

# ASNUNTUCK COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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## Fifth-Year Report

Submitted to the  
New England Association of Schools and  
Colleges

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# Asnuntuck Community College Fifth-Year NEASC Report

## Table of Contents

I. Introduction and Statement on Report Preparation	3
II. Institutional Overview	7
III. Response to Areas of Special Emphasis	10
o Ensuring Institution is financially stable	
o Implementing a system of institutional assessment	
o Evaluation of the new system of institutional governance	
IV. The Standards	
Standard 1 Mission and Purpose	14
Standard 2 Planning and Evaluation	17
Standard 3 Organization and Governance	22
Standard 4 Academic Program	26
Standard 5 Faculty	36
Standard 6 Students	39
Standard 7 Library and Other Information Resources	45
Standard 8 Physical and Technical Resources	49
Standard 9 Financial Resources	53
Standard 10 Public Disclosure	56
Standard 11 Integrity	58
V. Current and Future Plans	62
VI. Appendices	
A. Data First Forms: General Information and Standards 1-11 (Organization Charts included here.)	
B. Student Success Form (Series E 1a and 1b).	
C. Student Success Form (Series S)	
D. Additional Supporting Materials:	
1. College and Division Mission Statements	
2. Strategic Plan 2008-2011	
3. Technology Strategic Plan 2009-2011	
4. College Council Charter (Revised 2009)	
5. Charges to Newly Established Governance Committees	
6. Institutional Effectiveness Survey	
7. ACC Foundation Mini-Grants	
8. Academic Skills Center Annual Report	

## Introduction and Statement on Report Preparation

Asnuntuck Community College (ACC) completed its last self-study and NEASC site visit in 2005. At the time of ACC's continued accreditation (April 20, 2006), the college was asked to submit a two-year progress report that focused on five areas of special emphasis (ASE's): planning, governance, academic assessment, faculty evaluation, and information literacy.

The report submitted in March 2008 can be summarized as follows:

The report discusses college-wide improvements to planning and budget procedures. Specific attention is given to strategies developed to use data when setting priorities and to link our priorities to resource allocation. The successful adoption of our governance system is reviewed, and the progress made in student learning outcomes, program review, and graduation learning competencies. The discussion includes a particular focus on information literacy. The process for faculty evaluation is defined and its current status summarized.

We were also asked to address the following three ASE's in our fifth-year interim report: our continuing success in ensuring financial stability, implementing institutional assessment, and evaluating the effectiveness of governance. These are addressed in Section III of this report. Updated information on the five ASE's from the 2008 progress report is included within the appropriate Standard.

The period since Asnuntuck submitted its progress report has been one of exciting enrollment increases, academic program growth, student life enhancements, expansion of non-credit offerings, technology and classroom upgrades, and improvements of the facility. This period has also been one of budget challenges and personnel changes due to retirements.

In fiscal year 2009, the state of Connecticut offered a retirement incentive program that resulted in Asnuntuck Community College losing many senior faculty and staff. The impact of such losses to a small college cannot be overstated. To offer a few examples:

- In September 2008, we had 30 full-time faculty; in September 2009, we had 21.
- Our entire Admissions Department retired.
- 50 percent of our Business Office staff retired.
- Our Director of Continuing Education retired, leaving, at the time, only one member of the President's Cabinet who has worked at the college for longer than two years.

These changes created challenges and opportunities. As this report demonstrates, we successfully faced the former and were able to maximize the latter. This was achieved by focusing our priorities and keeping students and learning at the forefront of our decision-making.

Preliminary preparation of this report began in August 2009, with the understanding that the better part of the analysis of data, reflection, and writing would be completed throughout the

spring semester. The budget approvals to refill positions came in August 2009 and during the fall semester, the entire campus was involved in refilling the positions left vacant by retirements.

At a college-wide professional day on August 27, 2009, the Dean of Academic Affairs led a discussion entitled, "NEASC Fifth-Year Report: First Steps." At this and subsequent meetings during the fall semester, decisions were made regarding Data First Forms and the report committee structure. As most faculty and staff members felt that the structure used for the 2005 self-study worked well, it was agreed that we would proceed in a similar fashion. The Dean of Academic Affairs, the Director of Institutional Research, and Jean Egan (a senior faculty member) would offer general oversight and support. Professor Egan was granted a course release for spring 2010.

On October 8, 2009, members of Cabinet, the Director of Institutional Research, and the academic department chairs attended the training on Data First Forms held at Middlesex Community College (CT). On November 13, 2009, Robert Froh visited Asnuntuck Community College, and the President, Cabinet, and Director of Institutional Research met with him in a productive question and answer session.

At the January professional days, two sessions were dedicated to the report. One focused on the Data First Forms, and the second was a college-wide kick-off meeting at which timelines and specific guidance were distributed to committees. Committees chose their own co-chairs with the stipulation that one should be faculty and one should be a staff member. Students and adjunct faculty participated as well. Each committee was assigned a Cabinet member who was available as a resource, but who did not attend committee meetings and did not contribute to the draft reports. The process was highly participatory with over 90 percent of full-time faculty and staff serving on a committee.

All committees began working immediately on completing the Data First Forms. On February 26, Professor Egan offered an open forum Q&A to address questions and concerns that were emerging as the committees proceeded. Professor Egan also served as liaison between committees and worked closely with the Director of Institutional Research to ensure the committees received the data they needed. Professor Egan oversaw deadlines and the review of drafts written by the committees. During the last two weeks of April, the committees reviewed and commented on all drafts. During the first two weeks of May, the drafts were reviewed and commented on by the entire campus community, including members of the President's Cabinet. All reviews were conducted electronically to encourage participation and feedback. Final revisions were completed during June and July. A draft report was submitted to NEASC staff for comments in mid-July.

The Committee assignments were as follows:

**General oversight and NEASC Liaisons:**

Barbara McCarthy, Dean of Academic Affairs

Jean Egan, Professor of Psychology, Sociology and Management

Qing Mack, Institutional Research Director

**Committee for Standards 1, 2, and 3**

**Pat Hirschy, co-chair, Professor of Mathematics**  
**Tom Vesci, co-chair, Media Services Director**  
Donna Jones Searle, Director of Financial Aid  
Bev Jemison, Student Services Counselor  
Faye Campbell, Administrative Assistant  
David Dardanelli, College Council Student Representative  
*Cabinet Resource: Barbara McCarthy, Dean of Academic Affairs*

**Committee for Standard 4**

**Lou Sapia, co-chair, Instructor of Computer and Information Systems**  
**Cathy Juozokas, co-chair, Director, Academic Skills Center**  
Donna Landerman, Professor of Sociology and Psychology  
Teresa Foley, Instructor of Mathematics  
Nick Lefakis, Professor of Accounting  
Don Boyd, Professor of Criminal Justice  
Mike Rood, Professor of Psychology  
Tim St. James, Director of Admissions  
Stacy Lanigan, Associate Director, Career Services /Admissions  
Andrea Skidgel, Office Assistant  
Debbie Matusko, Secretary II  
Chris Hanecak, Information Technology Network Manager  
Jessica Campbell, Administrative Assistant  
*Cabinet Resource: Barbara McCarthy, Dean of Academic Affairs*

**Committee for Standards 5 and 7**

**Vince Motto, co-chair, Professor of Mathematics/Computer and Information Systems**  
**Ravil Veli, co-chair, Director of Library Services**  
Jean Egan, Professor of Psychology, Sociology, and Management  
Pam Keenan, Children's Reading Room Assistant  
Maria Ragno, Assistant Registrar  
Edwina Trentham, Professor of English  
Maki McHenry, Student Services Counselor  
Elle Van Dermark, Instructor of History  
Sage LaCroix, Instructor of Biology  
Heidi Fitzgerald, Instructor of Business  
Bob Bressani, Instructor of Business & Industry Services  
*Cabinet Resource: Katie Watkins, Dean of Student Services*

**Committee for Standard 6**

**Karen Dardanelli, co-chair, Evening Coordinator**  
**Cheryl Turgeon, co-chair, Associate Professor of Computer and Information Systems**  
Michaela Mullarkey, Associate Professor of Developmental Studies  
Beth Egan, Associate Director of Financial Aid  
Jenna Crawford, Administrative Assistant  
Susan Briggs, Program Specialist, Center for Professional and Community Education  
Michelle Coach, Instructor of Biology

Chris Foster, Manufacturing Technology  
*Cabinet Resource: Katie Watkins, Dean of Student Services*

**Committee for Standards 8 and 9**

**Jim Wilkinson, co-chair, Associate Professor of Business**

**Joe Muller, co-chair, Building Superintendent I**

Lynn Gregor, Director of Information Technology

Tom Cardarella, Instructor of Business & Industry Services

Amanda Baron, Secretary II

Julie Cotnoir, College Career Pathways Coordinator & Retention Specialist

Gail Labbadia, Registrar

*Cabinet Resource: Tim Hurlock, Dean of Administrative Services*

**Committee for Standards 10 and 11**

**John Sheirer, co-chair, Professor of English**

**Katie O'Connell, co-chair, Director of Educational Technology**

Kathleen Morrison, Executive Assistant to the President

Zakiah Barksdale, Professor of English

Maura Gardiner, Director of Business & Industry Services

Cheryl Cyr, AAO/Coordinator of HRMS

Jodi Weller, Financial Aid Assistant

Duncan Morris, Fiscal Administrative Officer

Maria Patenaude, Secretary I

Ben Durant, Media Specialist

Wendy Nelson, Assistant Professor of Communications and Broadcasting

Stan Kochanek, Instructor of Business & Industry Services

*Cabinet Resource: Joe Bleicher, Director of Human Resources*

## Institutional Overview

Asnuntuck Community College is a comprehensive public two-year college, one of twelve in the state system, in its fourth decade of service to the citizens of north central Connecticut. Our fall 2009 credit enrollment was 1,808 students (1,013 FTE), and our spring 2010 credit enrollment was 1,789 students (995 FTE). During academic year 2009-2010, we also served 1,402 students (totaling 2,262 seats) through our non-credit programs.

ACC is authorized to grant certificates and associate's degrees by the Connecticut Board of Governors of Higher Education (BOGHE). Our degree programs in Liberal Arts, Business, and Computer Information Systems are designed for transfer. Our career programs and certificates are in Early Childhood Education, Criminal Justice, Human Services, and Manufacturing Technology. Most career programs have career ladder options. We provide workforce development with a variety of non-credit programs with a special focus in Allied Health. We also offer credit courses in the six corrections institutions located in our service area.

## Significant Developments

**Continued Enrollment Growth:** The main campus headcount increased 7 percent in both of the last two semesters, with fall enrollment rising to 1,715 from 1,607 in 2008 and spring enrollment growing to 1,708 from 1,598 in 2009. Moreover, our FTE enrollment reached 1,013, surpassing the 1,000 plateau for the first time in the history of the college.

**High Degree Completion and Graduation Rates:** Asnuntuck Community College was ranked fourth in the Connecticut Department of Higher Education's *Report on 2006-2007 Degrees Conferred by Connecticut Institutions of Higher Education*, having increased degrees conferred by 32 percent between 2002 and 2007. The 2007-2008 edition of the same report showed that Asnuntuck was the only community college in the state showing growth in degrees granted in the engineering and technology field. The college has for some time had the highest graduation rate within the Connecticut Community College system. In 2009, we reported a 29 percent graduation rate to the U.S. Department of Education (IPEDS).

**Growth of Academic Programs:** As shown in the Standard Four Data First Forms, most associate degrees have shown significant growth since 2005. The Liberal Arts program grew 81 percent in the past four years, Human Services grew 38 percent, Computer Information Systems and General Studies both grew more than 20 percent, and Criminal Justice grew 18 percent. Enrollments in Early Childhood Education dropped four years ago, but have grown by 29% in the last three years. The Manufacturing Technology area has shown growth in both the number of certificate programs and the number of students in the programs. The number of certificates awarded grew from 66 in 2009 to 234 in 2010. Certificate programs grew from four to nine.

**Improvements to Academic Programs:** The Early Childhood Education program is a candidate for accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The site visit is scheduled for October 2010. Programming in Manufacturing Technology now includes Welding, Lean Manufacturing, and career-ladder certificates that prepare students to move from the shop floor to entry-level management positions. Program reviews in Communication and Computer Information Systems have resulted in substantial program modifications and new relevant certificates. A two-year review of the Liberal Arts program resulted in significant changes to degree requirements that have already improved retention and program transferability.

**Retirements and Personnel Changes:** When the State of Connecticut offered a Retirement Incentive Plan effective July 2009, thirteen Asnuntuck employees took advantage of the offer. With the Retirement Incentive Program (RIP), we were reduced by one-third of our faculty, one-half of our Business Office, and the entire Admissions Office. In the fall 2009 semester, eleven searches were conducted: five full-time faculty, two ACL professionals, three classifieds, and one manager. Virtually all of the college's permanent staff was involved in the searches. Over 1,200 resume packets were received and reviewed. In the spring 2010 semester, three additional full-time faculty searches were conducted, with approximately 400 resumes received. Additionally, an Acting Director of Workforce Development and Continuing Education was hired in April 2010. The scope of the recruiting effort was unprecedented in the history of the college.

**Orientation of New Employees:** The Human Resources Department developed a "New Hire Orientation" so that new staff could receive relevant information about benefits, policies, and procedures, electronically and instantaneously. Feedback indicates that it was well-received, and answered most or all questions. Academic Affairs developed a year-long New Faculty Seminar for new faculty hires during 2008-9. Evaluations by the first participants were very positive. Both new and seasoned faculty urged us to offer the Seminar during spring 2010 for faculty hired in January. The Seminar will continue in the fall and include new hires made over the summer.

