Introduction

In their report of April 1, 2009, the Middle States Evaluation Team made the following recommendation to the college for action to be completed and reported in the Periodic Review Report due June 1, 2014:

“As acknowledged in the College’s self-study, the graduate programs at Brooklyn College demonstrate uneven quality in terms of enrollment, mission alignment, and learning outcomes assessment. The team recommends that the College review and assess the graduate program offerings, not only with a view toward expansion in areas of high demand that are mission-central, but also with a view toward discontinuing graduate programs in areas of low demand that are not mission-central. Further, the College should define the College mission relative to graduate programs, and strive to ensure that robust graduate student learning assessments are implemented in these programs. This review should be included in Brooklyn College’s next Periodic Review Report.”

This document responds to that call by seeking to determine strengths and weaknesses in the college’s graduate programs, recommend changes designed to improve graduate education, and establish strategic directions for program growth and development.

Review Process

This review is the result of a multi-year process:

- In 2010-11, the college’s Strategic Plan included a revised mission statement and identified graduate program review as a priority in the goal of provid[ing] an outstanding educational experience for our students.
- In 2011-2012, a college committee created a detailed guide to help graduate deputies review their programs. The guide was designed to support comparability between and among programs. The committee was chaired by Colette Wagner (Assistant Provost for Planning and Special Projects), and comprised Michael Anderson (Director of Academic Assessment), Michael R. Ayers (Director of Institutional Research and Planning), James Eaton (Director of Academic Administration), Simon Harley (Director of Graduate Admissions), and Lea Honigwachs (Special Assistant to the Provost).
- In 2012-2013, the graduate deputies conducted in-depth reviews of their programs using the tools and questions in the review guide.
- In 2013-2014, the five deans created school-level reports based on the program reviews, and faculty and administrators collaborated to produce this college-level report and to develop its recommendations.

Beginning in fall 2014, the college will begin to prioritize the recommendations at the end of this review and to develop a timetable for implementing them.
Scope and Overview

This review focuses on the master’s degree programs offered through Brooklyn College’s five schools (Business; Education; Humanities and Social Sciences; Natural and Behavioral Sciences; and Visual, Media, and Performing Arts). Most of these programs are entirely housed at Brooklyn College, although many of the college’s faculty are also engaged with a growing number of CUNY PhD programs. In the 2012-2013 academic year, the faculty devoted a total of 3,657.2 workload hours to both doctoral and master’s-level education. Of those hours, 3,223.5—or 88.9% of the total—went toward master’s-level instruction.

All of the degree programs at Brooklyn College are offered with the approval of the Board of Trustees of the City University of New York and the Education Department of the State of New York, and all are accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. Programs offered by the School of Education are also accredited by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teachers. In addition, the MS in Speech Language Pathology is accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech; the Dietetic Internship Program in the nutrition program is accredited by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics; and the master’s of public health, offered as a joint degree by Brooklyn College and the CUNY School of Public Health, is accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health.

Master’s Programs and Certificates

The college offers 120 master’s degree programs and 10 advanced certificate programs, mostly through the Midwood campus. The college is the most popular graduate school destination for recipients of Brooklyn College baccalaureate degrees—in 2009, as reported in National Student Clearinghouse data, 287 or 35% of all Brooklyn College baccalaureate degree recipients enrolled in graduate programs (n=819) were enrolled at Brooklyn College.

Over the five academic years from 2008-9 to 2012-13, the college awarded 5,893 master’s degrees and advanced certificates, representing 33.3% of all degrees conferred by the college. However, the absolute number of master’s degrees and advanced certificates awarded declined over that same period by 3.7%, from 1,222 to 1,177, and graduate enrollment dropped by 12.2%, from 3,678 to 3,231. This reflects the national downturn in the number of entering graduate students due to dramatic changes in the employment market. The decline has been uneven across the college’s schools and programs and will be discussed in more detail below, where the five schools are considered individually.

In fall 2015, Brooklyn College will launch the new Barry R. Feirstein Graduate School of Cinema at Steiner Studios in Brooklyn. This will be the first public graduate school of cinema in New York City and the only school in the country situated on a working film lot. The school will offer MA and MFA programs in Cinema Arts, Cinema Studies, Sonic Arts, and Media Scoring.

