

Standard Four

The Academic Program

Description

During the past decade, the college has experienced unprecedented growth and success due to the efforts of visionary leaders, dedicated faculty and committed community members who have placed the college's mission and purposes at the forefront of their activities. Through their combined efforts, the college's academic programs remain highly responsive to, and valued by, the region's employers and institutions of higher education where Goodwin graduates continue to work and learn.

The mission of Goodwin College is to educate a culturally diverse student population in an environment that builds bridges between education, commerce and community. During the last NEASC visit in 2004, the college offered 12 certificates and five associate degrees. Today, the college is accredited by NEASC and the State of Connecticut to confer 11 associate degrees and 21 collegiate certificates, as well as a non-collegiate certificate in English as a Second Language. Goodwin is licensed by the State of Connecticut, and approved by NEASC, to offer courses leading to three baccalaureate degrees. Graduates are prepared for employment or to continue their education in the fields of education, social science, business, allied health, and nursing. All programs are developed with a specific focus on our mission of creating additional bridges between the college and community, both locally and globally. For example, the Child Study baccalaureate program was developed in response to new legislation that requires academic preparation of all child care workers. The RN-to-BSN program was developed in response to the need for associate degree and diploma nurses to earn baccalaureate degrees as required by hospitals that seek magnet status. Decisions to design new programs are guided by the College's Strategic Plan, Academic Plan, and ongoing market research.

Admission and Retention

Goodwin College admits qualified students without regard to race, religion, age, gender, marital status, national or ethnic origin, or handicap status. All students have equal access to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities at the college. The college does not discriminate in the administration of educational policies, admissions policies, financial aid policies, or other college-administered programs.

The Admissions Department is responsible for recruitment and enrollment of students to the college. The college admits students six times per calendar year. In a reflection of our mission, we have traditionally admitted students who are first-generation, adult learners, economically disadvantaged, and/or students who have not thrived in more traditional academic settings. Therefore, the college adheres to an open admission policy, admitting all students with a high school diploma or GED. In selective programs, admission requirements are clearly outlined in the catalog. Admissions officers work in cooperation with academic advisors to assist prospective students with admissions requirements. In addition, the academic advisor creates the individual student's plan of study and the first semester schedule prior to registration. Admissions policies and procedures, as published in our catalog, are clearly delineated and are consistent with our mission and goals.

As part of our retention strategy, students are assigned an academic advisor. In programs other than Health Science, department chairs (DC) and program directors (PD) take a more active role in course selection and degree planning. Students may meet with their academic advisor, faculty, or DC/PD by appointment or drop-in basis, whenever possible.

Undergraduate Degree Programs

When national, state or professional standards for programs exist, the college models its curriculum after such standards. The Medical Assisting, Histologic Science, Respiratory Care and Nursing programs have all earned programmatic accreditation reflecting compliance with those standards. The Early Childhood Education program is applying for NEAYC accreditation this year. Environmental Science, RN-to-BSN, Criminal Justice, Human Services and Business Administration degree programs are completing preliminary steps required to seek professional accreditation.

All program curricula, published outcomes, and specific graduation requirements are published in the catalog. All licensure and certification eligibility requirements are also published in the catalog. All information is updated yearly as part of the catalog republishing process.

Programs are designed to support our largely career-orientated student population. In 2009, the college formalized the Milestone policy through which students are enrolled in the highest degree available for their area of study. With appropriate degree planning, students are awarded academic credentials for work completed as they progress towards the higher degree. For example, a student enrolled in the Bachelor in Health Science program, through appropriate course selection, can first earn a certificate in Paramedic Studies. This policy provides students with an opportunity to work in their chosen field while pursuing their degrees.

In support of the Milestone policy, the bachelor degrees were designed as 2+2 programs allowing students to first complete the associate degree. Many departments offer collegiate certificates that serve as an academic progression point. For instance, the certificate in Human Services is built into the associate degree. Certificates range from 15-37 credits and are designed primarily to equip students with a specific skill set and knowledge base to be successfully employed.

The associate degree programs allow students to specialize according to their interests and abilities. Programs include a comprehensive series of discipline-specific courses, as well as general education courses. Students are encouraged to explore other interests through electives. All associate degree programs comprise a minimum of 60 credits and require at least four semesters of full-time study to complete. Twenty-five credits (42%) are in the required general education core.

Baccalaureate degree programs expand on previously learned skills and knowledge. The curricula include the breadth and depth required to move students beyond the practitioner level to begin scholarly study in their disciplines. Coursework includes more emphasis on theory and research. All bachelor degree programs consist of at least 120 credits and require at least eight semesters of full-time study to complete. Because Goodwin College offers three full semesters each year, most baccalaureate degrees can be completed in approximately three years.

Almost all programs include internships and/or clinical experiences that allow students to engage in hands-on learning. These educational experiences provide students the opportunity to build on the knowledge learned in the classroom, practice and demonstrate acquired skills, and to apply their critical thinking skills and problem-solving skills in the real world. Another way for students to demonstrate cumulative knowledge is through a capstone course.

Finally, the college recognizes that education has experienced a dramatic paradigm shift with the introduction of advanced technology. Faculty has embraced this change and actively seeks ways to incorporate technology in the classroom.