**Graduation Outcomes to Enhance General Education and Transfer:** In just two years, the faculty has developed new graduation outcomes (GO-RECAP) and agreed on rubrics and assessment strategies. In addition to input from student services and academic staff, every full-time faculty member served on one of the five RECAP teams. There is both strong consensus and ownership among the faculty regarding the initiative. Implementation will begin in academic year 2010-2011.

**Growth of Non-Credit Allied Health Programming:** A full-time Coordinator was hired to oversee all Allied Health Programs. The curricula have been reviewed to ensure appropriate coverage and employment readiness. Changes made following the review include: (1) adding "computerized" medical records software to both the Medical Assistant Program and the Medical Coding Program, (2) lengthening the two programs to improve workforce readiness, and (3) adding "minimum readiness criteria" that students must meet before placement into the Allied Health externship process. Asnuntuck's Allied Health Programs are approved by both the Connecticut Department of Labor and the Massachusetts Department of Workforce Development for Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funding.

**Balancing Enrollment Growth with Adequate Support Services:** The college has recognized the need to increase academic support services for students as enrollment has grown. The Academic

Skills Center (ASC) has hired professional tutors and/or added tutoring hours in math, English, and science as enrollment in those areas has increased. The ASC has also identified a formula for assessing future tutoring needs based on enrollment. In addition to increased tutoring, the ASC created a calculator lending library and developed and promoted other student-success initiatives, such as classroom study-skills workshops. Student usage of the center has increased steadily as services have been enhanced. For instance, in the 2009-2010 academic year, 213 students came for tutoring in math compared to 147 in 2008-2009, and 241 came for English tutoring in 2009-2010 compared to 157 in 2008-2009. The effectiveness of tutoring has been assessed by careful recording of tutoring hours and grades earned. In general, there is a correlation between the level of success achieved in coursework and the number of tutoring hours.

**Financial Aid:** Due in part to federal initiatives and our own enrollment growth, financial aid has grown significantly at the college. In particular, the number of PELL grant recipients increased by more than 50 percent, and the PELL dollar amount received by students was more than doubled within the same time period. (See the chart below.)

PELL Grant Increases			
	Financial Aid Applicants	PELL Recipients	PELL Funds Dispersed
2008-2009	1,053	371	\$855,916
2009-2010	1,403	572	\$1,727,486
Percent Increase	33%	54%	102%

In addition, the college had \$197,110 in CAP state grants this year and \$188,807 for 2008-2009 (a 4 percent increase). Our set-aside money (ACC Grant) for 2009-2010 was \$446,708, compared with \$383,271 for 2008-2009 (a 17 percent increase).

**Veteran-Friendly Campus:** A new Veteran Student Organization was created. Financial Aid was restructured to support veterans and provide services. The college installed a Veterans’ Oasis Center in 2009. The center is a place solely for veteran students and their dependents to study, relax, and meet other student veterans. Programs and workshops focused on retention of veterans have included weekly coffee hours hosted by college offices, monthly visits by Ed Burke from Representative Joe Courtney’s Office, and the first Asnuntuck USO canteen to celebrate Veteran’s Day 2009. The college was selected by *G.I. Jobs Magazine* as a “Military Friendly School” in both 2009 and 2010, ranking ACC in the top 15 percent of all colleges, universities, and trade schools nationwide.

**Facilities Improvements:** Over \$15 million in capital funding has been identified for implementation of the college’s Master Plan. Due to the current state fiscal crisis, the project has not been bonded. However, the college has not waited for the bonding to make improvements. A major Site Improvement Project to improve the college parking lot and surroundings was completed in the summer of 2008. This project corrected underground water issues, improved the flow of traffic, and increased pedestrian safety. A number of additional improvements have been made and are discussed in the next section of this report.

## Response to Areas of Special Emphasis

### **Ensuring the Institution is Financially Stable**

Asnuntuck Community College is currently in the best financial health in the institution's history, despite several years of state budget cuts and a lack of capital funding since fiscal year 2007. Over the course of the past five fiscal years (2006-2010), the tuition and fee revenues for the college have increased every year, typically by double-digits. Most of this increase has been fueled by enrollment growth, and the college is currently experiencing the highest enrollments in its 30-year history. Recognizing the importance and achievements of ACC's Manufacturing Technology program, the State of Connecticut has line-item funded the program at \$545,000 annually for each of the past three years. Other revenue enhancements, such as the new system-wide bookstore contract (an increase of over \$70,000 per year in revenue), have helped improve the college's annual revenue stream.

Despite the lack of state capital funding since fiscal year 2007, the college has aggressively moved forward in improving all areas of the college. These improvements have been funded by the college's operating fund. The improvements in the past few years include: installation of new boilers (\$200,000), installation of technology in six additional classrooms (\$65,000), Microbiology Lab (\$50,000), upgrade of Computer Lab 212 (\$50,000), Manufacturing Technology renovations (\$150,000), and supplementing the cost of the Site Improvement Project (\$70,000). Many of these improvements were included in the college's Master Plan. Other academic areas were identified as opportunity areas during the Campus Improvement process in the spring of 2010.

In addition to the above projects, the college has also increased the institutional financial aid account by 10 percent annually (over \$40,000 per year) and added another \$30,000 per year to its tutoring budget. The college also utilized available fiscal year 2010 operating funds to support the development of graduation outcomes, targeted advising projects, and professional development in placement best practices.

When the State of Connecticut offered a Retirement Incentive Plan effective July 2009, thirteen Asnuntuck employees took advantage of the offer. Despite receiving funding of less than 50 percent of the outgoing salaries, Asnuntuck was still able to refill all of the vacant positions, due to its outstanding financial position. In fact, Asnuntuck is one of only four colleges in the Connecticut Community College System with positive unrestricted net assets as of the end of fiscal year 2009.

The funding of the above projects and student success initiatives has not negatively impacted the college's financial position. Totals assets at the end of fiscal year 2006 were \$5.9 million, net assets were \$2.9 million and cash/cash equivalents were just above \$2.5 million. At the end of fiscal year 2009, total assets were \$10.5 million (an increase of 78 percent), net assets were over \$7.3 million (an increase of 152 percent), and the cash/cash equivalents were over \$3.5 million (an increase of 39 percent). Once finalized, the fiscal year 2010 financial statements will reflect additional increase in the above categories as the preliminary results show a surplus of over \$800,000.

The college exercises a conservative fiscal approach each year and normally approves an annual college budget at a breakeven level. As an example, the fiscal year 2011 Operating Fund budget was approved with a small deficit of just over \$10,000 from a total budget of over \$12 million. Included in the fiscal year 2011 budget is \$100,000 for implementation of strategic planning initiatives that were developed late in fiscal year 2010 and will be implemented in fiscal year 2011. Both the actual revenue and expenditures budgets are closely monitored throughout the fiscal year for performance versus the approved budget. If necessary, appropriate actions are immediately taken to insure outstanding fiscal year financial results. The college has ended nine of the past ten fiscal years with a year-end surplus, ranging from \$210,000 in fiscal year 2008 to the estimated \$800,000 in fiscal year 2010. The only fiscal year in the past ten with a year-end deficit was fiscal year 2009 and that deficit was only \$58,000 and the primary result of a state rescission of over \$165,000 late in that fiscal year.

### **Implementing a System of Institutional Assessment**

Asnuntuck has made significant progress in evaluating and improving institutional effectiveness by approaching the issue from several fronts at once: (1) linking planning to resource allocation, (2) improving governance structures and their assessment, (3) aligning contractually stipulated faculty “additional responsibilities” with strategic priorities, (4) enhancing academic program reviews, and (5) developing new graduation outcomes. We have also clarified and formalized a number of procedures that affect both students and faculty. Each of these endeavors is discussed further under the appropriate standard in the narrative section of this report.

The habits of data-driven decision making are evident throughout this report. One example of such habits of mind taking hold can be seen in the process for hiring faculty. Positions are no longer automatically refilled. Rather, proposals submitted by the academic departments are reviewed by the Academic Dean with the Faculty Council. Proposals include enrollment trends, program growth, future employment trends, and regional needs. Even though one-third of our faculty retired in spring 2009, not one position was refilled without the careful review of a data-based proposal.

Working on multiple fronts has allowed us to make substantial improvements during a relatively short period of time. This year, we sought to bring an umbrella over these various initiatives by doing Asnuntuck's first survey of institutional effectiveness. We realized that while we had a lot of data by and about students, we had never developed a formal survey for faculty and staff to share their views. The survey was developed by the Cabinet and the Director of Institutional Research using best practices and successful models from other colleges. Each Dean also asked certain members of their divisions (such as faculty department chairs) to comment on drafts of the survey. More than 80 percent of faculty and staff participated with good distribution across all departments. Adjunct faculty members and other part-time employees were also well represented.

The survey results were shared with everyone on campus via email. Cabinet members have reviewed the findings with their divisions and included responses to the findings in goals for fiscal year 2010. We consider this only the beginning of our review. The President will lead the college in a discussion of the survey findings at the beginning of the fall 2010 semester, and the findings

and discussions will be under consideration when we begin strategic planning in spring 2011. (See Appendix D for a copy of the survey.)

## Evaluation of the New System of Institutional Governance

The 2005 NEASC site team visit and the Connecticut Community College system review of the governance structure at Asnuntuck Community College suggested that the model was too large for the actual size of the college. Multiple committees and their membership outnumbered the availability of faculty and staff. Therefore, the structure was modified to include the following:

- College Council: The mission of the College Council is to provide a representative centralized council to enhance the ability of all members of the college community to participate in furthering the mission of the college and ensuring student success. The council is an elected representative body of all constituencies (students, staff, faculty, administration, and management). The council is advisory to the President.
- Faculty Council: The Faculty Council is responsible for promulgating policies and addressing issues that relate to the academic area. The Faculty Council strives to advance the college's mission by supporting teaching, public service, research, and scholarly writing, while maintaining an atmosphere of mutual understanding and open discussion amongst faculty, staff, and administrators.
- Curriculum and Standards Committee: The Curriculum and Standards Committee is a standing subcommittee of the Faculty Council and reports to the council. The Curriculum and Standards Committee supports the college mission through oversight and review of all credit-based courses, certificates, and degrees, as well as monitoring of academic standards.
- Instructional Excellence Committee: The Instructional Excellence Committee focuses on teaching and learning activities in advancing the Academic Affairs mission of ensuring excellence in teaching, and the creation of a learning environment that engages, nurtures, and mentors our students.
- Student Senate: The Student Senate helps students shape decisions that affect their education and experiences while they develop leadership skills. The senate emphasizes "community" in Asnuntuck Community College by sponsoring and expanding programs of an educational, cultural, social, and recreational nature, therefore enhancing and broadening the perspective of the community. The senate also works to establish a forum for the students that will aid in the success of student activities and will help students find social and self-satisfaction.

The Instructional Excellence Committee has been dormant for the past year as the Faculty Council reviews its structure and purpose. The other three committees have developed charters and the College Council charter underwent its first revision and was voted for approval by the council members. (To review a copy of the revised charter, see Appendix D.)

Three new committees have been developed since 2008: The Diversity Committee, the Scheduling Committee, and the Retention Committee. They are discussed in greater detail in Standard Three.

The Student Senate was revitalized in 2007. Although maintaining consistent student involvement in the organization has continued to be a challenge, at least eight to eleven members have been

elected each year. Members of the Student Senate serve as voting members to the College Council, Curriculum and Standards, the Foundation, and the Student Electoral Assembly for the State of Connecticut. The Student Senate serves as the voice of the student body and supports the efforts of several student organizations, including new additions such as the Student Union of Minorities at Asnuntuck, the Veteran Society, and the Student Activities Committee.

Other ad hoc committees that have been active in recent years include the Marketing Committee, the Educational Technology, Media Services and Information Technology Committee.

Assessment of the Governance Structure and various committees is done on an annual basis and follows the process identified in each charter. For example, the College Council develops an annual report and conducts a survey every two years. In the spring of 2010, the college implemented its first employee survey of institutional effectiveness. Both the effectiveness of governance and timeliness of decision-making were included in the survey.

# The Standards

## Standard One Mission and Purposes

Asnuntuck was founded during the community college movement of the 1960s that revolutionized higher education by extending access to higher education for people who previously did not have such opportunities. Asnuntuck continues to follow and refine that original mission as we enter the second decade of the Twenty-First Century.

### **Description: Major Changes Since 2005**

Asnuntuck Mission Statement: The college's Mission Statement has not changed since the last comprehensive report in 2005:

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

A 2007 review of the Mission Statement was conducted as part of the 2008-2011 strategic plan development. The review confirmed that the Mission Statement still captured the most important aspects of Asnuntuck's purpose. The statement is published in the college catalog, course booklets, on the back of college business cards, and it is posted in classrooms, the college information desk, and the college website. (See the Standard One Data First Form.)

The mission and purposes of the college are embraced by the college community as evidenced by responses to the Institutional Effectiveness Survey completed by college personnel in February 2010. The two most highly rated statements in the survey were, "the needs of students are important to college employees" and "I feel good about where I work."

Area Mission Statements: To better define the roles of various areas of the college, each area was encouraged to develop its own mission statement. The areas of the college listed below generated mission statements since 2005. (A selection of these are included in Appendix D.)

