics.

The fall meeting is focused on evaluating the results of the prior year's financial performance, assessing progress on the priorities for the current year that have been identified and funded in the current year's budget, and discussing near-term strategic priorities for the coming budget year and new initiatives and opportunities that may have arisen since the budget was approved.

The spring budget meeting is focused on the five-year financial plan each unit develops that operationalizes the strategic priorities identified in

the fall that will be incorporated in the budget for the upcoming fiscal year, combined with budget plans for the succeeding four years. All schools, academic support, and administrative units develop five-year financial plans. These provide the framework for multi-year planning, using enhanced data analytics to improve university decisions about resource allocations. The five-year financial plan is adjusted each year to reflect changes in internal and external opportunities and constraints. This process is also described in the report for Standard VI.

### **Evaluation of departments and programs.**

Academic departments and programs within the various GW schools are normally evaluated on a recurring basis through a system of [Academic Program Reviews \(APRs\)](#). APRs occur every five years and typically consist of a self-study created by the unit that is reviewed by both an internal committee (comprising faculty from other departments or programs) and an external team (comprising faculty from institutions external to GW). Upon consideration and review of all the available materials, and consultation as required in the individual college procedures, the Dean composes his/her own assessment of the department/program and submits that information to the provost. The chair of the unit under review and a faculty member selected by the department chair (if desired) then meet to discuss the results with the provost, the deputy provost, the associate provost, and the relevant dean and vice deans. The APR is concluded with a final memo from the provost summarizing the results of the meeting.

The APR guidelines were revised in 2014 to align better with departments' and programs' annual reports and to focus more on analysis rather than the mere reporting of data. The change was an outgrowth of a focus group, convened in 2013, that consisted of department chairs who had recently completed the APR process. While the general sentiment of the focus group was that the APRs were very useful and informative, they thought that much of the information required in the review had already been reported in annual reports. The

body of the APR was revised to include questions to consider in the review and to summarize and review data collected from annual program assessments, course evaluations, graduation surveys, and enrollment data and then use these data for strategic planning and program changes.

The schools requiring APRs for programs that do not undergo self-studies for professional accreditations now include the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences (CCAS), the College of Professional Studies (CPS), the School of Business (GWSB), the Elliott School of International Affairs (ESIA), the Graduate School of Education and Human Development (GSEHD), the Milken Institute School of Public Health, and the School of Engineering and Applied Science.<sup>79</sup> Schools, such as the Law School (GWLAW) and the School of Medicine and Health Sciences (SMHS), that do not participate in the APR process are regularly evaluated by their own accrediting agencies' actions.

### **Evaluation of agreements among the Medical Faculty Associates (MFA), the School of Medicine and Health Sciences (SMHS), the George Washington University Hospital/Universal Health Care, and Children's National Medical Center.**

<sup>79</sup> In 2016, GWSB instituted its own APR process and created guidelines that included all aspects of the program--curriculum, assurance of learning, student marketing, recruitment and advising, faculty quality, and financial factors. Drawing on guidelines from the Provost's office, GWSB has developed a template for a self-study document that includes a requirement that each program must do a competitive analysis. As with all APRs, an internal and external team meets with the department and prepares a report that is then reviewed by the school's curriculum committee; the process concludes with a report to the provost and a meeting with the program heads, dean, and the provost. Already, two programs have completed their self-studies.

<sup>80</sup> In 2011 there was a reorganization of the GW Medical Center, which had provided unified governance of the SMHS, the then-School of Public Health and Health Services, and the School of Nursing under a single vice president for health affairs (VPHA). The Medical Center was disaggregated such that each dean reported directly to the university provost and the VPHA and SMHS dean roles were merged into a single position. Much of the research infrastructure was moved into the newly created office of the vice president for research. The SMHS achieves its mission through a series of affiliation agreements with two separately incorporated, yet closely aligned clinical partners: the GW Medical Faculty Associates (MFA) and the GW Hospital, as well as Children's National Medical Center for pediatric training. The MFA is a non-profit, multi-specialty physician group practice, which employs over 350 full-time regular faculty organized into 15 academic departments in SMHS. Through the academic affiliation, the MFA is the main provider of clinical education for SMHS, home to a portfolio of clinical and translational research, and provides clinical care across nearly all medical specialties to the DC metropolitan area. The GW Hospital is jointly owned and operated by a partnership between GW and Universal Health Services Inc. (UHS). Under the terms of this partnership, named the District Hospital Partners, LP (DHP), UHS holds 80 percent interest and GW holds 20 percent interest. The GW Hospital provides routine as well as tertiary and quaternary healthcare and is the main inpatient clinical training site for SMHS students and other trainees. The VPHA/SMHS dean sits on the board of trustees for the MFA, GW Hospital, and DHP. The academic mission of all three are under the purview of the dean who appoints the department chairs, who also serve as the clinical chairs in the MFA and chiefs of service in the hospital. Both the MFA and DHP support the school financially with a portion of clinical revenue, and the dean oversees a funds flow process to departments to support student teaching, clinical clerkships, graduate medical education, and faculty time. Children's National Medical Center is a nationally ranked children's hospital which is home to the SMHS academic departments of pediatrics and genomics and precision medicine. Children's employs over 570 physicians who hold full-time, regular faculty appointments in SMHS. Children's is the chief provider of pediatric clinical training and is home to over \$75 million in basic science, translational, and clinical research.