Development of the Baccalaureate Degrees

In spring 2007, the Executive VP/Provost convened a Baccalaureate Task Force to develop three Bachelor of Science degree programs. The focus of the Task Force was to look at the various institutional and programmatic components needed to move the college to baccalaureate status. The Curriculum subcommittee, composed of faculty and professional staff, was responsible for the development of the baccalaureate curriculum. This group was responsible for recommending criteria that were later adopted for graduation requirements, distribution of credits, major requirements, and general academic policies.

Each bachelor degree program director was responsible for the oversight of the curriculum development of her respective program. In addition to incorporating state and programmatic standards, feedback from advisory boards and outside authorities was solicited. As with all new course and program development, program directors worked closely with faculty to ensure appropriate instructional methodology and procedures. Syllabi and course assignments were developed by appropriately credentialed and experienced faculty to ensure student learning. Finally, representatives from the Connecticut Department of Higher Education and area colleges conducted an on-site visit to ensure appropriateness of the curriculum. These same experts also validated that the programs had the faculty, facilities and administrative commitment needed to adequately support the baccalaureate programs.

All programs were designed to include an appropriate breadth and depth of content. New courses were designed and existing courses were reviewed using *The Guidelines for Defining Course Levels* that was adopted by the Baccalaureate Task Force. Introductory courses were designed to be broad, while advanced courses were designed more narrowly to explore a topic in depth. All programs include introductory courses to ensure that students develop a strong academic foundation. Upper division courses have clearly delineated prerequisites and/or corequisites and are offered in a logical sequence to build on prior knowledge.

The General Education Committee, another subcommittee of the Baccalaureate Task Force, was established to review our general education mission and philosophy and core curriculum. This committee conducted an extensive review of the general education offerings in 20 colleges, both private and public, within 100 miles of Goodwin College. Based on the range of general education requirements in the colleges studied, this committee recommended that the general education core for bachelor degree programs consist of a minimum of 46 credits, 40 credits in a required core to be distributed over five academic perspectives and six credits to be in program-specific courses. Rather than restricting credits to specific disciplines, the committee recommended a perspectives model for distribution of general education credits that the Connecticut Department of Higher Education found to be unique and creative. Within a reasonable range, the disciplines and the number of required credits in the perspectives plan are consistent with those of the 20 colleges studied by the committee. Table 1 indicates the number of credits required in each, and the disciplines included in each are as follows:

Table 1: General Education Perspectives for the BS Degree

Perspective	Credits	Disciplines	Minimum Credit Requirement
Global	6	History, Political Science, Economics	3 US focus 3 World focus
Analytical	7	Mathematics, Science	3 Math 4 Science
Humanities	6	The Arts, Music, Philosophy, Literature or Ethics	3 Literature or Fine Arts 3 Philosophy or Ethics
Social/Cultural	6	Psychology; Anthropology; Sociology	3 Introduction to Psychology 3 Elective
Communications	15	English, Communications, Computer Competency Courses	3 English Composition 3 Writing Elective 3 Oral Communication 3 Advanced Writing/Research 3 Computer Competency

In addition to the perspectives, bachelor degree students must complete a course with competency designation in multiculturalism, advanced writing, and research. Together, the perspectives and competencies ensure that our students are in the best possible position to fulfill the goals of a well educated person as well as have greater flexibility in course selection.

General Education - Perspectives and Competencies

All degree programs include a strong general education core. General education courses constitute at least one-third of each degree. The associate degree general education core was redesigned in spring 2009 to align with the baccalaureate curriculum. Table 2 shows the continuity of the perspectives between the associate and bachelor degrees.

TABLE 2: Five General Education Perspectives and Credit Requirements

	Total	Communication	Analytical	Social/Cultural	Global	Humanities	Gen Ed Programmatic Req.
A.S.	24/25	12	6-7	3	0	3	0
B.S.	46	15	7	6	6	6	6

The General Education core assures breadth by showing a balanced regard for what are traditionally referred to as the arts and humanities, the sciences, including mathematics, and the social sciences. These courses also provide the students with an opportunity to engage their creative intellect. Specific outcomes that define each of the perspectives and competencies are listed in the catalog and on the college website.

Recognizing that an educated person must be able to communicate clearly and effectively in oral and written modes, all degree students must complete six credits in English. Baccalaureate students are required to take an additional advanced writing course and one course requiring a research paper.

Writing skills are reinforced in general education courses and across the curriculum. Writing requirements are embedded in all of the degree programs including a research paper, laboratory reports, comparative writing and/or creative writing. Emphasis is placed on the utilization of scholarly sources and proper documentation of these sources. Through such assignments, students become skilled, perceptive and analytical readers and proficient

writers adept at doing research. Introductory and lower-division courses provide the basic writing skills and allow students to practice inductive as well as deductive reasoning and utilize information literacy skills. These courses develop the competencies needed for the advanced writing required for the higher level courses of the baccalaureate programs.

All degree programs include a computer literacy requirement for graduation. Students are encouraged to complete this course in their freshman year. Furthermore, all students enrolled in a baccalaureate degree or the Associate Degree in General Studies are required to complete a one-credit information literacy tutorial during their first semester.

Finally, in addition to the college-wide general education core, a new Community Service and Explorations initiative (CSE) was first developed for the Associate Degree in General Studies. The CSE requires students to complete 30 hours of community service. This requirement was then extended to the baccalaureate programs. The Academic Affairs committee has been working to develop the procedures for communicating with and supporting students as they complete these requirements.