- President's Office
- Academic Affairs
- Educational Technology Office
- Academic Skills Center
- Learning Resources Center
- Student Services
- Administrative Services

- Professional and Community Education (formerly known as Continuing Education)
- Human Resources
- Institutional Advancement
- Institutional Research
- Marketing Committee
- Media Services
- Financial Aid Mission Statement
- Registrar's Office
- Student Union of Minorities at Asnuntuck (SUMA-a student group)

## Appraisal

### Strengths

- Asnuntuck's First Year Experience course was featured as a best practice in the 2009-2010 SENSE data national report. The college scored especially high on the benchmark "High Expectations and Aspirations," which strongly connects to the college mission. First Year Experience is open to any student and required of all entering students in the Liberal Arts and General Studies degree programs. The fall-to-fall retention rate for students who take First Year Experience in their first semester is 62 percent, while the rate for students who put off taking the course is 46 percent.

- All faculty and staff at the college work collaboratively to create a welcoming and supportive environment for new students. At the beginning of each semester, Student Services staff members visit classrooms to explain support services and resources available to students. Classes visit the Academic Skills Center, which provides tutoring for students. Early Warning Academic Assistance is a collaborative effort between the faculty and student services to identify at-risk students. One month into the semester and continuing throughout, students who are having trouble in courses are identified, contacted, and advised about the steps they can take to improve their performance.

- The College Council (which includes elected representatives from all areas of the college, including students) enhances the ability of all members of the college community to work together to fulfill the mission and to ensure student success. The Council maintains multi-directional communication via its membership and open forums. (Council Charter included in Appendix D.)

- The Kudos Employee Recognition Program continues to acknowledge employees for contributions outside their normal job duties that often speak to the nurturing environment of the college campus.

### Concerns

- The newly developed area mission statements have not been widely publicized throughout the college community.

## Projection

- Administrative and Academic Departments that have not developed mission statements for their respective areas will be encouraged to do so. Those areas that have developed mission statements will publicize them more actively.

- We will use data gathered through our assessment of Graduation Outcomes to measure the success of the Mission.

### **Institutional Effectiveness**

The college utilizes a three-year cycle for Strategic Planning. College, division, and departmental missions are reviewed and revised as necessary at the beginning of each new strategic planning cycle.

## Standard Two Planning and Evaluation

Asnuntuck's planning and evaluation has always been driven by our commitment to serving students. In recent years, the college has built upon that traditional strength by gathering and analyzing both qualitative and quantitative evidence with greater care and skill. This has improved decision-making and deepened our understanding of what we do, how we do it, and how we can best continue to meet our students' needs.

### **Description: Major Changes Since 2005**

Evidence-Based Planning: An area of special emphasis in Asnuntuck's 2008 Progress Report was "Linking Priorities to Resource Allocation and Evidence to Planning." The report described the ways that the college connected strategic planning to evidence gathered through the participation of a broad spectrum of the college community, as well as evidence gathered through research of state and national educational trends. A consultant led the college through the beginning phases of this process, and the president tasked each cabinet member with making annual goal setting and budget building participatory and collaborative.

Since then, we have continued to set annual goals aligned with the strategic plan. We have further developed our uses of evidence to make planning decisions, and we have linked budget decisions to identified priorities. The following are some examples of how the college is informing our planning with specific evidence:

- Full-Time Faculty Hiring: As detailed earlier in this report, when hiring new full-time faculty members, the college does not simply refill positions. Instead, it requires a proposal justified by enrollment data, program review findings, and projected program growth.

- Technology Planning: In academic year 2008-2009, the college completed a highly participatory Technology Strategic Plan. Despite a lack of state dollars for technology upgrades, the president and cabinet have used the plan to guide decisions regarding classroom upgrades, new lab needs, and timelines for achieving a wireless campus.

- Instructional Facilities Upgrades: Decisions about improving instructional spaces have been made based on enrollment growth (the microbiology lab) and programs that are updating their curriculum (Computer and Information Systems and Communication).

Evaluation across the campus has continued to grow and improve. Academic program reviews have been completed despite the recent loss of 30 percent of our faculty to retirement. (See Standard Four for program review details.) As is evident in the E-series Data First Forms, reviews finished since 2008 show a larger number of changes effected due to the program review than in the past. This reflects the expansion of a culture of evidence and the practices that accompany it.

One example of our expanded culture of evidence would include the Academic Skills Center's annual data collection that correlates hours in tutoring to grades earned. (See Appendix D for a copy of the 2009 Annual Report.) Also, this past year, the Media Services Department did its first customer satisfaction survey and used the results to improve services. (This evidence was further expanded by feedback received through the campus-wide Institutional Effectiveness Survey, discussed below.)

Institutional Effectiveness Survey: Most importantly, the college moved beyond function-specific evaluation to launch Asnuntuck's first campus-wide Institutional Effectiveness Survey. As mentioned earlier, the college did not have a systematic way to assess employee insights, concerns, and satisfactions. The survey was based on strong examples from other colleges, but was designed to assess Asnuntuck's mission, strategic priorities, and institutional character.

The Institutional Effectiveness Survey was divided into five main parts:

- Importance of, and satisfaction with, various aspects of the employee experience, including the college climate, communications, decision-making, work environment, and professional development.
- Satisfaction with services provided by various college departments.
- Rating success of the college in achieving the priorities of the strategic plan.
- Demographic information, such as job type and years at the college.
- Open-ended questions to generate additional comments and suggestions.

All full-time and permanent employees participated in the survey, and all adjunct faculty members were given the opportunity to participate (nearly a third did). Some strong aspects of Asnuntuck identified by the Institutional Effectiveness Survey included a focus on student needs, comfort with supervisors, and general satisfaction with the college as a place to work. Communication and decision-making were identified as concerns. (A copy of the survey is in Appendix D.)

2008-2011 Strategic Plan Updates: In late spring 2010, the cabinet met to review our progress toward completion of the strategic plan for 2008-2011. The cabinet reviewed the plan with an eye toward what the college would need to focus on to complete the plan on schedule. (See the Standard Two Data First Form.) As a result of that review, the cabinet recommended, and the president, approved the following five institutional goals for 2010-2011:

- Ensure that new developmental education strategies are linked to both retention activities and degree completion goals.
- Improve the effectiveness of internal communication and the quality of external communication.
- Develop and support professional development at both department and individual levels.
- Complete implementation of annual procedures for planning and budget.
- Complete assessment of governance as revised and implemented during the 2008-2010 academic years.

It should be noted that two of these items (communication and professional development) were developed in direct response to recommendations made in the Technology Strategic Plan and concerns raised in the Institutional Effectiveness Survey.

CCSSE and SENSE: The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) is a survey tool for assessing quality in community college education. Asnuntuck participated in CCSSE in 2004, 2006, and 2008. Starting in 2012, CCSSE participation will be put on a three-year cycle to continue providing a systematic approach to the assessment of student learning and retention.

In spring 2010, the Retention Committee reviewed and discussed the CCSSE results. To provide more faculty and student interaction, a summer advising program was discussed and recommended by the committee. Two Retention Committee members are the leaders of the summer 2010 advising program. The Director of Institutional Research gave two CCSSE presentations to Faculty Council and one to the Student Services staff in the spring of 2010.

Compared to the state community college system and to the national average, Asnuntuck's CCSSE benchmark scores were not as positive as we desired. Our next round of CCSSE in 2012 will focus on each benchmark, the lessons learned, and how to borrow the wisdom from best practice colleges. Through using CCSSE data, we hope to promote high levels of student learning and retention and identify areas in which Asnuntuck can improve its programs and services for students.

The following table shows Asnuntuck's CCSSE benchmark scores for 2004, 2006, and 2008, with comparisons to the Connecticut community college system as a whole:

<b>Benchmark</b>	<b>Asnuntuck 2008</b>	<b>Connecticut Community College System 2008</b>	<b>Asnuntuck 2006</b>	<b>Connecticut Community College System 2006</b>	<b>Asnuntuck 2004</b>	<b>Connecticut Community College System 2004</b>
Active and Collaborative Learning	48.9	51.4	51.5	49.4	50.8	49.1
Student Effort	46.1	51.2	47.1	50.3	46.8	50.3
Academic Challenge	46.6	50.5	45.5	51.8	47.9	51.3
Student-Faculty Interaction	43.7	51.8	49.0	51.2	48.9	50.2
Support for Learners	49.7	51.8	50.3	51.2	48.3	51.2

The Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE) is a new survey instrument. It helps participating community colleges focus on the "front door" of the college experience. Asnuntuck will also be on a three-year cycle for administering SENSE. The six benchmarks are (1) early connections, (2) high expectations and aspirations, (3) clear academic plan and pathway, (4)

effective track to college readiness, (5) engaged learning, and (6) academic and social support network.

This is the first year SENSE national data became available. Asnuntuck scored all but one benchmark above the Connecticut community college system average and all but two above the national average. Because the benchmark for High Expectations and Aspirations was scored 7.1 points above the national average, Asnuntuck was featured in a SENSE national report in 2010 titled *Benchmarking & Benchmark: Effective Practice with Entering Students* as the "best practice" college. The innovative approach in First Year Experience (FYE) classes, in particular, was cited.

Asnuntuck will continue monitoring entering student progress using SENSE. SENSE data was released late in the 2010 spring semester. More in-depth review of each benchmark, and to set focus on one or more benchmarks, will begin in fall 2010.

The following table shows Asnuntuck's SENSE benchmark scores for 2009, with comparisons to the Connecticut community college system and the national cohort:

Benchmark	Asnuntuck	CCC System		2009 National Cohort	
	Benchmark Score	Benchmark Score	Score Difference	Benchmark Score	Score Difference
Early Connections	55.6	50.6	5.0	50.0	5.6
High Expectations and Aspirations	57.1	51.1	6.0	50.0	7.1
Clear Academic Plan and Pathway	55.0	50.6	4.4	50.0	5.0
Effective Track to College Readiness	42.0	50.0	-7.9	50.0	-8.0
Engaged Learning	49.8	47.9	1.9	50.0	-0.2
Academic and Social Support Network	54.5	50.5	4.1	50.0	4.5

## Appraisal

### Strengths

- The Institutional Effectiveness Survey provides the college with more specific information to inform planning than any previous measurement in the college's history.
- CCSSE and SENSE data provides concrete information to develop plans for enhancing student engagement. These surveys, as well as an online version of the Graduate Survey currently under revision, will be rotated on a three-year schedule. The funding for administering these surveys are provided by the Connecticut community college system office.

- Since 2008, full-time faculty members' annual "additional responsibilities" (contractual duties beyond teaching that are developed in collaboration with Department Chairs and the Academic Dean) have been specifically aligned with the college's mission and Strategic Plan.

### Concerns

- While a new culture of information and evidence is developing, the college still sometimes falls back into long-established patterns of relying on short-term observation and anecdotal evidence to inform planning.

- Recent retirements of long-term college employees have led to a loss of significant "institutional memory."

### **Projection**

- The results of the Institutional Effectiveness Survey will be used to inform planning and budgets throughout the college.

- Based on CCSSE and SENSE results, the faculty (in collaboration with the Retention Committee) will identify and develop strategies and goals during the 2010-2011 academic year.

### **Institutional Effectiveness**

On an annual basis, the President's Cabinet meets as a group to assess progress made on the Strategic Plan and to report their evaluation to the President. Modifications are made as appropriate to the Strategic Plan. College and division goals for the next year are developed accordingly. The Director of Human Resources reports annually to the President regarding completed evaluations of personnel. In advance of our 2011 strategic planning, we administered an institutional effectiveness survey in the spring of 2010. The survey's results are reflected in the college's goals for academic year 2010-2011. The survey will be administered on a three-year cycle so that results will be available when a new round of strategic planning begins.

## Standard Three Organization and Governance

Historically, Asnuntuck's relatively small size and open, friendly atmosphere lent to a somewhat informal governance. To facilitate better overall operations and more responsive structures, the college has formalized its governance system, and assessment of its effectiveness, while maintaining our open culture.

### **Description: Major Changes Since 2005**

Governance Focus: "Evaluation of the effectiveness of the new system of governance" was an area of special emphasis identified in the NEASC response to Asnuntuck's 2005 comprehensive report and site visit. The college's 2008 progress report to the commission noted that our college governance system was streamlined from an earlier proposal to focus on College Council, Faculty Council, the Curriculum and Standards Committee, and the Instructional Excellence Committee.

To promote systematic operation of these governance components, each one developed its own charter. Each has been operating actively, except for the Instructional Excellence Committee, which suspended operations partly due to a significant number of full-time faculty retirements.

In addition, the Student Senate has become a more active body. The Student Senate meets weekly during the academic school year, with approximately a dozen active members and a new executive board. The college has also seen increased student involvement not only in college-sponsored activities, but involvement in the following campus-wide committees: NEASC Fifth-year Report, College Council, and Curriculum and Standards.

As projected in our 2008 progress report to NEASC, three new committees were developed in 2009. Appendix D includes information on the committees' charges, initial goals, and membership. We summarize that information below:

The Diversity Committee's charge is to promote appreciation, understanding, and respect of diverse cultures and ethnic differences with Asnuntuck and the global community. (See Standard Eleven for details of the Diversity Committee's activities.)

The Scheduling Committee was charged with planning a three-year course schedule that ensures that degree completion is supported and to research innovative scheduling options. The committee understands that due to current changes in Financial Aid availability, the need for unique and creative scheduling will increase in coming years.

The Retention Committee consists of representatives from both the academic and student services areas and is developing short- and long-term goals and initiatives to support student success and persistence in these areas: (1) prior to enrollment (advising, registration, and orientation), (2) "at-risk" students (identification and support), (3) during the semester (early warning and

withdrawals), and (4) academic probation. The group also spent a significant amount of time and energy reviewing data and best practices in preparation for developing a comprehensive retention plan that will support developmental education initiatives.

