SECTION IV

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

4.1   General Requirements of the Educational Program

The CNU Mission Statement clearly states that the primary purpose of this institution is the education of its students. This is carried out by a faculty committed to teaching, research, and community service. CNU views the liberal arts as the foundation for quality instruction in the humanities, social and natural sciences, and business and the professional disciplines while providing its diverse student body with a comprehensive, globally-oriented education. Informed by the ancient and enduring academic values of the search for truth and the transmission of knowledge, as well as a concern with the students' overall well-being, CNU reaches out to a wide mix of students. These include commuter students of all ages and backgrounds and, since the fall of 1994, traditional-aged students living in the residence hall. CNU thus plays a special role in bringing the traditions and practices of the academic life within reach of a varied group of students who could not be served as well by a traditional residential college (Mission Statement; 1994-95 University Catalog, 6). Based upon the evaluation of the institution done for this Self-Study, it is evident that a competent faculty, adequate library/learning resources, appropriate computer resources, instructional materials and equipment, and physical facilities are provided to meet this purpose. By means of evaluation of student progress, of the teaching of individual courses, of the overall performance of each faculty member, and of departments and their programs, all on a regular basis, student achievement and the quality of programs are monitored and refined or enhanced as needed.

Of the 50 percent of undergraduates who responded to the Undergraduate Student Survey, 80 percent agreed that the stated purpose of CNU accurately reflects the mission of the University (UgSv, Question 7; the responses "strongly agree" and "agree" have been combined to produce this and most of the following percentages). Seventy percent agreed that the efforts of CNU to achieve this purpose are conscientious (UgSv, Question 8). Nearly the same percentage agreed that undergraduate curricular requirements are consistent with the mission of CNU (UgSv, Question 21).

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4.2.1   Undergraduate Admission

The general admission policies of CNU are determined by the Board of Visitors upon recommendation of the president as specified in the University Handbook. The size and character of the student body are aspects of the admission policies that are determined by the Board, as evident in the "Freshman Admission Requirements" and "Transfer (Classified) Admission Requirements" sections of the University Catalog. The implementation of specific

admission policies is the responsibility of the Admissions Committee, which is composed of seven members of the instructional faculty and the director of admissions. This committee reports to the Faculty Senate and instructional faculty as a whole (Handbook, IV, 9). It is the responsibility of the Office of Admissions to administer the admission policies of the University. These responsibilities are published annually in the University Catalog.

Because the educational purpose of CNU is to develop "intellectual, ethical, spiritual, and physical attributes" and to prepare graduates "to pursue lives with meaning and purpose and to become responsible and contributing members of society" (Mission Statement; University Catalog), the institution's admission policies are structured to identify students with strong academic preparation while allowing for students with some deficiencies. This is clear from the admission requirements presented in the University Catalog. There are both qualitative and quantitative requirements outlined here: students are expected to have been graduated from an accredited secondary school or its equivalent and to have completed four units of English, three units in the social sciences, three units in mathematics (Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry), three units in science, and either three units in one foreign language or two years each of two foreign languages; to have earned a "C" average; to rank in the upper half of their graduating class; and to have acceptable SAT scores (formerly 400 verbal and 400 math, and raised to 480 verbal and 430 math beginning Fall 1995) (1994-95 Catalog, 26-31). Students not meeting all of these requirements may be admitted with limitations. When the math SAT score is deficient, a proficiency test is given in math for placement of students in either a remedial course taught by Thomas Nelson Community College or a college-level course. Student with a deficient English SAT score are placed in special sections of ENGL 101(College Writing I), which are taught to enhance these students' writing skills and which supply academic counseling. Students with very low SAT scores can be admitted if an admissions officer judges them to have the potential to succeed academically. Such students will be restricted to a fixed curriculum in their first semester consisting of COLL 101: The College Experience, ENGL 101: College Writing I, ENGL 180: Analytical and Speed Reading, and PHIL 101: Critical Thinking I. Continuance is based upon successful completion of these courses. Special provisions are also made for early admission without secondary school graduation.

The Undergraduate Admissions Committee recommends to the instructional faculty policies for undergraduate admissions. Utilizing information from recent admissions decisions and in consultation with the Office of Admissions, regular evaluation of admission policies is part of this committee's purpose (University Handbook, IV,8). This is important given the discretion allowed to admission officers in their evaluation of applications as specified in the admission policies (Catalog, 26-27). For the fall of 1994 the following statistics profile the student admitted and the application of the admission policies by the Office of Admissions:

Entering freshman who
a.   had SAT verbal>400 .... 30%
      had SAT math>400

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      had high school GPA>2.0
      ranked in top half of graduating class

b.   had high school GPA>2.0 .... 70%
      ranked in top half of graduating class

c.   had high school GPA>2.0 .... 90%

d.   ranked in top half of graduating class 74%

e.   had SAT verbal>400 .... 50%

f.   had SAT math>400 .... 67%

While stated policies are followed, given the mission of the University and the importance of having students prepared as they begin their college programs, regular evaluation of admission policies is essential to ensure that students continue to have adequate preparation.