Foundational Coursework

Goodwin College's open enrollment policy affords opportunities to students who may not otherwise attend college. In support of this policy and to ensure that students are adequately prepared for collegiate-level work, all incoming students, if needed, are given the Accuplacer® test to determine placement in foundational coursework in math and English. Foundational courses are designed to create learning experiences which will assist students in gaining the skills they need to move on to college level courses. The college offers three levels of foundational English and math. Foundational courses are for institutional credit only and do not count towards credit required for graduation.

Though the college offers three levels of foundational math, students only register for and enroll in two foundational math courses. Math 098 covers the first two levels of foundational math, which are combined in a computer programmed course, MODUMATH. This is a sequential program that allows students to work at their own pace with the assistance of an instructor and tutors until they complete the entire two courses. Students then proceed to Math 099, an investigation of pre-algebra designed to provide students with a comprehensive foundation in pre-algebra concepts.

The foundational English courses focus on students' capabilities in reading, writing, and speaking. Emphasis is on developing reading skills, building vocabulary, reviewing basic grammar rules, and sentence and paragraph building.

Programs of Study

Since the last NEASC visit, and in support of our program growth, Goodwin College created five academic departments. At this time, the academic departments are General Education, Business and Technology, Health and Natural Sciences, Social Science and Education, and Nursing. Table 3, (see page 6) outlines the degrees and certificates offered by each department.

The college has formalized four institutional outcomes, consistent with and in full support of the College's mission, that every Goodwin graduate is expected to meet. Each degree or certificate program has learning outcomes that build upon the institutional outcomes. All courses have learning outcomes that support the program outcomes. Additionally, each degree program and stand alone certificate program has developed mission statements that support learning outcomes and the mission of the college. These mission statements and

learning outcomes are published in the catalog and on the college website. A matrix aligning outcomes is in the evidence room under Standards 2 and 4.

Table 3: Programs of Study by Department

Department	BS	AS	Number of Certificates Offered by the Department
General Education		General Studies	0
Business and Technology		Business Administration	6
Health and Natural Sciences	Health Science	Health Science	11
		Medical Assisting	
		Respiratory Care	
		Environmental Studies	
Social Science and Education	Child Study	Early Childhood Education	4
		Human Services	
		Criminal Justice	
		Homeland Security	
Nursing	RN-to-BSN	Nursing (ADN)	0

Curriculum is the purview of the faculty. Faculty members from each academic discipline review and revise their curricula as needed. Maintaining state statutes and programmatic accreditation guidelines, and in consultation with the appropriate DC/PD, faculty modify curricula through the assessment and review process. New courses are developed by appropriately credentialed and experienced faculty. Minor changes in curriculum or course content are approved at the department level. Major changes and new courses are approved by the Academic Affairs committee.

The curriculum follows a suggested course sequencing that maximizes student learning, including mastery of knowledge, information resources, and methods and theories related to a field of study. Introductory courses serve as prerequisites for advanced courses. The suggested sequencing of courses allows for a logical step-wise progression of knowledge and skill development. For example, to ensure attainment of skills and knowledge required to advance, nursing students must first successfully complete the math elective, biology, anatomy and physiology, and chemistry before applying to and enrolling in the Associate in Nursing. The new baccalaureate degrees offer program-specific 300- and 400-level courses that provide students with the opportunity to explore program-specific topics in depth.

The faculty use a variety of instructional methods and resources to meet the needs of the students and in support of the college’s mission. These pedagogical techniques include, but are not limited to, lecture, writing, multi-media presentation, group discussion, student presentations, collaborative work, and when appropriate, laboratory and clinical experiences and service learning projects.

While it is our hope that students will complete their baccalaureate degree at Goodwin College, we recognize that it is not always possible. To support students further,

articulation agreements are in place with select colleges for students who plan to complete their baccalaureate elsewhere.

English as a Second Language

English as a Second Language (ESL) is a Continuing Education program and is viewed as central to our mission as a college. The ESL students take a Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Survey (CASAS) test to determine placement in one of the four levels of study. The 48 credits received for the ESL Certificate are institutional credits only and cannot be transferred or applied to a degree program.

Integrity in the Award of Academic Credit

Requirements for continuation in, termination from, and re-admission to academic programs are published in the catalog. In addition, general graduation requirements are communicated to students, their families and other interested parties through the website and the student handbooks. All degree requirements are on every program's official college degree plan.

The residency requirement for Goodwin College is 25%, with the last 12 credits of the degree completed at the college. To be awarded the Bachelor of Science degree from Goodwin College, students must complete a minimum of 45 credits at the 200-level or higher, including a minimum of 30 credits at the 300- and 400-levels. To ensure the integrity of the major, and with the exception of the nursing program which requires 26 nursing credits be completed at Goodwin College, students must complete a minimum of 15 credits in their major at Goodwin College.

To ensure that students can graduate within the published program length, all courses are offered at least once over two consecutive years. Beginning with the 2009-2010 catalog, course descriptions include the semesters in which the course is scheduled to be offered, to help students in planning toward program completion. To guarantee curriculum delivery, Goodwin College does not utilize resources outside of its direct control, including classrooms, information resources or testing sites.