Complex and longstanding partnership agreements currently exist among the MFA, the SMHS, the University Hospital, and Children's National Medical Center.<sup>80</sup> Given changes in the healthcare market, the university, in conjunction with its partners, is reexamining the agreements to ensure that they enhance the university's academic mission. With senior leadership changes among all parties, it is an opportune time to rethink the precise relationship among the entities that shape the SMHS.

## **The Assessment of the Effectiveness of Governance Documents: Revision of the Faculty Code**

### ***(Criterion 5)***

As the university changes, so must its governance. Governance documents at GW are reviewed and updated as needed. The bylaws of the university were fully revised in 1978 but they have been amended as needed many times since, approximately five times per decade. The Faculty Organization Plan, originally put into operation in 1960, was revised in 1987. Since then it has been amended several times to meet the needs of a growing university (most recently in 2012). In 2015,

a fully revised version of the [Faculty Handbook](#) was released. The Faculty Code has been reviewed and amended at various times in the past, generally at the prompting of the Faculty Senate. The most recent review, however, came at the prompting of the BoT.

During the period from 2013 to 2016, the BoT undertook a review of faculty governance, specifically the Faculty Code and Faculty Organization Plan. This review was meant to ensure that governing documents were in alignment with the strategic plan. The process involved the board, the Faculty Senate, faculty representatives on working groups, and senior administrators. Five areas for potential enhancement of faculty governance were identified.

One of the first issues addressed was the institution's commitment to academic freedom (discussed in the report for Standard II). As a result of the collaborative effort between the BoT and the Faculty Senate, the Faculty Senate passed a resolution proposing an amendment to the Faculty Code on Academic Freedom. This resolution was subsequently approved by the board.

The board then charged the chair of its Committee on Academic Affairs with forming four working groups to address the following areas:

- Faculty participation in governance;
- Appointment, promotion, and tenure;
- Dean searches and review; and
- School rules and procedures.

Each working group was chaired by a member of the board, and included faculty, trustees, and academic administrators.

In addition to receiving input from the Faculty Senate and Faculty Senate committees, direct faculty input was solicited through faculty group meetings, town hall meetings, and a questionnaire. Consequently, constructive changes were incorporated to proposed recommendations from the working groups. The revised recommendations were then passed to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and the GW administration.<sup>81</sup>

Finally, four resolutions concerning recommendations to the Faculty Code were passed by the Faculty Senate. Following that, specific amendments to the Faculty Code were recommended to the BoT's Committee on Academic Affairs, which in turn recommended them to the entire BoT. On June 18, 2015, the BoT approved the [amendments](#), adopting the substance of the faculty recommendations.<sup>82</sup>

Ultimately, the following changes were made to the Faculty Code:

- New consolidated definitions for grades of academic personnel (Section I);
- A renewed affirmation of the commitment toward academic freedom, including a statement that academic freedom applies in the virtual classroom, while reminding faculty of the expectation that they show respect for the opinion of others (Section II A and C);
- An explicit statement of standard of excellence for promotion and tenure (Section IV B and C) requiring school and department review of criteria and processes for evaluation for promotion and tenure;
- A definition of compelling reasons for promotion and tenure non-concurrences (Section IV E 1);

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<sup>81</sup> During this process, the Subcommittee on Faculty Governance employed various strategies for obtaining input from the faculty. The subcommittee conducted five town hall meetings – one each on the Mount Vernon and Virginia Science and Technology Campuses, and three on the Foggy Bottom Campus, which were attended by more than 120 faculty members. In addition, a special website was established by the board that allowed faculty to submit comments online. In April 2015, an anonymous online questionnaire was distributed to all full-time faculty members that focused on draft recommendations to the Faculty Code and the Faculty Organization Plan.

<sup>82</sup> An additional resolution, however, concerned the Faculty Organization Plan rather than the Faculty Code. This resolution called for a proposed amendment to the Faculty Organization Plan that would allow tenured, regular contract, and specialized faculty who had attained the rank of associate professor to serve on the Faculty Senate. Up until that point only tenured faculty had been eligible to serve. In order to be enacted, the resolution required the approval of the Faculty Assembly. The resolution was introduced to the [Faculty Assembly in the fall of 2015](#). Although the majority of the faculty voted in favor of it, it nevertheless failed because it did not achieve the required two-thirds majority. A different resolution, permitting non-tenure track faculty members from SMHS and the School of Nursing (SoN) to serve on the Faculty Senate, was later passed by the [Faculty Assembly of 2016](#).