Leadership Team: Since 2007, the college has hired a new Dean of Academic Affairs, Dean of Students, and Director of Human Resources. Each has added renewed energy and input to the management team. The Director of Professional and Continuing Education retired in June 2009 but continued part-time until April 2010. An unsuccessful search to hire a new director was conducted in spring 2010. An acting director has been hired and will serve until the position can be permanently filled. The Department's name has been changed to: Workforce Development and Continuing Education.

Academic Department Structure: The academic area adopted a three-department structure beginning in the spring semester of 2006. The departments meet monthly, and smaller cluster meetings are scheduled as needed.

Here are the college's academic areas as organized into our three departments:

Department of Business, Careers, and Technology

- Accounting
- Business
- Business Office Technology
- Computer and Information Systems
- Criminal Justice
- Early Childhood Education
- Economics
- Human Development

Department of Social, Behavioral and Natural Sciences, and Mathematics

- Anthropology
- Astronomy
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Ecology
- Environmental Science
- Geography
- Health
- History
- Human Services
- Humanities
- Math
- Oceanography
- Philosophy
- Physics
- Political Science

- Psychology
- Sociology

#### Department of Arts, Theatre, and Communication

- Art
- Communications and Broadcasting
- Dance
- Digital Arts
- English
- English as a Second Language
- Music
- Physical Education
- Sign Language
- Spanish
- Theatre

Discipline Area Coordinators: The college has recently identified several full-time faculty members as discipline area coordinators to provide curricular leadership and fulfill program-specific administrative duties. Areas with recently appointed coordinators are Liberal Arts/General Studies, Math, and Science. The area of Writing will also have a coordinator beginning in the fall of 2010.

### **Appraisal**

#### Strengths

- All governance charters include annual assessment requirements.
- The department structure has generally been viewed as a success in terms of improving communication and cohesion in the academic area. Departments have made decision-making more efficient by providing definition for involved parties and by improving communication with key constituents. Department discussions have informed other governance units such as Faculty Council and Curriculum and Standards, and vice versa.

#### Concerns

- In the Institutional Effectiveness Survey, the ratings by college personnel on questions of decision-making were only in the middle to high range. Although satisfactory, these ratings are not as high as the college would like them to be. Governance-related topics addressed in the survey included effectiveness of governance, the use of data to make decisions, resource support for programs, timeliness, and participation.
- Some drawbacks of the academic departmental structure have been that one department is significantly larger than the other two, the departments could have a clearer organizing principle,

and individual faculty members within departments have not been trained to assume leadership of their departments in times of faculty transition.

### **Projection**

- The academic area plans a major discussion focused on restructuring the departments to balance the number of full-time and adjunct faculty members more evenly and to create more coherent departments. The planning and discussion will take place during the first half of the fall 2010 semester with the goal of implementation by the fall of 2011.
- The college will develop an annual procedure for all committees to report on their assessments to the College Council and/or Faculty Council (whichever is more appropriate).
- The next steps for evaluating the effectiveness of governance at the college include clarifying the meaning of the Institutional Effectiveness Survey ratings, benchmarking against other schools, and developing strategies for improvement.

### **Institutional Effectiveness**

All governance charters include annual assessment requirements. Examples of improvement based on assessments include: (1) The Curriculum and Standards Committee has made changes to forms used for proposals, increased the quality of proposals considered, and is currently reviewing the effectiveness of the "two-meeting" rule. (2) The College Council revised its charter to clarify its functions and the representative nature of its members' role. Next steps include developing an annual procedure for all committees to report on their assessments to the College Council and/or Faculty Council (whichever is more appropriate).

## Standard Four The Academic Program

Through quality academic review, Asnuntuck provides current and vital programs built on the strong foundation of general education that has characterized the college since its inception. In the past two years, the faculty have developed an exciting and innovative Graduation Outcomes project to provide meaningful capstone experiences for all degree graduates. The past five years have been characterized by significant growth in most programs and by record enrollment increases in Liberal Arts, General Studies, and Manufacturing Technology.

### **Description: Major Changes Since 2005**

In 2005, the NEASC site team found outcomes at the course level satisfactory, but was concerned about the lack of program outcomes, uneven program reviews, the status of assessment in general education, and the organizational structure of Academic Affairs. In 2008, we reported progress in all of these areas. The following sections update our progress and indicate other changes and new initiatives.

Enrollment, program growth, and program improvements have already been discussed in the “Significant Developments” section of this report. We repeat that information here for the reader’s convenience:

**Growth of Academic Programs:** As shown in the Standard Four Data First Forms, most associate degrees have shown significant growth since 2005. The Liberal Arts program grew 81 percent in the past four years, Human Services grew 38 percent, Computer and Information Systems and General Studies both grew more than 20 percent, and Criminal Justice grew 18 percent. Enrollments in Early Childhood Education dropped four years ago, but have grown by 29% in the last three years. The Manufacturing Technology area has shown growth in both the number of certificate programs and the number of students in the programs. The number of certificates awarded grew from 66 in 2009 to 234 in 2010. Certificate programs grew from four to nine.

**Improvements to Academic Programs:** The Early Childhood Education program is a candidate for accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The site visit is scheduled for October 2010. Programming in Manufacturing Technology now includes Welding, Lean Manufacturing, and career-ladder certificates that prepare students to move from the shop floor to entry-level management positions. Program reviews in Communication and Computer Information Systems have resulted in substantial program modifications and new relevant certificates. A two-year review of the Liberal Arts program resulted in significant changes to degree requirements that have already improved retention and program transferability.

Program Matriculation: As shown in the data first forms, we continue encouraging students to matriculate into academic programs. The matriculation rate increased from 63 percent to 71 percent over the last five years.

Graduation Outcomes: Asnuntuck is committed to helping students gain the knowledge, skills, and abilities they need to succeed in their academic, professional, and personal lives in the 21st century. The faculty, academic staff, and student services staff have worked during the past two years to identify and analyze a comprehensive set of abilities that we can measure as Graduation Outcomes.

Graduation Outcomes refer to a coherent set of knowledge, skills and abilities that successful ACC graduates acquire and demonstrate upon graduation from degree programs. They refer to the ability to acquire and apply knowledge to real world situations and experiences. These graduation outcomes skills will qualify students to transfer to four-year institutions, be ready for employment, and to apply important successful life skills.

Immediately following the 2005 self-study, the faculty began to develop graduation learning competencies. They were approved and included in the 2007-2009 college catalog. Further progress in this initiative was hindered by a break in academic leadership. A review of the graduation competencies took place throughout the 2008-2009 academic year, resulting in an entirely new, innovative, and exciting program of graduation outcomes.

Since the 2008 Progress Report, the college (led by a senior faculty member given a course release to serve as coordinator) has been working to establish graduation learning competencies. The preliminary planning began during professional days in August 2008. The coordinator met with the faculty and Student Services staff in October 2008 to present information about her review of the current pertinent literature. Sternberg's model of the three major skills for thinking and acting in the world was selected as a theoretical guide for Asnuntuck's graduation outcomes endeavor. In addition to Sternberg's skills (practicality, analysis, and creativity) the faculty added "Expressiveness" and "Responsibility." The faculty selected the acronym GO-RECAP for the campus-wide initiative.

At least one professional day at the start of each subsequent semester has been devoted to continuing work on graduation outcomes. Team leaders for each of the RECAP categories were selected to summarize the work of each group. The Coordinator held day-long meetings with the team leaders during summer 2009, Intersession 2010, and spring 2010 to refine and clarify RECAP categories and identify possible ways that students can demonstrate competency in each area. Discussion with the entire faculty during professional days in January 2010 focused on deciding how the college will assess whether students have fulfilled their RECAP requirements prior to graduation. Options have been narrowed to the following: capstone courses, a capstone field experience, and portfolio assessment. The program is ready to be piloted in academic year 2010-2011. Partial implementation is expected for graduates of spring 2011 with full implementation by 2012.

The following tables show the detailed definitions, performance indicators, and outcomes for GO-RECAP developed during the 2009-2010 academic year.

## Graduation Outcomes RECAP

**Responsible:** Students with responsible skills have information about the world and a clear understanding of the strategies necessary to engage with, advocate for change in, and give back to their communities and beyond.

Performance Indicators	Outcomes Include
1) Be a Responsible Citizen a) Well Informed b) Ethical c) Actively involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use effective writing, presentation, discussion, and debating skills</li> <li>• Engage in community-based activities (e.g., Poetry for Peace, vigils, coffeehouses, food drives, book drives, fund sers, service learning, community-action day)</li> <li>• Participate in student, local, and state political-awareness activities (e.g., voting; lobbying, organizing and/or participating in Constitution Day; environmental awareness and preservation events)</li> </ul>
2) Recognize and Reflect on Issues of Justice, Equality, and Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce assignments that require self-reflection in relation to course materials; completion of activities which express an understanding of, and respect for, social diversity [e.g., African-American Read-In, PTK and other forums, Diversity Committee, Student Union of Minorities at Asnuntuck (SUMA), Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT), cultural heritage and multicultural issues]</li> </ul>

**Expressive:** Students with expressive skills have the ability to communicate appropriately through multiple media to different audiences.

Performance Indicators	Outcomes Include
1) College-Level Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice the writing process—including narrative, descriptive, expository, persuasive, reflective, and/or creative writing activities related to course materials in all disciplines</li> <li>• Produce assignments documented in proper format (e.g., APA, MLA)</li> <li>• Write essays and essay exams</li> <li>• Collaborate in group work</li> <li>• Create student portfolios</li> <li>• Incorporate appropriate technology [e.g., word processing software, on-</li> </ul>

Performance Indicators	Outcomes Include
	line course management software (Blackboard)]
2) College-Level Speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice the speaking process-- including narrative, descriptive, expository, persuasive, reflective, and/or creative speaking activities related to course materials in all disciplines</li> <li>• Collaborate in group work including presentations</li> <li>• Take oral exams</li> <li>• Incorporate appropriate technology (e.g., presentation software and audio/video recording)</li> </ul>
3) Multimedia Activities and Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce traditional and/or digital art media in all disciplines</li> <li>• Collaborate in group work</li> <li>• Create student portfolios and/or installations</li> <li>• Incorporate appropriate technology (e.g., digital photography software)</li> </ul>
4) Performances, Recitals, and Demonstrations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce, perform, and/or present in all disciplines</li> <li>• Collaborate in group work</li> <li>• Create student portfolios and/or performances</li> <li>• Incorporate appropriate technology (e.g., video/audio recording and presentation software)</li> </ul>

**Creative:** Students with creative skills use information and/or apply ideas in original and ethical ways.

Performance Indicators	Outcomes Include
1) Generate Original Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use original thinking to design, construct, and/or produce ideas, products, solutions, and/or performances (e.g., case studies, digital photography, web design, audio/video production, art work, dance, poetry, writing assignments)</li> <li>• Incorporate appropriate technology</li> </ul>
2) Study Creative Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use critical thinking skills in the study of original works (e.g., by accomplished and developing</li> </ul>

Performance Indicators	Outcomes Include
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>artists, composers, writers, performers, and other thinkers)</li> <li>• Incorporate appropriate technology</li> </ul>

**Analytical:** Students with analytical skills understand and demonstrate the process of ethical and critical thinking.

Performance Indicators	Outcomes Include
1) Generate Assumptions and Premises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore current research and theory to generate initial concepts</li> <li>• Align concepts with practical applications through experimental or observational study (e.g., lab reports, test and/or quiz performance, documentation)</li> <li>• Understand the scientific method</li> </ul>
2) State Hypotheses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply the scientific method to generate testable hypotheses</li> <li>• Apply case studies and interdisciplinary theories [e.g., class discussions, written summaries, business problems solution factors (BPSF)]</li> </ul>
3) Collect Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use appropriate technology to generate relevant data</li> </ul>
4) Use Critical Thinking Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyze data and test hypotheses</li> <li>• Deconstruct components of the whole (e.g., identify character, plot, and literary elements; apply BPSF to case studies)</li> <li>• Evaluate characteristics (e.g., medium, technique, perspective, and attributes)</li> <li>• Summarize, compare/contrast, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate different theories, perspectives, and/or schools of thought</li> <li>• Interpret results and reach conclusions based on standard methods and ethical practices</li> </ul>
5) Generate Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply responsible and ethical solutions to environmental, social, economic, political, and technical applications across all disciplines</li> <li>• Research assignments or</li> </ul>

Performance Indicators	Outcomes Include
	presentations with proper documentation of sources (e.g., MLA, APA) and meet other appropriate criteria

**Practical:** Students with practical skills demonstrate successful personal and professional interactions.

Performance Indicators	Outcomes Include
1) Communication Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use proper English, grammar, spelling; reading and comprehending skills; effective speaking and listening skills; framing the context</li> </ul>
2) Interpersonal Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work effectively in groups (e.g., classes, clubs and organizations, community service, work study, intern/externships)</li> </ul>
3) Information Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Find, evaluate, and use appropriate information, quantitative, and technological resources (e.g., print, internet, audio, and video)</li> </ul>
4) Quantitative Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use mathematical information to solve problems</li> </ul>
5) Professional Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Translate and apply theories and concepts to practical applications (e.g., time management, problem solving, decision making, life-long learning, and conflict resolution)</li> </ul>

Program Review and Assessments: The program review process continues to serve as the linchpin for all academic assessment goals. A program review is not considered satisfactorily completed until outcomes and assessment are aligned at course, program, and graduation levels. Although working with the Data First E-Series forms showed us where we need to strengthen our efforts, it also showed us that we have progressed further in the past two years than we had realized.

Significant progress has been made in terms of implementing consistent program review procedures and completing a number of important reviews. The Liberal Arts review, in particular, should have wide impact on the quality of academics at Asnuntuck.