Through the assessment process, faculty may determine that a curriculum change would be beneficial to students. In such cases, students are given the choice to complete their program under the catalog in effect upon enrollment or transfer to the new curriculum.

The Faculty are responsible for the integrity of student grades. The Faculty feel strongly about academic integrity, as reflected in the recently updated Academic Integrity policy. This document was developed by the Faculty Senate and clarifies the policies and procedures surrounding the issues of plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic misconduct.

Goodwin College makes every effort to support all of its academic programs. In rare cases, the decision to discontinue a program does occur. In the event a program is terminated, the courses remain available and are listed until all matriculated students have completed the required courses. Only then are courses removed from our catalog. The last program to be discontinued was the Associate in Computer Systems Technology, which was discontinued after several years of minimal enrollment.

Administrative Oversight

Department chairs are responsible for the overall management of each department, ensuring the quality of the programs and courses offered. Program directors are responsible for daily activities of their respective degree and certificate programs.

Together, they ensure the quality of instruction through faculty observation and evaluation. These managers, working with department faculty, are responsible for continuous assessment of program outcomes through department meeting and the review of syllabi and curriculum. The VP of Academic Affairs convenes a twice-monthly Chairs/Directors meeting to discuss issues, seek support, develop joint departmental ventures, and openly discuss future planning for the College.

Faculty assign appropriate credit and course designation based on state and regional guidelines for assigning credit, as well as *The Guidelines for Defining Course Levels*. Goodwin College retains authority and responsibility for the design and content of all courses, including internships, externships, and clinical experiences. The college does not award joint degrees with other colleges.

The Faculty oversee the curriculum. Their selection and qualifications are essential to the integrity of the award of credit. Faculty members are selected according to their educational background, experience, skills, and attitude. The Faculty engage in professional development in the form of attending and presenting at conferences. Several full-time faculty members are pursuing terminal degrees. The Faculty undergo yearly evaluations to ensure the effectiveness of their teaching. In addition, students evaluate courses and instruction at the conclusion of each course by completing a course evaluation survey.

Courses are offered in traditional and non-traditional formats, such as concentrated seven and ½ week courses, weekend, online and/or hybrids to accommodate the various learning and lifestyle needs of our students. Regardless of format, all courses are developed and conducted in a consistent manner. Furthermore, students enrolled in non-traditional format courses receive and have access to the same resources as those enrolled in traditional courses. Examples of this support include library services, IT support, and the Learning Resource Center.

The development of online courses has been carefully implemented. In many cases, the same faculty members develop and teach both online and on-ground courses. To ensure course consistency for online courses, the Director of Distance Learning works with department chairs and program directors to implement these courses. Currently, Goodwin does not offer a full program online.

Prior Learning

Goodwin College appreciates that students come to our institution having already acquired college-level learning:

- from credits earned at other colleges and universities,
- from courses taken in a professional development or career training setting, and/or,
- over the course of the student's life through job, volunteer, and personal experiences.

The College strives to make the awarding of credit for prior learning as student-friendly as possible. To this end, there are clearly articulated policies regarding the transfer and award of credit. These policies and procedures originate in the Transfer Credit Committee, composed of faculty and staff from a variety of departments including the Registrar's Office, Academic Advising and Counseling, and Admissions. Students are made aware of these policies through the catalog, student handbook, and college website. There are two ways in which a student can earn collegiate credit for prior-learning:

- Transfer of Collegiate Credit, and
- Credit Awarded for Experiential Learning.

A full-time Transfer Evaluation Counselor was hired in 2009 to coordinate all transfer and award of credit activities. The College created this position to improve communication of transfer issues to all of its students.

Transfer credit is awarded only upon receipt of official transcripts. For courses to be transferred, they must meet the following criteria: (a) reflect appropriate levels of academic quality; (b) taken at accredited degree-granting institutions; (c) have a recorded grade of 'C' or better; and (d) be directly applicable to the Goodwin College curriculum. Transfer credit is not awarded for pre-college or remedial level courses or graduate credit. In addition, foreign student transcripts must be evaluated by a National Association Credentialing Evaluation Services (NACES) approved evaluator. The list of NACES approved evaluators is available on the website and catalog.

The college has invested in a computer program entitled Transfer Evaluation System (TES) to organize and make course equivalencies available to all college staff; ultimately, a public version of these equivalencies will be published on the College website.

Goodwin College values experiential learning and is working to become the school of choice for older, adult learners. Several avenues are available to the student for the awarding of experiential credit, including credit earned at non-collegiate institutions, proof of licensure/certification, military training, credit-by-exam, and portfolio assessment. Students may earn up to 50% of their degree through experiential credit.

Students who complete courses through non-collegiate institutions may earn experiential credit on a course-by-course basis based on:

- Recommendations of the American Council on Education's (ACE) National Guide to Credit Recommendations for Non-Collegiate Courses and Connecticut Department of Higher Education Guidelines,
- Evidence that the learning relates directly to what is learned in courses that are part of the Goodwin College curriculum,
- Sufficient documentation that the learning is equivalent to college-level instruction, and
- An earned grade of 'C' or higher for the course.

This type of evaluation and award is coordinated and approved by the appropriate faculty and Transfer Counselor.