- A requirement that all school and department rules and criteria be aligned with the Faculty Code and have certain provisions (Procedures for Implementation of the Faculty Code; Section A);
- A requirement for written published appointment, promotion, and tenure criteria in line with promotion and tenure standards (Procedures for Implementation of the Faculty Code; Section B 2, C 2-3);
- Changes in the promotion and tenure process to provide more clarity and transparency (Procedures for Implementation of the Faculty Code; Section B 6, 7, 8); and
- More specific rules for dean search committees and dean reviews (Procedures for Implementation of the Faculty Code; Section C 2).

The Faculty Code is not a static document, and it will continue to be reviewed and amended as necessary changes are identified. As a result of concerns expressed about the specific process followed at the conclusion of the BoT action in 2016, the BoT and Faculty Senate agreed on specific standards the board would follow in amending the Faculty Code in the future, thus demonstrating the university's continued commitment to shared governance. These standards were adopted in an amendment to the university bylaws (Article X). In addition, upon further review of the most recent amendments to the Faculty Code that were adopted, a draft list of possible additional corrections to the Faculty Code is being prepared by Faculty Senate representatives for board consideration.

## The Assessment of University Personnel

All employees of the university are regularly assessed.

The senior leadership team is reviewed annually against a pre-determined set of goals and metrics. The formal process is designed to meet five core program objectives that together aim to align the senior leadership team in their management of the organization. The program objectives include:

- Providing an objective assessment process to help hold executives accountable;

- Setting clear goals at the beginning of the performance year;
- Facilitating collaboration across the university by clarifying shared priorities;
- Delivering meaningful feedback to the executives on their performance; and
- Providing a clear basis upon which to differentiate compensation recommendations.

The evaluation program was formally introduced in 2007, and the first official submission was in the fall of 2008. The program was launched after consultation with [Willis Towers Watson](#) (Towers), a leading global advisory with roots dating to 1828, specializing in this area. Each year, Towers is re-engaged to provide competitive benchmarking data, recommendations about best practices, and custom research as needed.

Since in the past the review of deans was not consistent across all GW schools, that process was taken up as one of the elements in the process of reviewing the Faculty Code (discussed above). Now, a comprehensive review of all deans will be undertaken every three years. This review process will incorporate feedback from faculty, staff, students, and alumni. A summary of the review's conclusion will be presented to the faculty of the relevant school while the details will be reported to the provost.

The performance evaluation framework for faculty is managed by the Office of Faculty Affairs, which, in recent years, has invested in a subscription to Lyterati software. This software handles both the annual review and the reporting of conflict of interest. The full-time faculty performance framework is governed by the Faculty Code, under section IV, "Appointment, Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure." Part-time faculty performance is governed by the [SEIU Location 500 Collective Bargaining Agreement](#) under Article V, "Appoint and Re-appointment," and Article VIII, "Evaluations." Research faculty performance is evaluated during the grant performance/ review process.

GW staff members and administrators also undergo an [annual performance review](#). Staff complete self-assessments that include accomplishment and completion of goals, and supervisors use these comments to reinforce positive performance or to facilitate discussions toward change. Employees are provided feedback via narrative comments, reviewer ratings, and they are given an overall performance rating based upon categories such as communication, teamwork, job/technical skills, productivity, and customer service. In many areas, these ratings are calibrated to ensure consistency. Performance ratings are then used in allocating any salary increases and bonuses authorized by the budget.

## Recommendations

1. A review of the university's governance structure should be undertaken since a new president has taken office.
2. A review of university governance documents should be regularized.
3. The complex financial partnerships among GW's School of Medicine and Health Sciences, the Medical Faculty Associates, Universal Health Care/ the George Washington University Hospital, and the National Children's Medical Center should be reviewed and adjusted to reflect the new realities of healthcare delivery.

# Conclusion



In the spring of 2016, eight working groups were constituted for the purpose of preparing GW's decennial self-study for Middle States. These groups included faculty from all 10 schools, administrators, staff, students, and trustees. Throughout the fall of 2016 and spring of 2017, the groups reviewed the policies and practices of the university. The report that resulted from this effort provides evidence to demonstrate that GW is in compliance with Middle States standards. However, the report also includes 20 recommendations for the university's improvement. The recommendations are listed below by standard:

### **Standard I**

1. The university should reevaluate its mission statement to confirm that the mission and strategic goals are clearly defined, well-aligned, relevant, and achievable.
2. A review of the strategic plan should be undertaken now that the new president has taken office and the capital campaign has been completed.