As reported in the March 2008 ACC progress report, program reviews in Early Childhood Education (ECE) and Accounting were completed in 2006 and 2005 respectively. A number of additional reviews of programs and disciplines have begun, been completed, or are scheduled. The loss of several full-time faculty members to retirement in 2009 necessitated the revision of the master schedule of program reviews developed in February 2008. An updated schedule will be developed in the fall of 2010.

The following sections detail the status and/or findings of major program reviews:

- Early Childhood Education: The local program review was completed in 2006. After the review, the ECE program moved on to seek national accreditation from The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The Asnuntuck ECE Self-Study Report was submitted in March 2010; the Accreditation Peer Review Visit will occur in October 2010, and the commission's decision on accreditation is expected three months later. Accreditation standards are based on recent research on early childhood development and learning, and are aligned with baccalaureate level standards.

- Accounting: The program review was completed in 2005. As a result of the review, the Accounting program instituted a variety of faculty-led recruiting activities in area high schools, as well as a variety of curricular enhancements. To enhance the program's links to system and community accounting resources, the faculty met with area professionals to conduct a needs assessment and communicated with faculty across the Connecticut Community College System, to plan curricular changes. Faculty members have incorporated current accounting-related topics and events in classroom discussion, involving students in research in electronic and written sources.

- The Business Office Technology (BOT) degree was discontinued by decision of the Department Chair and Academic Dean in 2008-2009 due to successive semesters of lack of student enrollment. The degree work that remains current has been revised into a certificate that is part of a newly updated Information Systems Technology (IST-formerly Computer and Information Systems) program. The program is scheduled for approval at the September Connecticut Community Colleges' Board of Trustees meeting.

- Communications and Broadcasting and Communications and Broadcasting~Radio Option were reviewed with a completion date of spring 2008. The new full-time faculty member who arrived on campus in fall 2009 has continued to review the program offerings. Substantial modification of the Communication curriculum was completed this year, including termination of outdated certificates and the consolidation of degrees, new coursework, and updated certificates. The revamped program is geared to better prepare students for working with new media in the field. The program modifications are scheduled for approval at the September Connecticut Community Colleges' Board of Trustees meeting.

- A Mathematics Discipline Review was begun in fall 2006 and completed in spring 2010 by a new faculty member hired in 2008 with expertise in developmental mathematics. The "Accelerating Success in Mathematics Project" being piloted this summer is an outcome of that review. The project's target student population are those who either just miss the placement score for MATH 137 (the college-level algebra course) or receive a grade of C- in MATH 095 (missing the prerequisite C to move on to MATH 137). The project is designed to develop an optional pathway into MATH 137 by focusing on the specific gaps in student preparation and avoiding repetitive instruction of material already mastered. The project is a collaborative effort between the Mathematics faculty and the Director of the Academic Skills Center.

- The Liberal Arts Program Review, in progress for over a year, was completed in spring 2010. This review was enhanced by the simultaneous development of graduation outcomes, another major initiative of the faculty in 2009-2010. The review will guide the college in its immediate efforts to address areas needing clarification, updating, and improvement, as well as enhance and build on the strengths of the ACC Liberal Arts Program.

- Human Services Program Review is in progress, was to be completed spring 2010, now projected for fall 2010.

- A review of the Science discipline is scheduled for the 2010-2011 academic year. Two new full-time science faculty members were hired for spring 2010 and will take the lead in the review process.

- Manufacturing Technology Option, A.S. and Certificates Level I and II are scheduled for review in the 2010-2011 academic year.

Academic Area Restructuring: In 2008, we reported the formation of a new organizational structure in Academic Affairs. There are now three Departments with Department Chair oversight as can be seen in the organization chart included in the Standard Three Data First Forms. The departments have remained a stable part of the governance structure since their inception. Nonetheless, given the changes in personnel following retirements and shifting of faculty lines to areas of greater need, this is a good time to revisit the structure. Informal restructuring discussions were begun at the department level and between the Department Chairs and the Dean in 2009. These discussions were in preparation for the formal assessment that is scheduled for one of the August 2010 professional days and early part of the fall semester. (More information on the department structure can be found in Standards Three and Five.)

Workforce Development in the Manufacturing Sector: Asnuntuck has made a long-term commitment to Manufacturing Technology education. Growth in both program development and enrollment in the area of Manufacturing Technology has been significant as the college continues to respond to the workforce development needs of the communities it serves. A 2009 study by Deloitte Consulting of the advanced manufacturing sector of New England's economy confirms that this sector is poised for major growth and that Connecticut is identified as the state with the greatest potential to attract career positions in the advanced manufacturing sector. This year, two new employer-driven certificates were approved: Team Leader Management Skills in Manufacturing and Team Leader Technical Skills in Manufacturing. The Manufacturing Technology Center has created an ever-increasing number of corporate partnerships. Consequently, it has been able to introduce advanced technology coursework in additive manufacturing and rapid prototyping, solid works applications, welding and laser technology, and 3D digitizing.

Online Courses: The college has experienced significant growth in our online course offerings, and that growth has leveled off in recent years as we have reached a level that reflects faculty expertise and student need. The table below shows the growth trends of our online course offerings:

Calendar Year	Courses	Enrollment	Average Course Enrollment
2005	16	294	18.38
2006	32	689	21.53
2007	49	1,057	21.57
2008	53	1,145	21.60
2009	51	1,058	20.75

Articulation Agreements: Asnuntuck has been actively developing new articulation agreements since the 2005 comprehensive report. The college now participates in the system-wide guaranteed admission agreement with the University of Connecticut's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (signed in November 2007), and the School of Business (signed in March 2010) as well as the guaranteed/dual admission agreements with the four Connecticut State Universities (signed in April 2009). In addition, ACC has recently developed guaranteed/joint admission agreements with private four-year colleges, Albertus Magnus College and American International College. A similar articulation agreement with Bay Path College is currently under consideration.

In addition, specific pathways to particular majors have been formally established in an attempt to create a more seamless transfer from ACC to the receiving university or college. One such example is the University of Connecticut Psychology Transfer Agreement, which, as a subset of the Guaranteed Admission Agreement, clearly outlines a suggested sequence of courses to take at ACC that will ensure the student enters UConn's Psychology program with junior standing. Articulation agreements that would create seamless transfer between Asnuntuck's Human Services program and four-year programs at five area colleges (Springfield College, Elms College, Western New England College, Westfield State College, and the University of Hartford) are also in progress.

Enfield Adult Education Partnership: Since the 2005 NEASC site visit, Asnuntuck has entered into a partnership with Enfield Adult Education to offer on-site developmental courses to students who have not yet earned their high school diploma. These courses are free to students and provide them with access to all of the college services such as the Learning Resources Center and Academic Skills Center. The course credits earned are applied to both their high school transcript as well as their Asnuntuck student records. This initiative began with a summer offering of one course in 2006 and has grown to include multiple courses throughout the academic year, including Academic Reading, Writing: Paragraph to Essay, Prealgebra, Elementary Algebra, First Year Experience, and English as a Second Language.

## **Appraisal**

### Strengths

- The college's use of E-Series Forms has helped to identify issues and guide program planning and assessment.

- Since 2008, knowledge of outcomes assessment has been among the criteria for all new full-time faculty hiring and was included in the job announcements for these positions.
- The college has implemented uniform use of a formal review process provided by the Connecticut Community College System.
- The graduation outcomes project promoted extensive discussion among the faculty and student services staff members concerning the college's commitment to developing all aspects of our students' education. In addition, the resulting GO-RECAP structure is a detailed and far-reaching way to re-envision the college's mission in concrete terms.
- The college's expanded articulation agreements enhance Asnuntuck's ability to lead students through a progression from the beginning to the end of their educational goals.
- The Department Chair structure contributed to improved evaluation and mentoring of adjunct faculty members.

### Concerns

- A recent survey of syllabi from the spring 2009, fall 2009, and spring 2010 found that student learning outcomes are listed in most courses taught by adjunct faculty members, but such outcomes are not yet published in all syllabi for courses taught exclusively by adjunct faculty members.
- According to the Program and Discipline Review Schedule (revised in February 2008) the following reviews were scheduled to take place but have not due to faculty retirements: Social Sciences, General Studies, Humanities, and English.

### **Projection**

- The Department Chairs and Program Coordinators will continue to work with adjunct faculty members to ensure that all course syllabi have measurable learning outcomes.
- The Dean of Academic Affairs will update the program review calendar for fall 2010 to ensure they continue in a timely manner.
- The next steps for the graduation outcomes is to select a GO-RECAP assessment option to pilot and plan the implementation process. This includes determining how the college will track and assess student data. The college has set a goal of piloting GO-RECAP in 2011-2012 and launching it college-wide prior to 2012-2013.

### **Institutional Effectiveness**

The quality, integrity, and effectiveness of academic programs are evaluated through regular program reviews, available job placement and transfer statistics, annual advisory board reviews of curricula and program developments, and assessment of graduation outcomes.

## Standard Five Faculty

Full-time faculty members have always been at the core of Asnuntuck's mission, serving students in the classroom and beyond. Despite the recent retirement of approximately one-third of our full-time faculty, the college has been able to institute a new departmental structure and hire excellent new faculty members to carry on the best of Asnuntuck's student-first traditions while preparing them for the future.

### **Description: Major Changes Since 2005**

- New Academic Dean: After the retirement of one academic dean and relatively brief tenures of two others, the college hired a new Academic Dean in July 2007. The new dean has brought three years of stability to academic area leadership after a period of relative upheaval.

Full-Time Faculty Retirements and Hiring: Partially due to a state retirement incentive program in 2009, the college lost a significant number of full-time faculty members to retirement in recent years. (See the Standard Five Data First Forms.) In 2008, the college had 27 full-time faculty members (as well as three full-time teaching professionals in the Manufacturing Technology area classified as Instructors but not generally included in a count of full-time faculty members), a high for recent years. Unfortunately, the 2009 fiscal crisis and subsequent retirement incentives rolled back our progress in keeping full-time faculty numbers high. The college has refilled as many positions as the budget allows for, and in fall 2010, there will be 25 full-time faculty members (as well as the three Instructors in Manufacturing Technology).

As mentioned under the "Significant Developments" section of this report, in order to orient the influx of new full-time instructors, a well-respected faculty leader designed and led a New Faculty Seminar in 2009. The seminar meets weekly and includes frequent guest presentations, significant attention to teaching and learning issues, and discussions of such issues as department structure, human resources, promotion and tenure issues, community colleges, student advising, information and educational technology, grading, faculty additional responsibilities, student demographics, and union matters. The Seminar will be offered for the third time in fall 2010.

### **Appraisal**

#### Strengths

- As shown in the 2008 progress report, the college significantly improved faculty evaluation practices and has continued those improvements to the present. In addition, as part of a system-wide initiative, the college has moved from a paper student evaluation system to an online student evaluation system.

- As stated in the site visit team's 2005 report, Asnuntuck faculty members are committed to student success and excellent teaching. They are also committed to the college and participate fully in governance and other initiatives. This commitment was evident throughout this year as every faculty member served on at least one search committee. Every faculty member served on one of the committees that produced this report. All have improved their abilities to gather and analyze data in order to assess our strengths and challenges.
- Asnuntuck's full-time faculty members continue to be very active professionally. For example, two English professors have recently published books and won writing awards. One Theater professor had a role in the prestigious Hartford Stage production. Two math professors have won national fellowships and grants. In addition, all full-time faculty members participate in professional development activities such as conferences and workshops on a regular basis.
- The college has brought a number of professional development speakers to campus for faculty in-service activities on such topics as universal design, veterans' issues, academic honesty, and learning communities.
- The college has a high level of adjunct faculty participation in local professional development activities. For example, many English and Math adjunct faculty members participated in a joint departmental workshop in June 2010 that focused on placement testing and curriculum outcomes.
- As noted in Standard Two, the college used specific data such as enrollment, reliance on adjunct faculty members, and program growth to plan for the hiring of new full-time faculty members.
- The New Faculty Seminar has been well received and highly effective in mentoring our recently hired full-time faculty members.

### Concerns

- Our enrollment increases have outpaced our full-time faculty hiring. As a result, our reliance on adjunct faculty members has somewhat increased since 2005.
- The lag time between the significant number of full-time faculty retirements and the subsequent full-time faculty hiring led to a short-term gap in curricular leadership in some areas.
- The Instructional Excellence Committee has been dormant for two years, leading to a reduction in local, peer-generated, professional development activities for faculty members. (However, during that same period, the quality of faculty professional days has improved.)

### **Projection**

- The college will increase and improve professional development opportunities and funding for faculty members.

- The college will fill the two remaining full-time faculty vacancies as soon as budget dollars are available.

-The college will survey adjunct faculty members to assess what additional services and support they would most benefit from.

- The Academic Affairs Office will re-invigorate peer-generated professional development. (As noted earlier in this report, one college-wide goal is to increase the budgetary support for professional development throughout the college.)

### **Institutional Effectiveness**

Full-time faculty evaluations, promotion, tenure, and sabbaticals are all accomplished in compliance with policies of the Connecticut Community College Board of Trustees and procedures outlined in the Connecticut Community College Congress collective bargaining agreement. Evaluation of adjunct faculty is also in done in compliance with the above.

## Standard Six Students

Asnuntuck's small size and caring atmosphere has long been one of our best assets, and the college continues to adapt to the changing needs of our students. Student Services (in collaboration with Academic Affairs) has developed systems, policies, and protocols to accent our caring atmosphere with more seamless service for students. Staff members have become increasingly cross-trained to meet the growing demands of enrollment, and online resources have been enhanced to support student self-advocacy through career, transfer, and registration information.