Other forthcoming master’s programs are described with their particular schools below.
Doctoral and Consortial Degree Programs

A significant portion of the college’s graduate education is delivered via a consortial model for doctoral training through CUNY’s Graduate Center, Graduate School of Journalism, and School of Public Health. These programs are separately administered and accredited. Many of our faculty are affiliated with PhD programs at the Graduate Center and teach courses there, although doctoral students in biochemistry, biology, chemistry, computer and information science, earth and environmental science, and physics work in labs and classrooms on the Brooklyn College campus.

In the 2012-2013 academic year, Brooklyn College faculty devoted 433.7 workload hours, or 11.9% of all graduate-level teaching, to doctoral instruction or dissertation advisement. Faculty in the School of Natural and Behavioral Sciences and the School of Humanities and Social Sciences accounted for the bulk of these hours (50.0% and 32.3%, respectively).

In 2012-13, the City University of New York announced a new direction in doctoral education in the sciences. The University is encouraging colleges to develop campus-based doctoral degrees and degree programs shared by two or more colleges within the system. At the present time, the School of Education is working with the Queens College School of Education to create a joint PsyD doctoral program. The purpose is to prepare outstanding graduate students for urban school psychology practice at an advanced level to meet the pressing mental health, behavioral, and educational needs of Pre-K through grade 12 students and their families from linguistically and culturally diverse communities.

Since the University-wide discussion about the consortial and campus-based degree programs is ongoing, this report does not address them in detail. But it does recommend that the college undertake a comprehensive review and planning effort over the next two years as these new directions are clarified.

Governance and Services

Beginning July 1, 2011, the college began a major restructuring with the inauguration of four new schools that joined the existing School of Education: the School of Business, the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, the School of Natural and Behavioral Sciences, and the School of Visual, Media, and Performing Arts. This has radically changed the institutional landscape in which graduate education operates. Prior to this reorganization there were two academic deans, a Dean of Undergraduate Studies and a Dean of Graduate Studies and Research. The Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies transitioned into the new Office of the Associate Provost for Academic Programs (with revised responsibilities); the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research was closed.

The new Office of the Associate Provost for Academic Programs assumed responsibility for graduate student services and oversight of the academic policies and procedures that apply to graduate students. Key new hires in this office include an Academic Policy Appeals and Probation Specialist in fall 2012 (to provide more oversight of the probation process and to coordinate student appeals to the Faculty Council Committee on Graduate Admissions and
Standards) and a permanent Associate Provost in fall 2013. The new Associate Provost is currently restructuring the office staff to better address graduate student needs.

Faculty Graduate Deputies manage the individual programs and advise students, but do so with little administrative support. Although the positions rotate frequently among faculty members in any given department, the college does not offer training sessions for new Graduate Deputies. Instead, training is entirely ad hoc and “on the job.” The college also does not maintain a central repository for the ever-evolving rules, procedures, and forms that govern graduate life, making it difficult for Graduate Deputies to keep up with important changes. As a result, the faculty that students turn to for expert advisement do not always have the necessary expertise and do not always know where to turn for answers to their questions.

Over the last few years, the Graduate Deputies have assembled several times each semester with the Associate Provost to share information and discuss concerns. Many of the issues raised by the deputies have emerged from changes required by the new school structure and problems caused by the rollout of CUNYFirst, the new student management system that CUNY has required its colleges to adopt. The chair of the Committee on Graduate Admissions and Standards, Faculty Council’s graduate policy committee, has been sitting in on these meetings to help facilitate the flow of information among the various parties involved in administering the college’s graduate programs.

The creation of the new governance framework has provided an opportunity to resolve several long-standing issues, described in the next section, and has provided momentum to address other on-going concerns. The framework remains imperfect, however, since there is no longer a central resource for graduate students. The college also needs to resolve fundamental questions about the “fit” of graduate programs within the five schools by empowering the individual schools to take a greater role in servicing the graduate students enrolled in their programs. At present, each of the schools is working to develop its own strategic vision for the future of its graduate programs; to implement procedures to enhance existing programs and develop new ones; and to develop appropriate student services, fund-raising priorities, and resource allocation models.