In a limited number of circumstances, Goodwin College awards experiential credit based upon proof of the student's completion of current certifications. These licensure/certifications are selected and evaluated by the faculty. A list of approved licensure/certifications is available on the College website.

Military personnel may request that an official transcript of their learning experiences be sent to Goodwin College. Credit awards are based on the recommendations put forth in the ACE Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services and completed by Goodwin College's Transfer Counselor in conjunction with the appropriate faculty.

Goodwin College awards experiential credit for a wide range of both internal and national standardized exams. The College follows ACE recommendations for passing scores but all final decisions regarding the acceptability of an exam and the required passing score is determined by the appropriate faculty. Currently, Goodwin accepts credit for exams offered

through CLEP, Advanced Placement, Dantes DSST, and Excelsior exams. A comprehensive list of acceptable exams and minimum passing scores is available on the College website.

In the past year, a portfolio assessment program was developed. A completed portfolio is submitted to a faculty committee for review and possible award of credit. A portfolio is either a paper or electronic book that describes and documents a student's learning; it provides evidence of what the student knows and can do related to the outcomes of the Goodwin College curricula. Award of credit is not guaranteed.

Student appeals of transfer and/or experiential credit evaluations are handled through the Department Chair or Program Director. If a satisfactory result is not achieved, the student may continue to pursue the appeals process through the Academic Review Committee. Information regarding the appeals process is available on the college website.

Assessment of Student Learning

Goodwin College remains committed to offering a quality educational experience to its students. Therefore, the college takes seriously its obligation to evaluate its academic programs and to utilize all data collected in a continuous planning and improvement process. Direct responsibility for program assessment lies with the department chairs and program directors. Assessment data is shared among key governance groups including the College Leadership Council and the Academic Affairs Committee. In May of 2008, a Director of Educational Assessment was hired to facilitate all institutional assessment efforts.

Responsibility for the college's academic programs is shared among the college's academic officers, department chair, program directors and faculty. The senior academic officers include the Executive VP/Provost, VP for Academic Affairs, and VP for Institutional Effectiveness. The VP for Academic Affairs chairs the Board of Trustees' Academic and Faculty Affairs subcommittee and the Academic Affairs Committee. In consultation with departmental leadership, they ensure the academic rigor, quality of instruction and ongoing improvement of the academic programs. The VP for Institutional Effectiveness monitors programs for compliance with governing bodies and facilitates the collection and dissemination of assessment data analysis.

The VP for Institutional Effectiveness chairs the College Committee on Assessment (CCA), comprised of both faculty and administration. The committee's mission includes monitoring the quality of course and program offerings through both the formal and annual program review process. In its third year, the CCA reviews all the academic programs and support services; determines whether outcomes were achieved; and documents evidence of curricular or service improvement. As described in more detail in Chapter 2, the strength of the process is the collection of student learning outcomes and documentation of the effectiveness of curricular improvements.

All program curricula are evaluated regularly by collecting data and discussing that data with key stakeholders, such as faculty, advisory boards, and senior academic officers. These discussions lead to additional planning and monitoring improvements designed to enhance student learning. The Faculty plays a vital role in the collection of the data and implementation of changes. Department meetings allow faculty the opportunity to review the curriculum, progress of annual department objectives, and to plan for the future. Each department sets new objectives to address the need for improvements, thus enabling the college to allocate resources on the basis of its academic plans, budget requests, and goals.

In addition to evaluating student learning at the course level, the college evaluates learning at the departmental level through regular program review. While the college's program

review process is in its infancy, the process has been embraced by faculty and staff. Reported on Form E and on the College Committee on Assessment website are examples of data that were collected and the curricular improvements that were made as a result. Evidence of student learning is documented. Program review is completed by the faculty, guided by the College Committee on Assessment and eventually reported and discussed with the college leadership.

All programs use a combination of direct and indirect assessment tools to understand the extent to which students are assimilating, synthesizing and processing materials being studied. While our established programs can demonstrate "best practices", newer programs are still developing assessment skills. For instance, clinical rotations, internships and/or capstone experiences in Nursing, and the allied health programs allow the student to apply theoretical knowledge to practical patient-focused learning experiences. Examples of capstone and clinical experiences are described in course syllabi and are located in the evidence room. Ultimately, these experiences are evaluated through successful completion of licensing examinations.

In addition to data collected within departments, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) makes data and analytical reports available to the community through reports at department meetings and website publications. For instance, students and faculty completed a national engagement survey, CCSE and FSSE. The results highlighted the agreement of faculty and student regarding the college's high level of academic rigor. The discussion of these data at the fall 2009 Community Day lent support for the recent decision to expand the hours and staff of the college's writing center. A subcommittee of the College's Faculty Forum is currently reviewing the data and will use it to set the agenda for the coming year.

The external review of academic programs also helps to ensure quality. Wherever possible, academic programs have either obtained or are seeking external professional accreditation. This process requires regular program review by an external visiting team. The process results are documented in program strengths and action plans to address weaknesses. Furthermore, all academic programs, including certificates, engage in formal program review every five years, followed by ongoing annual program review. Only recently have these programs considered expanding external input beyond discussions with advisory boards to include visits from their colleagues at regional colleges (e.g., assessment mini-grants).