### **Standard II**

1. The faculty conflict of interest policy should be reviewed for potential updates.
2. The development, dissemination, and implementation of most policies and programs relevant to Standard II pertain to regular full-time faculty. It is recommended that the administration review how well university policies are communicated to specialized and part-time faculty through the Faculty Handbook or other means.
3. Although largely positive, campus climate needs to be improved so that students, regardless of background or circumstance, feel welcome and supported.
4. The university should complete its review and implementation of Title IX policies as well as GW's corresponding Sexual Harassment and Violence Policy.

### **Standard III**

1. An overall strategic plan for online education should be created in order to better plan for

centralized support services and coordinated offerings.

2. Student services and support should be enhanced by employing a university-wide constituent relationship management system that would be used by all of the academic support services (e.g., advising, Writing Center, STEMworks, and Disability Support Services). Such a tracking system would facilitate communication and enhance analytical capabilities to further facilitate improvement of student services.
3. GW should continue to increase graduate student and faculty development opportunities to improve teaching and learning at all levels.

### **Standard IV**

1. Although the university has made great strides in its recruitment of international students, it should now turn its efforts to diversifying the nationalities of international students.
2. The university should continue its efforts to improve the overall undergraduate experience for its students.

### **Standard V**

1. GW should build on the progress made during the last 10 years in the assessment of educational effectiveness by:
  - a. Further institutionalizing protocols and procedures;
  - b. Continually offering training for faculty and staff involved in assessment;
  - c. Providing more timely feedback on assessments; and
  - d. Focusing more on the use of assessment data to improve student learning.
2. An annual award for assessment excellence should be created.
3. The university should continue and further develop the assessment program that was piloted in summer 2017 by training a new group of doctoral students to provide assistance in evaluating program and G-PAC assessments, thus educating future educators on doing effective assessments.

## Standard VI

1. A state-of-the-art research environment should be created by improving research support and concentrating on existing academic strengths.
2. HR processes, policies, and priorities should be more closely aligned with the changing needs of the university. In particular, the ability to hire research staff in a timely manner should be enhanced in order to support increases in research funding.
3. Consider lessons learned from the \$1 billion campaign and build a development organization focused on enhancing the university's mission in an efficient manner.

## Standard VII

1. A review of the university's governance structure should be undertaken now that a new president has taken office.
2. A review of university governance documents should be regularized.
3. The complex financial partnerships among GW's School of Medicine and Health Sciences, the Medical Faculty Associates, Universal Health Care/ the George Washington University Hospital, and the National Children's Medical Center should be reviewed and adjusted to reflect the new realities of healthcare delivery.

## Steering Committee and Working Group Members

### Steering Committee

- Paul Duff, *Professor of Religion (CCAS) (Steering Committee Co-Chair)*
- Cheryl Beil, *Associate Provost for Academic Planning and Assessment and Assistant Research Professor of Psychology (Steering Committee Co-Chair)*
- Elizabeth Amundson, *Registrar and Associate Provost (Co-Chair, Verification of Compliance Working Group)*
- Jeffrey Brand, *Associate Dean for Graduate Studies; Associate Professor of Philosophy (CCAS) (Co-Chair, Working Group, Standard I)*
- Sarah Baldassaro, *Associate Vice President for Communications; External Relations (Co-Chair, Working Group, Standard I)*

- Charles Barber, *Deputy General Counsel (Co-Chair, Working Group, Standard VII)*
- Elizabeth Chacko, *Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies; Professor of Geography (CCAS) (Co-Chair, Working Group, Standard V)*
- Steve Charnovitz, *Associate Professor of Law (GWLAW) (Co-Chair, Working Group, Standard II)*
- Joe Cordes, *Associate Director (TSPPPA); Professor of Economics, Public Policy, and Public Administration (CCAS) (Co-Chair, Working Group, Standard VI)*
- Julie DeLoia, *Associate Dean; Professor of Exercise and Nutrition Science (GWSPH) (Co-Chair, Working Group, Standard III)*
- Geneva Henry, *Dean of Libraries and Academic Innovation (Co-Chair, Working Group, Standard III)*
- Pamela Jeffries, *Dean, School of Nursing (SoN) (Co-Chair, Verification of Compliance Working Group)*
- Laurie Koehler, *Vice Provost, Enrollment Management and Retention (Co-Chair, Working Group, Standard IV)*
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- Raymond Lucas, *Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs and Professional Development; Associate Professor of Emergency Medicine (SMHS) (Co-Chair, Working Group, Standard II)*
- Mike Mochizuki, *Associate Professor of Political Science and International Affairs (ESIA) (Co-Chair, Working Group, Standard V)*
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- Renee DeVigne, *Associate Dean for Student Academic Development; Professorial Lecturer (GWLAW)*
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