**College-Level Policies and Procedures**

In a collaborative effort, the Office of the Associate Provost for Academic Programs, the Faculty Council Committee on Graduate Admissions and Standards, and the Graduate Deputy Council dedicated the 2011-2012 academic year to a review and revision of graduate program policies and procedures. Through a series of meetings that included representatives from the Graduate Admission and Registrar’s offices, the participants developed and implemented a number of new policies and procedures. These included a new process for helping students on probation to form academic plans; streamlining the thesis title form and ensuring that Deans receive copies; inviting the chair of Graduate Admissions and Standards to meet with the Graduate Deputy Council at least once a year; aligning undergraduate and graduate cross-over and change of grade forms and grade appeal processes; re-conceptualizing the Graduate Dean’s List as a school-based activity with new guidelines; and assigning the final review of MA theses to the Deans.
Some of the issues identified still remain to be resolved, however, including the rationalizing of graduate admissions statuses; finding a system that will allow graduate deputies and the Registrar to monitor matriculation conditions; reviewing the authorities previously invested by Faculty Council in the now defunct Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies; resolving unclear and sometimes incorrect language in the Graduate Bulletin; and repairing the Degree Progress (marketed as Degree Works) online degree audit system, which does not always provide accurate information to students. Other problems originate with CUNY, such as deficiencies in the e-permit system, and must be pursued at the university level.

Over the past five years, the Faculty Council Committee on Graduate Admissions and Standards has implemented a number of additional policy and procedural changes to improve the functioning of graduate education at the college. The committee revised the re-admission process in consultation with the Registrar’s Office so that, under certain circumstances, applications for readmission would automatically trigger an academic progress review; developed a pilot admission protocol for a second graduate credential; brought the college into compliance with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services regulations by restricting the number of undergraduate courses that may be required as a condition of admission to matriculated graduate status; developed a policy allowing students to apply certain courses from a first master’s degree or certificate to a cognate degree or certificate; clarified the policy for assigning grades of INC (incomplete); brought the amount of time allowed students to complete INC grades into compliance with CUNY policy; began working with Information Technology Services (ITS) on an e-petition system that will allow electronic submission and review of graduate student petitions to the committee; and took steps to ensure that students registering to take the comprehensive exam for a second time would be fully aware that college rules allow only two attempts at passing the exam. The committee also met with the Associate Provost for Academic Programs and new Deans to discuss the charge to the committee by Faculty Council and the types of petitions received, and to make recommendations with regard to the new school structure.

The Office of the Associate Provost for Academic Programs has identified two primary goals for the 2013-2014 academic year. First, the office is working with the chair of the Committee on Graduate Admissions and Standards to bring the college’s probation and dismissal policies, and the processes by which they are implemented, into alignment with national best practices. Second, the office is working with the Graduate Deputies, the Office of the Registrar, and Information Technology Services (ITS) to implement a more functional process to track admissions conditions, since the prior process was altered by the implementation of CUNYFirst in spring 2012.

**The Five Schools**

**Common Concerns**

Although the five schools face different kinds of challenges, the review process revealed a series of common concerns that must be addressed at the college level:
1. Every program cites the inability to offer adequate aid as detrimental to recruitment and retention. Some programs get less than twenty dollars per student to distribute among their majors. The majority of the college’s graduate students—84.8% in fall 2013—were enrolled part-time rather than full-time, mostly because they were juggling one or more jobs along with their coursework. This lack of funding makes it impossible for students to focus exclusively on their studies and difficult for them to complete their programs as quickly as they would at peer institutions.

2. Virtually all of the program-level reviews describe a major disconnect between departments and marketing efforts. Programs need more time and resources to put together high-quality recruiting material, including material for their websites, and need access to those who have expertise in the area of recruitment. In addition, current and prospective students frequently complain about the difficulty they have finding information on the college website, and faculty often find their program pages cumbersome to update.

3. Programs currently have no way to track students after graduation. The college must develop systems to keep track of alumni and to give programs ready access to the gathered information. With such data in hand, programs can develop employment statistics for marketing efforts and promote giving by keeping alumni connected to the college.