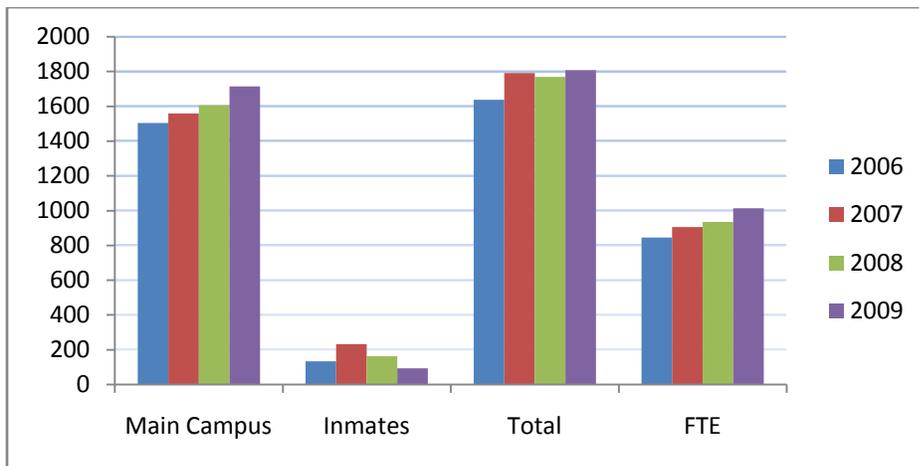
### **Description: Major Changes Since 2005**

The site visit team's 2005 report stated concerns regarding a lack of annual goals in Student Services and staffing limits. In spring 2007, a new Dean of Student Services was hired, and Student Services has had annual goals that are linked to the overall college strategic plan since 2008.

Staffing: Staffing in Student Services has increased to better serve student needs. The Financial Aid Office was restructured, resulting in a half-time position becoming full-time as a Veteran's Coordinator and Certifying Officer. A half-time Career Counselor position was added in 2006, and, in 2010, was made full-time to support Admissions Office needs. The Administrative Assistant to the Dean was made full-time in 2007 as well. An Evening Coordinator was hired in 2005. The college applied and received funding from the Veteran's Administration to provide two college work-study positions specifically to support veteran student needs. In addition, staff schedules have been adjusted to ensure that the needs of evening students are met.

Professional development for Student Services staff members is provided on a regular basis to help them to stay current with best practices. All members of the Student Services team are cross-trained to support student success through participation in committees, co-curricular program development and implementation, and student leadership development. Recent workshop examples include topics such as serving the needs of veteran students, appreciative inquiry series, understanding CCSSE data, students at risk, plagiarism, and the college culture.

Enrollment Increases: Main campus enrollment has shown steady growth every year for the last four years. Full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment has also increased every year and reached over 1,000 FTE for the first time in the college's history. The chart below (which includes inmate enrollment for prison courses) represents enrollment increases from 2006 to 2009.



As discussed in the “Significant Developments” section of this report, the number of Asnuntuck Community College degrees and certificates awarded has grown significantly from 274 in 2009 to 482 this spring. This number includes 28 August 2009 and 65 December 2009 awards. Growth in specific degree programs is discussed in detail in the section on Standard Four.

Financial Aid Increases: As the data first forms indicate, the amount of financial aid received by our students has increased every year for the last four years from 1.1 million dollars in 2006-7 to 2.8 million in 2009-2010. (Also see the Standard Six Data First Forms.)

Student Orientation: Student orientation is strongly supported by both the college and the Asnuntuck Community College Foundation. A \$500 mini-grant has been awarded two years in a row to hire Cornerstones Consulting to facilitate ice breaker/leadership sessions with our new students for the day and evening programs.

The New Student Orientation was expanded in 2008 to include a day session as well as an evening session. The day session included team building, academic expectations and opportunities, as well as resources and support services for students. In 2009 the evening session was lengthened to include team building, once again with the support of a mini-grant from the ACC Foundation. Even though the New Student Orientation remains voluntary, the expectation of attendance was made known to new students via flyers, academic counseling, phone calls and emails. Attendance increased 20 percent in 2009 over the previous year.

In 2009, 48 new students attended the New Student Orientation four-hour day program and 60 attended the two-hour evening program. The evaluations were consistent in listing the session with Cornerstones Consulting as the thing students enjoyed the most at the event. An online orientation was also created as a supplement for those individuals unable to attend the on-campus student orientation. This includes frequently asked questions, important terms, and tips to be a successful student.

A pilot summer orientation/advising project was instituted in summer 2010, where faculty members met with small groups of students to discuss academic and career goals, explore academic programs and classes, and introduce students to the expectations of college. The summer session

also included academic advising and registration, team-building activities, student IDs, and a training session for utilizing online resources.

Academic Advising: In 2010, a whole month was dedicated to advising with April being dubbed, "Advising Month." All full-time faculty members signed up to advise students during Advising Month, and coverage was provided throughout the entire month. In addition, a retired full-time faculty member was hired part-time in spring 2010 to help with advising, probationary students, and retention of students.

The college recently instituted a Retention Committee to help students, especially those at risk, maintain their studies at the college. (See Standard Three and Appendix D for more information.)

The Manufacturing Technology area recently began using a "roving mentor" to help standardize precision manufacturing programs, develop curricula, and work with Workforce Development System career advisors. The roving mentor helps assess and select students for internships and job shadowing opportunities while coaching students with their adjustment to an academic environment and assisting with job placements suitable for their abilities. Manufacturing Technology also offers "shadow days," whereby prospective students can sit in on classes so that they can preview our programs to determine if they meet their educational needs.

Asnuntuck's Manufacturing Technology program continues to focus on student job placement with great success. The placement rates for the 2009-2010 graduating class exceeds 80 percent, and entry-level annual wages average \$35,000 to \$40,000. Most of our graduates transitioned successfully to career positions in the aerospace industry (particularly related to nearby Bradley International Airport). The aerospace industry is the primary economic engine for manufacturing in Connecticut. A review of the placement data demonstrates that our graduates are placed in a wide variety of firms, from small companies like Joining Technologies in East Granby, Connecticut, to large international companies, including U.S. Tsubaki (based in Illinois); from "job shops" like Delta Industries in East Granby to specialty companies, including Jarvis Surgical in Westfield, Massachusetts.

In recent years, the college has also focused its efforts to address the needs of our increasing number of online students. Course schedule booklets now feature an inventory titled "Is Online Learning for Me?" to help students become informed about the skills and technology necessary for success in the online environment. In addition, the college has moved to a one-stop portal, my.comnet.edu, which encompasses all of the online tools students typically access, including student records, academic resources, and course management platforms.

The college has developed several new articulation agreements with four-year colleges and has given special attention to ensuring that students are able to participate in the agreements. (See Standard Four for more information.)

Student Involvement: As already discussed in Standard Three, the Student Senate has become a more active body with a dozen active members that meet weekly and a new executive board. Also, students are members of both College Council and the Curriculum and Standards Committee.

In addition, the Student Union of Minorities at Asnuntuck (SUMA) has worked in cooperation with the Diversity Committee on several initiatives. For example, the groups hosted an employee reception for students of diverse backgrounds, attended by approximately twenty-five students and a variety of employees. SUMA and the Diversity Committee also channeled student academic interests to create the impetus for offering an English Department "special topics" course in spring 2010 called Exploring the Black Aesthetic.

Various caterers were contacted to provide lunch service throughout most of the semester. While not directly a Student Services function, this was provided as a convenient and healthier food service choice than vending machines, as well as a social opportunity for students.

The Student Service area maintains its own web page (accessible through the college website) that is updated regularly with a calendar of events, helping to promote student awareness of and involvement in the events. In addition, recent upgrades to the myCommnet online portal (<http://my.commnet.edu>) maintained by the community college system have consolidated many student resources into a "one-stop" access point.

Services for Veterans: As mentioned in the "Significant Development" section, the college opened a Veterans' Oasis Center in 2009. The center is a place solely for veteran students and their dependents to study, relax, and meet other student veterans. Students can use the computers to prepare for classes, watch a movie on the large screen TV or enjoy a cup of coffee before class at their weekly coffee hours. Veterans can participate in programs and services that will help access supportive veterans' programs through State and Federal agencies and that encourage success in the academic setting.

The college also initiated a Veterans' Task Force, comprised of faculty, staff, and student veterans who want to ensure that the needs of our veteran students are being met. A new Veterans Student Organization encourages students to get involved, meet and work with other veterans, help create programming and events geared toward veteran students, and advocate on the behalf of student veterans at the institutional, local, state, and national level. Monthly Veteran Workshops are now offered to focus on veteran benefits, resources and issues, career development (resume building, interview techniques, and career resources), transfer opportunities, and financial aid information. The college has also designated one member of the student services staff as our Veterans' Coordinator/Certifying Officer.

## **Appraisal**

### Strengths

- The college's enrollment growth has been strong and steady in recent years, making a positive financial impact on the institution.
- Federal guidelines have expanded student access to financial aid, allowing the college to help fund the education of more students at higher levels. In particular, PELL grants are now available to students for enrollment in summer classes.

- CCSSE data is reviewed often to measure educational outcomes and assessments for the student services area.

- The college was selected by *G.I. Jobs Magazine* as a “Military Friendly School” in both 2009 and 2010, ranking ACC in the top 15 percent of all colleges, universities, and trade schools nationwide.

- The enhancement of the college's transfer articulation agreements has provided more opportunity for students to convert their start at Asnuntuck into completion of a four-year degree.

### Concerns

- Spring semester orientation is still a concern. At the beginning of the semester, Student Services staff visited the majority of classes to give a brief overview of academic and student support services to all of our students.

- The greater availability of financial aid and enrollment increases could create Financial Aid Office staffing concerns in the near future as the college deals with the processing of greater numbers of aid applications.

- The college has not been able to generate significant alumni involvement in the activities of the college. The alumni database maintained by the former Director of Institutional Advancement has not been maintained since 2008.

### **Projection**

- The college hopes to institute a formal spring New Student Orientation for spring 2011. A committee will be formed to assess prior attempts and be creative with options to get students to attend. Potential ideas generated include a Saturday daytime event, several afternoons during the first week of classes, or a combination of afternoon and evening sessions.

- The college will plan for ways to balance increasing enrollment and financial aid applications with staffing levels that will probably not grow at a corresponding rate.

- The college recognizes the importance of dedicated positions for placement testing and student activities, and in light of the current fiscal times and staffing shortages, is reviewing alternate strategies to address these issues.

- The college recently identified the development of a student lounge area to be a top priority for the coming months. A space has been designated and plans are underway to involve the Student Senate in the design process.

- Although a formal alumni group does not exist, Student Services has begun to document alumni success stories and will continue to do so. In addition, an alumni commencement speaker was selected for the 2010 ceremony, a tradition the college plans to continue.

### **Institutional Effectiveness**

The primary mechanisms for review are the Retention Committee and the Joint Academic Affairs and Student Services Committee. The Retention Committee reviews retention and CCSSE data and makes recommendations to Faculty Council and the Deans of Academic Affairs and Student Services. The Joint Academic Affairs and Student Services Committee is a collaboration led by the deans. Key members of the two divisions meet together regularly for cross-divisional problem solving. Items for the agenda come from members of the committee who represent all academic and student service departments.

## Standard Seven Library and Other Information Resources

Access to information at Asnuntuck is no longer limited to the relative physical limits of our library's walls. Despite space, budget, and staffing constraints, the college has developed a collaborative approach to information literacy that serves our students through a variety of curricular and technological methods.

### **Description: Major Changes Since 2005**

“Helping students develop Information Literacy Skills” was an area of special emphasis for the 2008 progress report. At that time we were able to report some improvements in the instruction provided through the Learning Resources Center (LRC) and an increase in the amount of instruction embedded in coursework by faculty. In June 2008, the Director retired and in January 2009 the senior Librarian retired. A new Director, with expertise in information literacy, was hired in January 2009, but the senior librarian has not been replaced due to budget limitations. A one-year contract to hire a full-time Librarian has been approved for fiscal year 2011, along with an additional part-time position. The many personnel transitions have somewhat slowed the full attainment of our information literacy goals. Nonetheless, we have made significant progress as is detailed below.

Information Literacy: Information literacy initiatives have been undertaken at the college as a collaboration between librarians, academic support staff, and faculty.

Information literacy training is present as embedded course content in multiple disciplines, including: English Composition, First Year Experience (FYE), and Criminal Justice (CJ). In addition, an ad hoc Plagiarism Committee formed two years ago has raised awareness among students, faculty, and staff that academic honesty is an important part of information literacy. Information literacy is an explicit outcome for all FYE courses. The course outcome states that upon completion of the class students will be able to “employ information literacy practices to recognize, locate, evaluate and use information effectively.” Any student can register for FYE and it is required for both the Liberal Arts and the General Studies degree programs.

Instructors use a range of approaches to teach information literacy. The class may visit the LRC for instruction by a librarian. Library tours and information about where to access information in the library are also provided. Information literacy instruction may also be conducted by a librarian in the classroom. An instructor may also use LRC databases in a class or lab setting for information literacy instruction. A research-based assignment that employs these skills is typical.

The college-wide graduation outcomes initiative (GO-RECAP) also focuses on skills and assessments related to information literacy. Information literacy is integrated into all five outcomes and will be measured in a post-hoc analysis of random samples of graduates that is projected to begin by 2012-2013.

The LRC staff is currently working with an adjunct faculty member to help develop one discrete information literacy module as a pilot program. The program will involve the information literacy skills of analyzing periodicals and extracting and using information. The goal is to develop a video module to help students analyze potential sources and target the search to be more discipline specific. The plan is for story boards to be built this semester that can be produced in the fall semester by video production students. The larger faculty community will be asked to assess its viability. Based on feedback, more modules will be developed.