Institutional Effectiveness

The college leadership has lent significant support to the programmatic assessment process since the last NEASC visit. A full-time, doctorally prepared Director of Educational Assessment was hired to support the academic departments with program review and assessment in the major. The college's formal review process was revised with the help of an external consultant, Dr. Barbara Walvoord. A new template for both the five-year cycle and annual cycle was adopted. As described in detail in Standard 2, all programs participate in program review every year. Reflective discussions on the process resulted in simplifying the reporting template the first year. Discussions on assessment methods resulted in workshops to help faculty develop rubrics as assessment tools.

As reported on Form E, all programs have identified student learning outcomes and publish them in the catalog and on the website. Assessment of learning outcomes has resulted in numerous program changes as outlined on the E forms. Every program collects evidence of student learning and discusses it with their staff, and when possible, their advisory boards.

Curricular improvements such as changes in textbooks, revised assignments or new courses are documented in their year-end reports stored on the CCA website. Program Directors are beginning to bring an external perspective to their program review process by inviting faculty from other local colleges to review student work.

Additionally, the OIE collects data on retention rates, graduation rates, placement rates, and licensure and certification rates. All of the data and analysis are shared with the campus community.

The Academic Affairs Committee, along with the department chairs, program directors and faculty anticipate, address, and approve substantive programmatic changes. The OIE has increased its activity to collect, analyze and distribute survey data. Our ongoing assessment practices and related planning discussions are designed to capture unforeseen changes that result from our move to the higher degree. Finally, the College Committee on Assessment will monitor the effectiveness of the program review process.

Appraisal

Goodwin College continues to offer programs that focus on the college's mission to bridge education and enterprise. The curricula and programs offered are academically sound and are grounded in real-world experiences that prepare our students to enter the workforce upon graduation.

The open admission policy continues to be both a strength and challenge for the college. This policy allows Goodwin College to fulfill its mission of serving a highly diverse student population. Many students who thought college degrees were out of their reach, or who have not realized success at other institutions, have been successful here. Our commitment to individualized attention has allowed us to help these students attain a college degree. However, the open admission policy also limits our ability to identify students early who do not have the aptitude to complete their chosen field of study. At this time, Goodwin has obtained an SAT and ACT code for prospective students. Though we do not plan to use the SAT or ACT score as an admission criteria, we are hopeful that the SAT data will provide us with additional information about our incoming students that can be used for placement purposes. We are also looking at the possibility of using SAT and/or ACT scores in addition to the Accuplacer[®] for placement into English and math.

Since the last NEASC visit, the college has continued to offer and develop new associate degrees that meet the needs of our students and community. The feedback from employer and graduate surveys, as well as the results of credentialing exams, indicates that students are learning the published learning outcomes. The offering of baccalaureate degrees is a significant step in the college's history. The college anticipates that the bachelor degrees will build on the solid foundation of its associate degrees and will provide additional educational and employment opportunities for our students.

Strength in our programs comes from the active engagement of faculty. The Faculty have a substantive voice in the development, implementation, and assessment of curriculum and program design. For example, faculty engagement played a significant role in the development of the curriculum and the new 30- and 400-level courses. Faculty participation on the Baccalaureate Task Force provided meaningful recommendations that were adopted as policy to guide the college as it develops a baccalaureate culture.

An important outcome of the offering of bachelor degree programs is the increased opportunity for students to select elective courses. The revision of the associate degree

general education perspectives provides students with the opportunity to choose elective courses within the general education disciplines. However, due to the highly specialized nature of our associate degree programs, plans of study typically include directed electives to aid the student in fulfilling their graduation requirements. The baccalaureate programs provide more opportunities for students to explore open electives.

Highlights of the departmental accomplishments that have occurred since the last NEASC visit include:

- **Business Administration:** faculty-driven implementation of the new computer literacy curriculum to increase student learning and allow for better assessment of student learning;
- **General Education:** faculty-led development of the new perspectives and competencies; creation of the AS in General Studies; and the development of new courses to support the BS degrees;
- **Health and Natural Sciences:** faculty-driven course development to support new programs; development of the AS and BS in Health Science; accreditation site visit for Histologic Science in Fall 2009; initial accreditation from Commission on Accreditation for Allied Health Education Programs in Spring 2009; increased intra-program faculty collaboration with the creation of the department;
- **Social Science and Education:** development of the BS in Child Studies; the preparation for the national accreditation visit for the Early Childhood Education program; alignment of the Human Services curriculum and assessment framework to meet the Council for Standards in Human Services Education in anticipation of a professional accreditation visit in spring 2011; creation of the AS in Homeland Security in 2005, the first degree of its kind in the State of Connecticut; and
- **Nursing:** initial National League of Nursing accreditation of the ADN program; full-approval from the State Board of Examiners for Nursing from attainment of greater than 80% first-time licensing exam pass rate; the development of the RN-to-BSN degree.

General Education

The General Education faculty made several significant revisions to the programs of study since the last NEASC visit. The development of the perspectives and competencies assures our students are in the best possible position to fulfill the goals of a well educated person as well as have the greatest flexibility in course selection. The department is implementing its plan for assessing the perspectives and is focusing on writing. General education instructors are currently discussing how to support other faculty who reinforce general education outcomes within the major courses (e.g., sharing common rubrics, offering professional development such as writing across the curriculum, etc.).