School of Business

Fulltime equivalent graduate enrollment in the School of Business increased by 76.3% between fall 2009 and fall 2013, from 124.8 to 220.0. Most of that growth took place in the Master’s of Science in Business Economics (MSBE) program. This was also the most popular degree among international graduate students, attracting 40.1% of the college’s international students in spring 2014.

But after completing a review of the graduate curriculum in fall 2013 as part of the accreditation process for the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), the faculty found many weaknesses in the MSBE program. As a result, the faculty is thoroughly revising it to improve academic quality and to align the program more closely with AACSB requirements. The revised program will also better serve the Brooklyn business community, since the current program—which is the only graduate business program at a public institution in the borough—is too narrow in breadth to meet existing needs.

The faculty is proposing to rename the MSBE program the Master’s of Science in Business Administration (MSBA) and to require a core of business courses in all concentrations. Initially, the degree will retain its existing four concentrations. During the spring and summer of 2014, data will be gathered from Department Advisory Boards, alumni, and employers to determine demand for other concentrations. Based on research already completed, the school anticipates the following concentrations will be added: Digital Marketing; Luxury Brand Marketing/Retailing; Leadership in Organizations; Finance and Investments; MIS/Supply Chain Management; Health Professions.

Growth in enrollment is not the primary objective in revising this program. In fact, given resource constraints, the school and the Provost are currently discussing “right-sizing” graduate enrollments in order to improve quality.
The Department of Finance and Business Management has already approved the changes. Approval of the college Faculty Council is expected in spring 2015, and new enrollments are scheduled for fall 2015.

The school is also making efforts to tighten up entrance requirements and probation and dismissal policies. Graduate Deputies are currently reviewing proposals to add a GMAT requirement to admission criteria for the newly revised MSBA, place students on probation when they earn two C’s, and dismiss students from the program if they earn a third C. The school expects to make decisions on these policies in spring 2014.

School of Education

Fulltime equivalent graduate enrollment in the School of Education decreased by 24.6% between fall 2009 and fall 2013, from 992.3 to 748.3. The number of majors has declined in most programs, with the important exception of Early Childhood Education: Special Education, where majors have increased by 83% over the same period. The New York City Department of Education’s freeze on new teacher hires heavily influenced these declines.

In response, the Department of School Psychology, Counseling, and Leadership (SPCL) is establishing a group of faculty and students who can approach prospective applicant groups to discuss the merits of becoming school psychologists, counselors, or educational leaders. One of the department’s programs, the Educational Leadership Program, is continuing to look for partners (such as the Jewish Board of Education) to establish programs that will increase enrollments. The department has also begun to explore ways to create additional training and professional development opportunities for already employed educators. An Advanced Certificate in Play Therapy, in partnership with the Association of Play Therapy, already has CUNY and State Education Department approval, and the department is contemplating a new PsyD program in school psychology. The faculty is also investigating the market for programs in neuropsychological assessment for school psychologists and mindfulness training on a multidisciplinary level for educators.

The Department of Childhood, Bilingual, and Special Education is considering a five-year undergraduate/graduate degree program that will speed time to completion and give students an advantage over candidates with only a baccalaureate degree.

The Secondary Education Department is in the process of streamlining program requirements and general foundation courses to integrate recently mandated Board of Education and NYSTE requirements with regard to teacher preparation. It is also realigning student-teaching requirements across the department and has begun to prevent students from registering for courses between 8:00 and 11:00 a.m. to preserve time for student teaching. The Social Studies program is currently undergoing a comprehensive restructuring.

Faculty in the School of Education tend to devote far more workload hours to master’s-level education than do faculty in the other four schools, but much of the difference is made up by part-time faculty, who consistently teach about one third of the school’s graduate courses. There
are, for example, 136 students in the Early Childhood Education program, but only seven full-time faculty. As a result, most of the graduate courses and all of the student teaching sections are covered by adjuncts. Similarly, the Special Education program has two full-time faculty members and fifteen part-time faculty.