The Connecticut State University System no longer maintains the Basic Information Literacy Tutorial (BILT). The ACC librarians are exploring alternate delivery models for information literacy skills. The ideal is a module approach that students can take as tutorials with a self-assessment component as part of the module. The college continues to research models that can be adapted for use at Asnuntuck. (See the Standard Seven Data First Forms.)

To expand student information resources, the college recently entered into a formal agreement with the Enfield Public Libraries to offer Asnuntuck students the opportunity to utilize the material they have in-house and online. The Central Library on Middle Road and the Pearl Street Branch Library (both only a few minutes drive from the college) offer extended hours, including on weekends, giving our students additional library access. The Enfield Public Libraries have more than 140,000 items and access to over twenty different databases to assist students in their academic pursuits.

## **Appraisal**

### Strengths

- The college has access (through state consortia purchases) to substantive academic research resources.
- The LRC has a dedicated adaptive technology workstation.
- The LRC now has wireless access for patrons with laptop computers.
- The LRC now has a group work computer pod station.
- There is greater knowledge and acceptance by students, staff, and faculty of the importance of information literacy.

### Concerns

- Staffing continues to be insufficient for the required level of technical and public service operations. We have lost a full-time librarian and a full-time clerical support staff person. To meet American Library Association standards for minimal staffing for an institution with the college's enrollment, the LRC requires the addition of one full-time librarian, one full-time support staff,

and funding to support in-session evening staff, both librarian and clerical. The reduction in staffing has resulted in reduced hours each week and the elimination of Saturday services. As mentioned above, the college has addressed some of these needs for fiscal year 2011, but will need to plan for beyond that period.

- The print materials and database collections are insufficiently funded. The budget has decreased since 2005 from \$80,000 to its current amount of \$54,000. Following completion and review by faculty of a complete inventory in August 2010, the President has approved up to a 20% increase in the budget for fiscal year 2011.

- Although planned for in the Facilities Master Plan, the LRC currently has no dedicated group study space or dedicated sound-suppressed quiet study space.

- The LRC has only nine personal computers for student, faculty, and public use.

- The LRC has an inadequate/non-functional library materials security system.

## **Projections**

- Librarians, Academic Skills, and Educational Technology staff will collaborate to develop an information literacy outcomes statement with standards of proficiency for Asnuntuck students and graduates, based on the latest ALA/ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education. Recent faculty vacancies due to retirements and understaffing in the LRC have resulted in resources being devoted to faculty hiring committees and basic library services rather than new collaborative initiatives. As faculty members are hired, more discussions can and need to ensue. We will continue developing a shared vision of what information literacy is for our students and then implement it across campus.

- The college is mindful of ALA standards and will explore ways to hire a permanent full-time librarian dedicated to Information Literacy and seek alternative ways to provide appropriate clerical support to the Library.

- Purchasing of an appropriate materials security system is currently under consideration.

- Purchasing laptops for use in the Library is under consideration as a way to expand available technology in limited space.

- The sufficiency of the library's technology, materials, and staff budgets will be reviewed during the 2010-2011 Strategic Planning process. As stated above, in the short term, following completion of an inventory of the collection, and review by faculty, the President has approved up to a 20% increase in the budget for fiscal year 2011.

- In conjunction with overall website improvements for the college, the LRC will develop an interactive webpage to meet user demands for products and services online.

- As funding becomes available, the college will implement the library component of the facilities Master Plan.

### **Institutional Effectiveness**

Evaluation of the library and instructional and information technology departments are included in the Institutional Effectiveness survey. Departments are developing goals for academic year 2010-2011 in response to the survey results.

## Standard Eight Physical and Technological Resources

Despite a delay in state funding support of Asnuntuck's facilities master plan, we have planned astutely to use existing resources to improve the facility and enhance teaching and learning through classroom and technological upgrades. Asnuntuck's facilities provide a place where employees and students can comfortably and safely come together and achieve the college's mission.

### **Description: Major Changes Since 2005**

Master Plan: The campus master plan for Asnuntuck Community College has been completed, calling for \$16.5 million in the Community Colleges Five-Year Facilities and Capital Plan, but due to the state budget crisis, the Bond Commission is not funding the project. Once bonding is in place, the Master Plan will, according to the Space Utilization Study and Master Plan, accomplish the following:

- Assess programmatic needs
- Reflect accepted space-planning guidelines
- Project space needs based on projected enrollments
- Result in a campus that will serve the regions' burgeoning credit and non-credit enrollments well into the future.

Other Upgrades: The building and grounds were purchased by the state for \$2 million in January 2008. In the absence of funding for the Master Plan, the college has done many necessary upgrades since 2005. (Also see the Standard Eight Data First Forms.)

Most recently and significantly, the LPN program independently operated on campus by Howell Cheney Technical School for more than twenty years closed in 2010 due to state budget cuts. The program had occupied several classrooms and office spaces on one hallway of the second floor, utilizing approximately 2,690 square feet of building space. (The program did not generate any revenue for the college.)

The Workforce Development and Continuing Education Department will utilize the newly available 2,690 square feet on the second floor, while returning some currently occupied classrooms and office space to the college for reallocation. This will allow Continuing Education and Workforce Development programs a dedicated hall of classrooms that are being remodeled and will give a fresh new look and a centralized location to this department as the college expands these programs.

With the above strategic move as part of our assessment and response to student needs and growth, the college is improving the facilities out of operating funds. The combination of the second-floor nursing hall space remodeling and the renovation of space for the Manufacturing

Technology Program equates to more than 8,000 square feet of recently renovated and upgraded space.

The following is a summary of other recent upgrade projects:

- Facilities

- Student seating areas have been added in various spots of the building.
- The college bookstore has been relocated from the back of the building to a more accessible area in the front of the building.
- Artwork has been installed in the main cafeteria.
- The building's boilers have been replaced.
- The parking lot has been repaved and enhanced (new lighting, rotary and student drop-off area, security phones, and sidewalks).
- Gazebo has been added to the back of campus and designated a smoking area.
- The Veterans' Oasis Center was opened.
- The college elevator has been upgraded.
- The Manufacturing Technology area installed additional classroom space.
- The auditorium stage area was resurfaced and some curtains replaced.
- Portable Art gallery purchased for biannual student art shows.
- A C-Pod was added to the Learning Resources Center, facilitating collaborative student work.
- Asbestos abatement was completed in 12 classrooms and the boiler area.
- Green cleaning products are now being used.

- Technology/Infrastructure

- Implemented Virtual Local Area Networks (VLANs).
- CCC WAN connection upgrade that increased Internet connection 15-20 times.
- New VoIP phone system (CISCO Call Manager).
- New voicemail system (CISCO Unity).
- New Dell server and storage to support server virtualization.
- Public wireless access (Wi-Fi) in Cafeteria, Learning Resources Center, and Veterans' Oasis Center.

- Security

- VoIP phones in every classroom.
- New paging system allows emergency broadcasts to every VoIP phone in the building.
- Enhanced 911, allows the police to see the location from where the 911 call was placed.
- Blue Light emergency phones in the parking lots.
- 4 digital monitors located in hallways.
- Several sensitive areas re-keyed to answer FERPA concerns.
- Classroom doors now lock from the inside for additional security.

- Technology in the Classroom

- Upgraded 12 classrooms with PC, DVD/VCR combo, external speakers, distribution amplifier/switcher, and ceiling-mounted projector.
- Kept pace with computer lab, software and hardware needs to support instruction.

- Asnuntuck Radio Station WACC

- We now operate 24 hours a day both on the Internet and on the FM band at 107.7. Students use a digital production studio to produce promotional announcements, public service announcements, and other programming.
- WACC serves the community by rebroadcasting alerts through the Emergency Alert System. This keeps our students, faculty, staff, and the public informed of any inclement weather situations, amber alerts, etc.
- Veterans' Oasis Center
  - Three computers, one networked printer, wired and wireless Internet access, Wii Fit, and wide screen TV.

## **Appraisal**

### Strengths

- The boiler-replacement project has led to \$25,000 a year in savings and 20 percent decrease in usage, saving the college money and lessening our energy footprint.
- The classroom technology upgrades, bringing the college from two "smart classrooms" in 2005 to twelve in 2010 (with more planned), has been a significant improvement in how the college can use instructional technology for our students.
- When one-time funds became available in spring 2009 for facility upgrades, the college invited proposals from employees for campus improvement projects that cost up to \$50,000. Out of many proposals, three were chosen (microbiology lab, computer lab, and television/audio studio).
- Despite lack of funding for the college Master Plan, many upgrades have been made to the facility that enable the college to provide a productive work environment and to serve our students' needs. Budgeting for facilities is more closely linked to strategic planning than at any previous time in the college's history.

### Concerns

- Without Master Plan funding from the state, the college has been unable to reach its full potential as a workplace and as an educational institution.
- The lack of capital funding from the state since fiscal year 2007 has slowed progress in equipment purchases and technology upgrades, including establishing a more extensive campus wireless network.

## **Projection**

- Despite ongoing state fiscal restrictions, the college will continue to seek operating budget, state, and outside funding to implement the campus Master Plan.

- Using one-time available funds, the college plans facility upgrade projects for significant improvements in the science classrooms, computer labs, and television/audio studio space. These projects will be carried out by fall 2010.

- Other upgrades being planned for the near future include the following:

#### Facilities

- Surveillance camera project for parking lots and entranceways
- Wireless access campus-wide
- 25-seat computer lab and other upgrades for Manufacturing Technology
- Summer 2010: New electrical and data outlets for labs 133a and 133b
- Summer 2010: Replacement of furniture in lab 133a
- Summer 2010: Replacement of computers in lab 133a or 212
- College web page redesign

#### Technology/Infrastructure

- Asnuntuck will be the hot site for Disaster Recovery for the System Data Center
- Upgrade at least two new "smart classrooms" each fiscal year
- Additional virtualization for servers
- Virtualization for computer desktops

#### **Institutional Effectiveness**

Realistic planning and budget allocation by the President and Cabinet are done annually. Decisions have been informed by the Technology Strategic Plan (completed in spring 2009) and academic program needs as demonstrated in program reviews.

## Standard Nine Financial Resources

Asnuntuck has not been immune to the effects of the recent global financial crisis, but the college draws on a long history of achieving our mission without an over-abundance of funding. Judicious use of reserves and allocation of resources, along with recent enrollment increases, has allowed the college to maintain an excellent level of student service and educational quality.

### **Description: Major Changes Since 2005**

Fiscal Stability: As discussed in Section III of this report, despite several years of state budget cuts and a lack of capital funding since fiscal year 2007, Asnuntuck is currently in its best financial health in the institution's history. (See the Standard Nine Data First Forms.) Over the past five fiscal years, tuition and fee revenues have increased every year, typically by double digits. Most of the increase has been driven by enrollment increases, and the college is experiencing the highest enrollments in its 30-year history. The college has ended nine of the past ten fiscal years with surpluses, including a preliminary surplus of over \$800,000 in fiscal year 2010.

The college has aggressively moved forward with renovations to the facility, using its own operating funds to make many substantial improvements tied to the facility, student success and the teaching and learning environment. Although the college received no direct federal stimulus funds, the State of Connecticut was required to maintain funding of higher education at fiscal year 2009 levels to receive federal stimulus funds. This state funding enabled the college to refill employee vacancies created from the Retirement Incentive Plan offered by the state. In addition, the full fiscal year funding for the positions, combined with the delay in refilling many of the positions, created available cash in fiscal year 2010 that was used for many of the facility improvement projects mentioned in the Standard Eight section of this report.

At the end of fiscal year 2009, Asnuntuck's total assets were \$10.5 million (an increase of 78 percent from fiscal year 2006), net assets were over \$7.3 million (an increase of 152 percent from fiscal year 2006) and the cash/cash equivalents were over \$3.5 million (an increase of 39 percent from fiscal year 2006). The positive results for fiscal year 2010 will add to each of the above numbers, all of which are at all-time highs for the college.

Revised College Budget Process: The college instituted an improved budget planning process in 2007 to facilitate linking budget development with overall college strategic planning. Due to delays in state budget allocations and the realities of level funding, this process has not been used in the past two years. We look forward to using it in spring 2011. The budget planning timeline is as follows:

- Late March/Early April: Budget calls go out to all areas of the college. Forms with budget and expenditure histories are provided to members of cabinet for distribution to their department

spending heads. The budget timeline is also attached, as well as Capital Expenditure forms. Department heads are encouraged to talk to other members of their respective departments for input to budget needs.

- Early to mid-April: Departmental budget requests are due to the respective manager of that division, with a copy to the Administrative area. The Dean of Administration begins to assemble the total requested and compares that to projected revenue for an initial “big picture” overview.

- Mid- to late April: The respective managers meet with the department spending heads to review their requests. This conversation allows the department spending heads to justify their budget requests to their immediate supervisor. Any changes to the initial request are communicated to the Dean of Administration for revision of the total requested. This total request is then prepared in a document for Cabinet review.

- Mid- to late May: Preliminary budget distribution is received from the System Office. At this point, there is usually a projected deficit, so the Cabinet then reviews the budget for possible changes, deletions, and/or revenue enhancements. Once a final internal college budget is approved by the president, the budget forms are revised to reflect the approved budget and redistributed to the members of Cabinet for distribution to their respective spending heads.

- Early June: The college budget is announced and data entered in the Banner system. Ideally, the college also receives final budget distribution from the System Office~although often this is not received until middle to late June.