Although Goodwin College does an adequate job in measuring the preparedness of incoming students in math and English through Accuplacer placement testing, more work needs to be done. A study to assess the accuracy of cut-off scores for placement is currently in the planning phase. Over the next few months, the OIE will collect data on cut-off scores in relation to the success of students measured by retention rates, graduation rates and in completion of English 101.

Administrative Oversight

The college has ensured that there is sufficient oversight of the academic programs. Since the last NEASC visit, numerous program director positions have been added to support new programs. The three largest departments, General Education, Health and Natural Science, and Nursing, are headed by department chairs. Currently the department chair position is vacant for the departments of Business and Technology and Social Science and Education. The VP of Academic Affairs serves as the interim chair of both departments. As the college

moves forward in offering additional baccalaureate degrees, the organization of the departments is being examined to ensure effective oversight of curriculum. Some departments may need to be combined while others may need to be divided. The General Education department, for instance, has increased its core and elective course offerings and faculty to support the bachelor degrees. This department may need to be split into two, three or more departments. The Business and Technology Department offers only one degree program. This department may be merged with another similar department. This realignment will require thoughtful discussions among faculty, administration and the Board of Trustees.

The organizational structure of the academic department has been restructured with an eye to the future. Under the direction of the Executive VP/Provost, the VP for Academic Affairs directly oversees all academic departments. Under the VP for Academic Affairs, two new dean positions, Dean of Faculty and Dean of Students, remain open. The college recognizes that the VP for Academic Affairs currently serves not only this key leadership position but also in several interim positions. We hope to fill at least one of the vacant Dean positions by September 2010.

The college has made a commitment to increasing the number of faculty with terminal degrees through its hiring practice. Since January 2008, six new faculty with terminal degrees have been hired. Furthermore, the college has made a significant commitment to supporting current faculty in their pursuit of a terminal degree. The Doctoral-Preparation Assistance policy provides tuition assistance for full-time faculty pursuing a doctoral degree. Currently, one nursing faculty and the Chair of the Health and Natural Science department are supported by this program. The Child Study Program Director and four nursing faculty are currently applying to a doctoral program and plan to utilize this assistance. It is significant to note that these three faculty members serve the three departments that offer 300- and 400-level courses.

Traditionally, faculty responsibility is balanced between teaching, service, and research. In light of the college's focus on graduating practitioners and beginning scholars, the primary focus of faculty at Goodwin has been and will remain on effective teaching and service to the college and community. However, as we create a baccalaureate culture, we anticipate that faculty will become more engaged in scholarly activity in the form of presentations and publications, both on and off campus. Faculty have already shared their expertise as evidenced by presentations at national conferences and publications. The college has begun collecting and recording scholarly activities of faculty. A list will be available in the evidence room.

Integrity in Awarding Academic Credit

The faculty developed sufficient guidelines to ensure consistency in the award of credit and the development of new courses. Furthermore, procedures are in place to assure that courses have the same learning outcomes, regardless of the format of delivery. With the development of the BS degrees, the adoption of *The Guidelines for Defining Course Levels* has ensured all courses are appropriately numbered.

Like faculty at other institutions, Goodwin faculty has encountered cheating, plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct. As a result, the Faculty Senate revised its Academic Integrity policy. In terms of definitions and appropriate consequences, this policy will serve as a guide for students and faculty regarding issues of academic integrity.

Policies have also been developed to ensure appropriate award of credit for prior learning. Significant work has been completed to support transfer of credit and the award of

experiential credit. The hiring of a full-time transfer counselor and the purchase of the TES software indicates that the college recognized the need for increased infrastructure to support the BS degrees. The development of the Transfer Committee is another important step in ensuring appropriate policies and procedures regarding the award of credit. The Transfer Committee reports to the Academic Affairs committee, ensuring additional faculty and administrative oversight for transfer of credit.

In addition, portfolio assessment is coordinated on a student-by-student basis through the Director of Educational Assessment. At this time, the portfolio assessment program is being reformed to include a formal collegiate course to aid the student in portfolio creation and completion. The college hopes to offer the first course in the summer 2010 semester.

Assessment of Student Learning

In the past, Goodwin College has relied heavily on indirect evidence of student learning such as survey results, retention, and placement rates. The institution recognizes that these types of tools, while necessary and valuable, are only part of the assessment process. A challenge has been to collect both direct and indirect evidence or to include multiple data collection periods before implementing changes. This past year, departments began adding "assessment of student learning" as a standing agenda item at departmental and advisory board meetings. However, program-level review only captures some of the many faculty-led assessment activities happening within the departments.

The offering of upper division courses increases the complexity of assessment of student learning outcomes. The college is committed to supporting the faculty's efforts for assessment and evaluation at the classroom level. Assessment will continue to be the focus of professional development activities.

One strength of the college's oversight process is that many people are involved. First, as reported on Form E, established programs have earned professional as well as regional accreditation. Maintaining accreditation requires regular internal and external oversight. Furthermore, the faculty has assurance that students are meeting professional competencies and knowledge through review of licensure/certification rates, as well as employer and graduate surveys. The new shared governance structure promotes the sharing of assessment data and "closes the loop."