The School of Education has a particular challenge in that a number of its programs are no longer recognized by the relevant Specialized Program Associations. The next Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) site visit is in 2017, with the unit report due in 2016. In preparation, the college is reviewing resource allocations to insure that the school meets the relevant professional standards. It is also important that partner departments be involved in preparations for the CAEP site visit and that current problems with communication between School of Education programs and partner departments be resolved.

Also working its way through the approval process is the Advanced Certificate in Early Intervention and Parenting, which has been approved by Faculty Council.

**School of Humanities and Social Sciences**

Fulltime equivalent graduate enrollment in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences decreased by 30.2% between fall 2009 and fall 2013, from 410.7 to 286.6. Much of that drop has taken place just in the past year or two. This reflects a national downturn in the number of students seeking degrees in the humanities and social sciences. Revisions of the Political Science department’s various master’s program course offerings over the years account for the largest program decrease.

Since the departure of its founding dean in June 2013, the School of Humanities and Social Sciences has been under the leadership of an Acting Dean. Strategic discussions of graduate programs have accordingly been put on hold, pending the arrival of the new dean in fall 2014. However, there has been a good deal of work at the departmental level. The Sociology Department changed the structure of its program in 2009 with positive results; that same year, the History Department instituted a very successful portfolio track to complement its thesis track; and the Political Science Department has recently raised its admission standards to good effect. Discussions are underway of possible new programs—most notably in Urban Studies and Medical Humanities—that will make effective use of faculty expertise, and serve evolving student needs.

In response to a recent external review, the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures is overhauling its graduate programs. Under consideration are changes to degree requirements, comprehensive exams, and the capstone/thesis project. In the longer term, the department hopes to add course offerings that would better serve students interested in media studies, translation studies, and international business. Such courses will enhance the practical value of the department’s degrees by helping students apply the knowledge they acquire to specific professional contexts.

The Department of Political Science is in the process of revising two of its three concentrations.
Since the Urban Policy and Administration concentration faces increasingly stiff competition from a proliferation of generic “urban affairs” and “urban policy” programs, the department is narrowing and refining the program’s focus. The new emphasis will be on urban politics, specifically electoral politics, political incorporation of immigrants, civic engagement and community activism, and inter-racial relations in urban areas. The revised program will also provide intensive training in the statistical analysis and mapping of a variety of data sources, thereby providing graduates with clearly marketable skills. Enhancements to the International Affairs concentration include plans to recruit more international students, develop internship opportunities with international organizations, and partner with foreign universities to form student exchange programs.

School of Natural and Behavioral Sciences

Fulltime equivalent graduate enrollment in the School of Natural and Behavioral Sciences decreased by 10.0% between fall 2009 and fall 2013, from 520.7 to 468.7.

The laboratory and field sciences (Biology, Chemistry, Earth and Environmental Sciences, and Physics) tend to have consistently low enrollments, which is true nationally since master’s-level programs compete with PhD programs that provide students with free tuition and financial support. One by-product of the CUNY consortial model is that Brooklyn College rarely awards master’s degrees to doctoral students who leave the program, artificially deflating the numbers for the program relative to peer institutions.

But the number of declared graduate majors has increased in all of these departments over the past five years, as it has in computer science. Declared graduate majors have decreased in Health and Nutrition Sciences, Kinesiology, and Psychology between 7.9% and 21.1%.

Most programs in the School of Natural and Behavioral Sciences have fewer qualified applicants than available spaces and completion rates below 50%, with programs in Health and Nutrition Sciences and Psychology being notable exceptions. But departments tend to staff their graduate classes with full-time, tenure-track faculty, and a majority of programs have embarked on significant curricular changes within the past 5 years, either to make the programs more appealing to students, bring them in line with national standards, or respond to external evaluations.

School of Visual, Media, and Performing Arts

Fulltime equivalent graduate enrollment in the School of Visual, Media, and Performing Arts decreased between fall 2009 and fall 2013 by 10.6%, from 239.2 to 213.9. The school’s programs have generally been successful in retaining students and encouraging timely graduations, in part because students move as a cohort through the graduate experience. A number of new programs are currently working their way through the approval process, including an Advanced Certificate and Artist Diploma in Music Performance and MFAs in Sonic Arts and Media Scoring (currently under consideration of the Faculty Council Master Planning Committee); the MFA in Cinema Arts (currently under review by the New York State Education
Department); and the MA in Cinema Arts and the Advanced Certificate in Museum Education (both of which have been approved by both CUNY and the NYSED).

