

Christopher Newport University
Phi Beta Kappa Application, February 2008
Brief of the Initial Report

The Phi Beta Kappa Committee met on Tuesday, February 5 to discuss the first draft of Christopher Newport University's application for a Phi Beta Kappa chapter. At this meeting the members of the committee developed an initial impression of Christopher Newport University's current status, including relative strengths and weaknesses. Strengths included the liberal learning emphasis of the curriculum, honors programs, characteristics of incoming students, expanding opportunities in internships and study abroad, and increasing numbers of students pursuing postgraduate degrees. The new Paul and Rosemary Tribble Library and the projected academic buildings will be assets as well. The members of the committee agreed that Christopher Newport University's culture and goals are consistent with the goals of Phi Beta Kappa.

The committee also identified areas where improvement would strengthen the overall application. These areas are summarized briefly below; they are not listed in order of importance.

1. Graduation rates
2. Teaching load
3. Faculty resources
4. Library holdings and resources
5. Financial resources
6. Number of students pursuing graduate degrees
7. Number of faculty whom are Phi Beta Kappa members

In summary, Christopher Newport University has many strengths that are consistent with the objectives of Phi Beta Kappa. The curriculum and emphasis on faculty-student engagement foster liberal learning. Some of the perceived weaknesses already have been targeted for reform. During the next six weeks, the Phi Beta Committee will work to identify characteristics of institutions recently awarded a Phi Beta Kappa chapter. This comparison will allow a better assessment of Christopher Newport University's status. The committee will provide an action plan to the Provost by April 1, 2008.