Areas of Achievement

- Development and implementation of strong and varied selection of programs that respond to the needs of the community and that directly support the Mission of Goodwin College.
- Academic programs designed to promote student success.
- The creation of the Milestone policy in 2009.
- The revision of the associate and development of the bachelor general education core.
- Use of technology to provide individualized instructional programs such as MODUMATH®.
- Shared oversight of academic programs with groups who meet regularly enabling the college to be proactive and quick to respond to issues.
- Development of a three-year Academic Plan.
- Supportive administration that ensures appropriate oversight and sufficient resources for the programs.
- Dedicated and creative department chairs and program directors who are actively improving and growing their programs in response to student and community needs.

- Enthusiastic faculty committed to sharing assessment best practices and willing to engage in and suggest improvements to the new program review process.
- Appointment of the new transfer counselor position has expanded support for our student-friendly transfer and award of credit process. Students are provided with the maximum opportunity to receive credit for courses that were taken elsewhere while maintaining the integrity of our program learning outcomes.
- A realistic academic assessment process has been implemented for the college.

Areas of Concern

- Implementation of the Shared Governance Model and the activities in the Tier 1 and Tier 2 committees are evolving and will need to be examined annually to ensure quality academic programs and experiences.
- Although we currently assess cut-off scores, the method of tracking and analysis can be improved to accurately place students in foundational coursework.
- Lack of assessment of foundational courses in preparing at-risk students for college success.
- The possible need for a reorganization of academic departments in response to the addition of new programs and courses.
- A VP for Academic Affairs that currently fulfills vacant dean and department chair positions.

Projections

Goodwin College will continue to develop as a regionally-accredited baccalaureate institution. The college will continue to develop programs that meet the needs of our students and the State of Connecticut. Goodwin College recognizes the importance of planning for the future and has developed an organizational structure that will support the growth of the academic programs. A restructuring of academic departments may be necessary. Vacant positions that are currently staffed by the VP of Academic Affairs will be filled. Furthermore, the college will increase the number of faculty possessing a terminal degree in support of the baccalaureate programs.

The Academic Department has created a three-year Academic Plan that is aligned with the five-year Strategic Plan. The Academic Plan will serve as a guide for the department's activities, including the development of new associate and bachelor degrees. The guide also calls for increased offerings in online education. Currently, the college does not offer a complete program online. The college plans to develop its first complete online program, Histologic Science, in 2010.

The college will seek additional ways of improving its programs through assessment. In particular, the college will regularly review and evaluate its program review processes for academic and service departments. The college will also implement a process for assessing its institutional-level outcomes. Through the use of curriculum mapping, faculty learned where students have opportunities to achieve those outcomes. The next step is to determine the best way to evaluate student learning. At the writing of this self-study, faculty are assessing the first institutional-level outcome: "Students will demonstrate proficiency in their chosen field of study." The department chairs and program directors will meet to discuss the effectiveness of student internships and clinical experiences and to identify areas for improvement.

The college community will continue to learn about assessment and augment the assessment plan with new initiatives. For example, this next year will focus on assessing student learning in high-enrollment, multiple section courses such as computer literacy and the freshmen experience courses. Finally, the evaluation of student learning outcomes with respect to the new general education perspectives and competencies must remain a part of this review process. At the writing of this self-study, it is too early to report on the success of students in achieving our general education outcomes. Toward this end, the general education committee is in the process of creating rubrics for each of the perspectives to be used for teaching and assessment purposes.

To achieve these goals, the college will:

- Fill vacant department chair positions by September 2010. Fill one vacant Dean positions by September 2010 and the second by September 2011.
- Implement and continuously update the three-year Academic Plan. The VP for Academic Affairs, in conjunction with the Academic Affairs Committee, will monitor and assess the effectiveness of the Plan.
- Develop new programs that meet the needs of the greater Hartford area and the State of Connecticut. The next proposed AS degree is the Associate in Science in Occupational Therapy Assisting (OTA), which will be submitted to the Department of Higher Education during the spring of 2010. It is anticipated that a Bachelor of Science in Organizational Studies will be the next baccalaureate program, both in an on-ground and online format.
- In addition to online courses, Goodwin College will continue to offer courses in a hybrid or blended format. The college will also seek approval from the state of Connecticut and NEASC to offer its first online program in 2010. To meet the needs of our students and the market, Histologic Science was chosen to be the first program offered by Goodwin College in a complete online format.
- Develop additional 300- and 400-level general education courses to support the growth of bachelor degree programs.
- Continue to develop a collegial environment that attracts exceptional employees, values holistic wellness, and affords personal and professional growth opportunities. In particular, the college will seek to recruit candidates possessing doctoral degrees, as well as support current faculty who are pursuing doctoral degrees.
- Maintain close community ties and work diligently to improve the college's status in the greater Hartford community. This will be done by expanding partnerships with businesses and advisory committee membership to model lifelong learning and the promotion of civic responsibility. This will also help to ensure our curricula continue to prepare students for future employment success.
- Evaluate the Program Review process in 2010 to ensure that the process focuses on student learning outcomes and ongoing effectiveness institution-wide. Use the results of the evaluation to guide any changes to the evaluation process.
- Assess the institutional-level and general education learning outcomes to document student success and to improve the curriculum as needed.
- Increase the number of students using Prior Learning Assessment by increasing student awareness and the availability of this opportunity for earning experiential credit.
- Use available data to analyze and assess the placement of students into foundational courses, the success rate of these students, and the appropriateness of the cut-off scores being used. This study is scheduled for completion by June 2010.