The school’s TV studio was unavailable for several years while under construction, leading to a decline in admission numbers in the MFA program in TV production and a cohort of students who graduated without a full complement of skills. During that period, the Production Professor worked diligently to provide students with a broader experience by taking them off campus. But the program’s current students have the opportunity to work on special projects in the new HD TV studio, which opened in spring 2014.

The school has identified admissions as an area in which the school structure might be leveraged to benefit all programs and, as a consequence of its review process, the school and the Office of Graduate Admissions will implement a streamlined admissions process in the fall 2015 admissions cycle. The concern to be addressed is the fact that while applicants wait for a response from Brooklyn College, they often accept places at other schools. A shift from notification of applicants regarding the results of auditions and portfolio reviews by individual departments will also be implemented, so as to invest all notifications about admission status in the Office of Graduate Admissions and eliminate confusion. Scholarship and financial aid support have also been identified as critical areas for improvement. While the college’s tuition is affordable, the lack of scholarships (particularly in the first year of study) available by comparison with competitor institutions is a major factor. In the fall 2014 admissions cycle, the top five applicants for the school’s graduate programs accepted full scholarships offers from more expensive competitor institutions. The school plans to work more closely with the Financial Aid Office to address specific concerns of graduate applicants (many of whom are out of state and international students).

The school is working on several fronts to improve the experience of students both during their stay at Brooklyn College and through the early years of their post-graduate careers. Since the world of art is now more global than local, the school is seeking funding that will provide students with an international experience and bring international recognition to the college. The school is also working on plans to provide the transitional elements that keep students in the field after graduation. For example, the school has been working with two external theater studios to establish post-graduate scholarships that will enable theater graduates to perform and hone skills in Manhattan-based studios. It is also working to develop the same opportunities for music graduates. The school is actively investigating potential sources of funding for art residencies that, although already in existence, are not affordable for the college’s art graduates.

In developing its newest programs, the school has consulted extensively with outside academics and professionals. As the proposals for Sonic Arts and Media Scoring were in formation, the Conservatory of Music brought in a variety of outside experts to address issues of technology, equipment, and industry need and to discuss what programs of this type should look like in 2020. Similarly, as the curriculum for the five tracks in Cinema Arts was in development, faculty were in constant conversations with external professionals about the kind of education that will meet the needs of industry both now and in the future. Such conversations directly shaped the missions and curricula of the new programs.
Admissions and Recruitment

The responsibility for admitting graduate students is shared by the Office of Graduate Admissions and the academic department in which the graduate program resides. Once Admissions has assembled a complete application, the academic department reviews it and makes a decision about admission. Admissions facilitates departmental decisions by serving as the centralized clearinghouse for all incoming application documents (with some exceptions) and all notifications of admission decisions to applicants.

The college’s response to declining graduate enrollments began with a reorganization of the graduate admissions staff and workspace. In February 2011, the college appointed a Director of Graduate Admissions to a newly created position in the Division of Enrollment Management to manage and develop the recruitment and admission of graduate students. The following September, the college also appointed a Graduate Admissions Advisor to provide admission counseling to prospective graduate students and to support student recruitment. The Admissions office relocated to a newly refurbished space with increased room for staff.

The Office of Graduate Admissions then reviewed its processes and made a number of significant changes. The office substantially improved services to applicants and academic departments by establishing two teams, each with its own coordinator, to focus on graduate programs in particular academic schools. It also upgraded, with the help of ITS, the online application system so that applicants can complete their applications over more than one internet session; implemented new procedures to speed up the assembly of application files and the forwarding of files to academic departments for review; published guidelines for applicants on the graduate admissions website; introduced a self-managed document submission process; began downloading and printing transcripts for graduates of CUNY colleges directly from CUNY database systems; and improved its communication with Graduate Deputies by sending periodic email updates during the admission cycle.