## **Appraisal**

### Strengths

- Enrollment growth has helped to generate more income for the college. Tuition and fee revenues have increased every year, typically by double-digit percentages.
- The college has been able to absorb several years of state budget cuts without having to lay off employees. Individual colleges in the state system and individual departments at the college have had autonomy in deciding how to handle budget cuts without a directive to cut employees.
- Concessions by state unions (furlough days, reduced salary increases, etc.) have helped reduce the impact of budget cuts.
- Due to a state community college system formula for full-time to part-time faculty instruction, the college was able to secure funding to refill many of the full-time faculty positions lost due to the recent retirement incentive plan.
- The college benefited financially from the state's pursuit of federal stimulus funds.

- Asnuntuck is one of only four of the twelve Connecticut community colleges with positive unrestricted net assets (UNA-sometimes called the "rainy-day fund"), current resources available to support future operations.

### Concerns

- Because the state of Connecticut budget was delayed the past two years, the college has not been able to follow its revised budget planning process in the past two budget cycles.

- Fiscal year 2010-2011 will probably be even more challenging than fiscal year 2009-2010 due to the state fiscal situation. In addition, the state of Connecticut is currently projecting a \$3 billion deficit for fiscal year 2012.

- Although the college remains in solid financial position, it cannot continue to use operating funds to complete renovations projects and purchase equipment that should be funded by state capital funds.

### **Projection**

- The college is committed to returning to its improved budget planning process in spring 2011, despite expected delays in the state budget.

- The new bookstore contract should result in an additional \$70,000 per year of income to the college.

- Using one-time available funds, the college plans facilities upgrade projects for significant improvements in the science classrooms, computer labs, and television/audio studio space. These projects will be carried out by fall 2010.

- Recent space planning identified short-term needs including additional space for a new main telecommunications area, full-time faculty offices, a dedicated student lounge, and additional storage space.

### **Institutional Effectiveness**

The college complies with financial management procedures determined by the Connecticut Community College Board of Trustees, as well as state and federal regulations. The college participates in appropriate external audits.

## Standard Ten Public Disclosure

Once called "the hidden jewel," Asnuntuck is now an active participant in the communications revolution. Within the building and across cyberspace, we are making connections between students, employees, the community, and the world at large.

### **Description: Major Changes Since 2005**

Communications Improvements: A major change in college communications is that our classrooms now all have telephones. In addition, these phones can function as a public address system when important announcements need to be made to the entire building. The Connecticut Community College MyCommnet alert system, which can send messages to student and employee cell phones, is another improvement for sending out a mass distribution of important information to college constituencies. A digital signage system, featuring large-screen television monitors, has been placed in high-traffic areas of the college. The college recently established a Facebook page, which enables students to include us in their social networking activities.

Marketing: Marketing duties have been added to the job description of the Executive Assistant to the President, but those duties are only a small part of that job description, not the exclusive focus. The Marketing Committee operates primarily in an advisory capacity for the Executive Assistant to the President.

Information Availability: Part-time faculty members are now listed in the college catalog, current as of the publication date of the catalog. These faculty members are also listed in the online version of the course schedule at MyCommnet.edu as soon as they are hired to teach specific courses. In addition, the college's financial statements are now more accessible online than they have been in the past. (See the Standard Ten Data First Forms.)

### **Appraisal**

#### Strengths

- The communications upgrades (classroom telephones, MyCommnet alerts, digital signage, Facebook) now make connecting with the college's students, employees, and community easier and more contemporary.
- The availability of financial statements has been improved with easier access to certain documents online (but knowledge of the availability of this information remains a concern).

#### Concerns

- The college still does not have a separate staff position dedicated specifically to marketing.

- The college webmaster still has only a small percentage of his job description (Media Specialist) dedicated to work on the college website. The college currently has more than 200 web pages, many of which are outdated. There is no clear procedure for proposing website updates, additions, or deletions.

- The primary document containing Asnuntuck's public information is the current catalog, which is currently not available on the college website as such. Most of the catalog is available in other forms on the website, but it is not always easy to find. The college still does not clearly indicate the availability of some programs, courses, services, and personnel.

### **Projection**

- The college will explore further opportunities to connect with our constituencies through advances in electronic communication and online social networking.

- Implementing a content management system would help address some of the website updating issues.

- The college will make the current print catalog available in an easily accessible location on the college website and establish a system for making catalog updates available to the public.

- Plans are being made to update information concerning the availability of college programs and services on the college website. In addition, a plan is in process to identify and publicize which semesters most courses are typically offered.

### **Institutional Effectiveness**

The college is improving its systematic review of all print and electronic publications. Past practices have ensured accuracy and currency. Availability and completeness of the college website is currently under review.

## Standard Eleven Integrity

Asnuntuck has always been a place that feels like "home" to students and employees. In recent years, as student participation has increased, long-time employees have retired, and a generation of new faces has appeared, the college has maintained its sense of being a place of welcome through being a place of unity and diversity.

### **Description: Major Changes Since 2005**

Student Participation: Student participation in the college governance system has increased significantly. Students now have two representatives and two alternates on the College Council, one representative and one alternate on the Curriculum and Standards Committee, one representative on the Diversity Committee, and one representative on the Foundation Board.

Veteran Friendly Campus: A new Veteran Student Organization was created, and a Veterans' Oasis Center installed at the college. Financial Aid was restructured to support Veterans and provide services. Programs and workshops focused on retention of veterans have included weekly coffee hours hosted by college offices, monthly visits by Ed Burke from Representative Joe Courtney's office, and the first Asnuntuck "USO Canteen" to celebrate Veteran's Day 2009. The college was selected by *G.I. Jobs Magazine* as a "Military Friendly School" in both 2009 and 2010, ranking ACC in the top 15 percent of all colleges, universities, and trade schools nationwide.

Diversity Committee: The Diversity Committee's charge and membership has been discussed previously. The committee has been extremely active and has made a consistent and positive impact on the college, as evidenced by this summary of its 2009-2010 activities:

- Drafting an updated committee charter.
- Establishing regular reports on committee activities at various governance meetings.
- Hosting an employee reception for students of diverse backgrounds, attended by approximately twenty-five students and a variety of employees.
- Celebrating the Sukkah and Harvest Festival to educate the college community about diverse harvest festivals.
- Hosting the African-American "Read-In" program to celebrate the works of African-American writers.
- Posting "Stall Stats," a series of approximately twenty display pages with diversity messages put in all college bathroom stalls.
- Coordinating Peace Week, a week-long series of events focusing on creating peace and inclusion in a diverse world. Events included programs on the Peace Corps, building respectful and peaceful dating relationships, a memorial reading of the names of American service members killed in recent wars, peace through music, lessons from the Holocaust, men and violence in relationships, two peace vigils, and a "Poetry for Peace" coffeehouse.

- Securing approval to purchase and mount large maps of many different parts of the world along the classroom hallways as a way to encourage student global awareness.
- Posting weekly displays on the Celebrating Diversity Bulletin Board on a variety of diversity topics on the main front hallway of the college.
- Featuring inclusive symbols and celebrations of the winter holiday season.

Hiring Practices: Asnuntuck has always worked to make our hiring practices clear and transparent. However, some aspects of our hiring practices had not been formalized. Although ACC has not had difficulties in the past gaining acceptance of its annual plan, the college's 2008-2009 Affirmative Action Plan was not accepted by the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO). Subsequently, the college contracted a hiring consultant to assist the Affirmative Action Officer in the completion of the plan and to instruct search committee chairs in fulfilling their CHRO reporting requirements. The Affirmative Action Plan for 2009-2010 has been submitted to CHRO and was accepted without concerns.

We have made several improvements to our hiring processes. Job postings are now designed to include the specific requirements and preferred qualifications of the position in order to establish clear and objective decision-making during the search and selection process. The search and selection process is comprised of a broad range of activities, including the decision to create or refill a position, recruitment, advertising, screening and interviewing candidates, and selecting a candidate for the job. The following general principles apply to the search and selection process:

- Open Searches: There is a presumption that positions will be filled following an open search of appropriate scope.
- Recruitment Period: There is a presumption that positions will be filled following a minimum of thirty days of active recruitment, including advertising in appropriate print and/or electronic media, strategic personal contact with individuals and professional groups likely to refer qualified candidates, and circulation of the announcement.
- Scope of the Search: The general practice for recruitment for unclassified positions is as follows:
  - Faculty positions and non-teaching positions at level 18 and above are subject to national searches. A national search is defined as using media sources that have national exposure, e.g., *Chronicle of Higher Education*.
  - Non-teaching positions at levels 16-17 involve regional searches.
  - Positions below level 16 may be filled as the result of local or regional searches.
- Advisory Search and Selection Committee: The search and selection process generally involves an advisory search and selection committee. The role of the committee is to assist with recruitment activities, screen applications, and recommend candidates to the president. The final selection of a candidate is made by the president. Prior to beginning work on a search, an advisory search and selection committee is convened for orientation and the committee charge by the Affirmative Action Officer. The orientation includes review of the following:
  - Job description and minimum qualifications for the position.

- Affirmative action goals as set forth in the annual Affirmative Action Plan filed with the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities.
- The advisory role of the committee.
- Policies on equivalencies and exception appointments.
- Key deadlines for the search process.
- Expectations regarding the nature and format of the recommendation, i.e., list of unranked candidates with strengths and weaknesses.

## **Appraisal**

### Strengths

- As the percentage of full-time and matriculated students has increased in recent years, so has the number of students who participate in college governance and activities.
- The college's emphasis on supporting veterans has provided a place of support for those who serve their country in the military, as well as increased campus awareness of national and global issues.
- A specific budget was established for the Diversity Committee. In addition, the committee continues the time-honored Asnuntuck practice of creatively making good things happen despite funding shortages.

### Concerns

- Asnuntuck's small size, limited resources, and the relative heterogeneous population of our service area sometimes make promoting awareness of cultural diversity difficult.
- Although many improvements have been made to our hiring process, there still is not a formal process manual available.

## **Projection**

- The college will continue to encourage growth of student participation in college governance.
- The Human Resources office will continue to train search committee chairs in the affirmative action process to assure best hiring practices and to improve our future Affirmative Action Plans. A formal process manual will be an end product of these endeavors.
- The college will continue to explore ways to enhance our students', employees', and community's experience of cultural diversity and awareness of the larger world beyond the walls of Asnuntuck and the borders of Enfield.

## **Institutional Effectiveness**

Policies and conditions that maintain the institution's integrity are reviewed on the same timetable as the college catalog is revised and republished every two years.

## Current and Future Plans

Feedback from the SENSE study, Asnuntuck's Institutional Effectiveness Survey, and College Council meetings demonstrate the dedication of our faculty and staff and their ability to solve problems and get the job done creatively and efficiently. Needless to say, both fiscal and human resources are stretched thin at a small college. Each individual has a broad range of responsibilities, and the recent combination of increased enrollment and multiple vacancies strained morale. To improve morale we have the Kudos program which recognizes and publicly honors those who go above and beyond their job descriptions. It is an ongoing challenge to balance enrollment demands and services with existing resources. We have shown in the past we are able to do this, and with the large number of new hires made last year, we are renewed and ready for the future and its challenges.

There are three additional challenges we face: the growing number of underprepared students seeking a community college education; the flood of displaced workers from business, finance, and industry that are seeking training and education to prepare them for workforce reentry; and the expectation of cuts in state budgets that will require the college to further depend on our financially successful entrepreneurial ventures through Continuing Education. Each of these challenges is discussed further below:

The Connecticut Community College Developmental Education Initiative has articulated "five strategic levers to advance student success: curriculum alignment, assessment, data and measurement, redesign and innovation in developmental education, and integration of Academic and Student Services." At Asnuntuck we already have all five levers in place, Developmental Mathematics and Writing are already integrated into the curriculum, we are using data and measurement wisely in the Academic Skills Center and our "Accelerating Mathematics" pilot project, we believe developmental education needs to be redesigned in order to improve student success, and we already have an unusually high degree of collaboration between Academic Affairs and Student Services. We expect to make great strides during the next three years.

The need for a skilled workforce in Connecticut is becoming critical, as European companies continue to move to New England. One such company in our service area is committing twenty million dollars to the expansion of its facilities. Asnuntuck will strive to meet these needs, both on our campus and through expanding our Business and Industry partnerships. In addition, we expect an increase in displaced workers in need of training and expect growth in both Manufacturing Technology and the Allied Health programs.

The projected budget cuts for fiscal year 2012 and beyond are a serious concern, but we are in strong financial shape now and are increasing the revenue generating capacity of the Workforce Development and Continuing Education offerings. The recently hired Acting Director of Workforce Development and Continuing Education has completed a cost/benefit analysis of that department's offerings, which will lead to a greater variety of courses, based on community and business needs, with profitability margins that will benefit the college.

Other future plans include: developing a new strategic plan for 2012-2015, expanding our strategies to ensure and assess institutional effectiveness, further improving graduation rates and joining the national movement to significantly increase the number of Americans who have college degrees.

As discussed in Standard Four, Asnuntuck's current commitment to the following academic programs has been highly productive: Computer Information Systems, Communication, Early Childhood Education, and Manufacturing Technology. We have also committed to increasing student success in the areas of Mathematics, Composition, and the Life Sciences. Other areas of projected growth and opportunity over the next five years include Criminal Justice, Honors Program, Art programming, and various Liberal Arts options. We are just beginning to explore these opportunities.

Working students who do not qualify for PELL grants make up an important part of our student population. To assist them, the use of the three-step payment plan has grown increasingly popular with both credit and non-credit students. The college encourages current and prospective students, families, staff, and faculty to attend any of the many financial aid workshops that the college hosts. We will continue to seek alternative support for these students such as increasing Foundation scholarships and other strategies.

Through wise strategic planning, thoughtful responses to the Institutional Effectiveness Survey, and an increased commitment to professional development, we have the opportunity to grow, prosper, and meet our mission.