The Office of Graduate Admissions also developed a new communication plan to provide information via email and letter to applicants at strategic points during the application process. Particular attention was given to applicants with incomplete files. Previously, applicants who had not paid the $125 application fee had been excluded from the communication plan. But the new plan targeted this group with regular follow-up emails in the same way as applicants with incomplete files. As a result, the percentage of all applicants who paid the application fee increased from 80% in fall 2011 to 89% in fall 2013.

Graduate Admissions also made it easier for international applicants to establish the U.S. equivalency of their qualifications and English language proficiency. The number of agencies that applicants could use for credential evaluation was increased from three to twenty-two. The office also purchased an annual membership to AACRAO’s “Edge” database of international qualifications to enable internal evaluation of credentials where feasible. Finally, Admissions decided to recognize the IELTS test as an alternative to TOEFL as a test of English language proficiency.
The Office of Graduate Admissions has also significantly enhanced its recruitment efforts. In fall 2011, graduate admissions staff began attending feeder college graduate fairs and Idealist Fairs in the metropolitan New York area on an annual basis. The following fall, the office participated in Hobson’s virtual fair for international students. Admissions also reorganized the annual on-campus graduate open house around the new schools and asked Deans to launch the welcome sessions; developed a series of monthly on-campus information sessions with an associated email communication plan; set up a series of online events to engage with prospective students, applicants, and newly admitted students; encouraged academic departments to host their own information sessions; and supported recruitment for a number of programs by (1) sending email blasts to prospective students and Brooklyn College undergraduates, and (2) in collaboration with the Office of Marketing and Communications, advising on new flyers to promote graduate programs.

The positive impact of these changes is measurable. Between fall 2011 and fall 2013, despite the decrease in graduate applications, the new graduate admissions processes increased the percentage of applicants with completed files from 68% to 78% and increased the number of new student enrollments by 17.9%.

Assessment

The college has continued to develop in its graduate-level student learning outcomes assessment regimens. Those master’s programs that have specialized accreditation (ASHA, ACEND, NCATE, and CEPH) have robust outcomes assessment procedures. In programs that do not have specialized accreditation, assessment is at various of levels of development. History, for example, has a fully developed plan with well-articulated student learning outcomes that are measurable and appropriate for the MA level. They are mapped to courses, and there are both direct and indirect tools in place. The department has been collecting data and has a regular structure for analyzing, discussing, and acting on results.

Other departments have made significant progress but are still working at consolidating the various pieces into a comprehensive effort. The English department has the necessary tools in place, such as comprehensive exams, theses, and surveys, but the results are not yet being analyzed for assessment purposes (across students) in a sustained or systematic way.

Goals/outcomes are at the course level, program outcomes are implicit rather than explicit, and the curriculum map is unclear and cumbersome. In Art, the MFA studio reviews have been used intermittently for assessment purposes and the latest iteration of the department’s assessment plan includes planning for more regular MFA assessment and expansion of these efforts to the MA in Art History. The interdisciplinary MFA in Performance Interactive Media Arts (PIMA) has for years used a well-developed rubric to evaluate student capstone projects and has collected the results. But its analysis of the results needs better documentation and reporting. The Chemistry Department’s assessment plan clearly distinguishes graduate level outcomes for both masters and doctoral students. It has mapped these clearly to courses but has not yet used the tools at hand—exams and research projects—to collect, analyze, and apply assessment evidence. The School of Business is developing a rigorous outcomes assessment process as part of its multiyear process of gaining AACSB accreditation.
Still other departments and programs recognize that they have to adapt and apply the principles and mechanisms that they have developed for their undergraduate programs to their graduate offerings, but are less far along. In Political Science, goals/outcomes could be better articulated for the two degree tracks, and some indirect measure is needed. Comprehensive exams are already required and could easily be used for student learning assessment purposes. Theater, following an outside review and reorganization, is redoing its assessment plans from the ground up. Sociology has yet to formalize its efforts in terms of goals/outcomes and collecting evidence across students but is discussing how to move forward.

The college’s Director of Academic Assessment is continuing to work with departments to further strengthen their assessment programs. The Director implemented a new Learning Outcomes Assessment Status Rubric for graduate programs and held a series of three workshops in spring 2013. The workshops assisted twenty-eight faculty in developing specific plans for completing and refining their department’s assessment programs. The Director’s current efforts emphasize moving departments from focusing on “reputation measures” to using actual student work to assess learning, and from focusing on measuring inputs to measuring outcomes. This past fall, the college also created a standing outcomes assessment committee to oversee the continued development of assessment programs.

**Five-Year Recommendations**

**Governance:**
- Establish formal mechanisms for oversight of graduate programs at the school level.
- Complete the Faculty Council review of graduate program policies.
- Continue meetings between the Graduate Deputies and Associate Provost for Academic Programs, eventually reducing the number of meetings to once a semester and alternating them with semiannual meetings organized by school.
- Strengthen communication between the School of Education and partner departments in programs that require close collaboration.

**Student Services:**
- Conduct a student survey to determine needed services for graduate students and develop appropriate services.
- Plan for services that cater to the specific needs of international students as the college begins targeted recruitment for specific graduate programs.
- Review availability of high-demand services in the evenings when most graduate classes are held and adjust services accordingly.
- Develop a resource plan for providing increased services at the school level, in the Office of the Associate Provost for Academic Programs, and in Enrollment Management Services.
- Continue the reorganization of the Office of the Associate Provost for Academic Programs to ensure that consolidated services address student needs.
- Work to resolve existing procedural issues:
  - Rationalize graduate admissions statuses.
  - Develop a system that will allow Graduate Deputies, the Associate Provost for Academic Programs, and the Registrar to monitor matriculation conditions.
o Review the authorities invested in the Coordinator of Graduate Studies by the Committee on Graduate Admissions and Standards.

o Review and resolve unclear language in the Graduate Bulletin.

o Update the Degree Progress system to provide the most current and accurate information to students.

o Work with CUNY to address deficiencies in the e-permit system.

- Complete and implement the e-petition systems for graduate petitions to the Committee on Graduate Admission and Standards.
- Develop and implement an electronic system for evaluating, accepting, and declining graduate student applications.
- Facilitate better student advising by holding annual training sessions for new Graduate Deputies.
- Create an online and regularly updated Graduate Deputies Handbook that includes all relevant rules, procedures, and forms.

**Financial Support:**
- Embark on a campaign to improve funding for graduate students through grants, assistantships, and fellowships.
- Identify programs (MFAs, MSSLP, and others) that should be charged differential tuition and work with the university to bring their tuition more closely in line with their costs.

**Marketing and Recruitment:**
- Put more resources toward systematic recruitment plans for all programs and include an international recruitment component for targeted programs.
- Develop program and faculty web pages that will better serve as effective marketing tools and will be easier for potential applicants to find and for programs and faculty to update.
- Keep better track of alumni to develop employment statistics and to encourage giving, and make the data easily available to program heads.
- Highlight graduate programs in the college mission statement.

**Program Growth:**
- Develop and implement appropriate standards for sunset review of outdated, under-enrolled programs.
- Ensure that remaining programs have enough fulltime faculty to advise students adequately and to provide a sufficient rotation of courses.
- Identify resources needed to grow programs that attract large numbers of applicants (SLP, Mental Health Counseling, and others) with the goal of increasing enrollment without compromising quality.
- Strategically plan and incorporate online components into selected graduate programs.
- Create a support mechanism within the schools for the development of new program proposals.
- Explore the creation of graduate programs in health related fields and other disciplines that provide opportunity for employment and professional growth.
- Plan for doctoral degree granting status in selected science programs by developing a campus impact statement and a comprehensive planning and resource model for program
development.

- Continue to monitor CUNY’s restructuring of consortial and doctoral programs and capitalize on opportunities that will leverage the college’s existing strengths.

**Other Recommendations:**

- Identify programs that would benefit from specialized external accreditation, devise timelines, identify responsibilities, and allocate appropriate resources to support application for external accreditation.
- Continue to provide programs with the guidance and support they need to develop effective assessment programs, with the goal of having every graduate program running a robust outcomes assessment regimen on the graduate level within the next five years.
- Perform comprehensive reviews of graduate certificate programs.