Overall, there seems to be a consensus that the undergraduate admissions process at CNU works well and that recruiting activities and materials accurately and truthfully portray the institution. In a survey of alumni, 87 percent agreed that CNU admission policies were clearly stated; only 6 percent disagreed. Seventy-six percent agreed that CNU admission policies are appropriate to its mission; 8 percent disagreed. Eighty-seven percent of the faculty surveyed either agreed or strongly agreed that CNU admission policies are clearly stated, published, and available; 5 percent either disagreed or strongly disagreed. Seventy-nine percent of the faculty responding either agreed or strongly agreed that admission policies are appropriate to the mission of CNU, while 21 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed (AlSv, Question 29; FcSv, Questions 30, 31).

Students are normally expected to have graduated from an accredited secondary school, but individuals from institutions with non-college-preparatory curricula and individuals with a GED can be admitted if they meet all other criteria for admission. Such individuals will be evaluated using all available information on secondary school work and GED scores to determine if they have achieved a grade of "C" or better in academic subjects. Such an approach relies on information based on national standards that permit admission of students with experiences appropriate for consideration.

The documentation necessary and the application deadlines for regular freshman admission are clearly stated in the University Catalog (22-27) and each issue of Registration News, as are documentation and deadlines for early admission (27-28) and transfer students (28-30).

Transfer student policy is defined and published in the Catalog (28-31). Transfer applicants must submit a secondary school transcript or a GED certificate and college transcripts in addition to the application for admission. Official transcripts from all colleges previously attended must be submitted. Students must be in good academic standing at the last college or university attended and must present a cumulative GPA of 2.00 ("C"). College-Level

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Examination Program (CLEP), Advance Placement (AP), and departmental challenge examinations, as well as acceptance of credit from other institutions, are used to award advanced standing. Degree seeking transfer students must be eligible to return to their most recently attended institution in order to be admitted   to CNU.   In a survey of alumni, 84 percent of those to whom the question applied indicated that they found accurate information about CNU requirements prior to transferring (AlSv, Question 36).

The awarding of credits based on advanced placement or other examinations or from non-collegiate or professional institutions follows national standards as issued by programs such as the College Entrance Examination Board, CLEP, and the American Council on Education. A table listing qualifying scores to earn CNU credit for Advanced Placement is printed in the University Catalog (32).   A brochure regarding CLEP is distributed through the Office of Career and Counseling Services (University Catalog, 18). This brochure lists the general and subject CLEP examinations for which CNU credit may be given, the corresponding courses and the amount of credit granted, the required CLEP scores, and other matters of CLEP policy. As stated in the University Catalog, transfer credits are awarded for courses "similar in aims and purposes to those of Christopher Newport University" and in a manner that "approximates the curricular structure for the appropriate baccalaureate degree at CNU" (29-30). As stated earlier, admission policies are products of the Undergraduate Admissions Committee that have been approved by the administration and are administered by the Office of Admissions. The assessment and awarding of transfer credits are carried out by the Office of Admissions in accordance with these policies and, when necessary, in consultation with the appropriate departments.

Credit is not awarded directly for experiential learning. However, if such learning can be validated by way of a standardized assessment tool, e.g., CLEP, or a departmental challenge examination, appropriate academic credit will be awarded.

Transfer students are informed of the amount of transferable credit through a written evaluation form. This form specifies the total amount of credit transferred as well as the specific CNU courses for which credit is allowed. The form is signed by the evaluating officer of the Admissions Office. This form usually takes about a month to process from the time the Admissions Office receives all pertinent documentation. In a survey of alumni, 90 percent indicated that transcript evaluation and transfer of credits were handled fairly, and 88 percent agreed that transcript evaluation and transfer of credits were handled efficiently. The corresponding figures for faculty are 81 percent and 96 percent (AlSv, Questions 38, 39; FcSv, Questions 26, 37).

The University Catalog contains the guidelines for acceptance of credits for transfer students (29). When not from a degree-granting institution accredited by a postsecondary regional accrediting body, credits are evaluated using the standards of the World Education Service, the American Council of Education, and other collegiate evaluating services. Where

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such standards are not appropriate, the Office of Admissions uses internally generated guidelines based upon the curriculum and requirements of CNU degrees. In all cases, the Admissions Office makes the final evaluation of transfer credits. For students converting from a non-degree program to a degree program, the requirements for regular degree admission are used. No transfer of "block" credit is allowed.

Once admitted, a student is expected to make reasonable academic progress. Minimum standards for continuance are stated in the University Catalog (42-44) and are on a sliding scale based upon the number of credit hours attempted. These standards range from a 1.50 for students with 15-29 credit hours to a 2.00 for students with 90 or more credit hours. Students with grade point averages below these values are eligible for probation or suspension depending on their actual GPA. Dismissal is automatic for students receiving a third academic suspension. Readmission of suspended or dismissed students is handled by the Academic Status Committee following the procedures given in the University Catalog.

4.2.2   Undergraduate Completion Requirements

As detailed in the 1995-96 University Catalog, Christopher Newport currently offers 7 different undergraduate degrees, which are the Bachelor of Arts (B.A.), Bachelor of Science (B.S.), Bachelor of Science in Accounting (B.S.A.), Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (B.S.B.A.), Bachelor of Music (B.M.), Bachelor of Science in Governmental Administration (B.S.G.A.), Bachelor of Science in Nursing (B.S.N.), and Bachelor of Science in Information Science (B.S.I.S.). There are 24 majors and 46 concentrations within these degrees--a total of 75 degree programs available at CNU.

In addition to stating the general education requirements for degree completion, the Catalog provides a specific list of the courses and the sequence of these courses that must be taken in order to satisfy the criteria for each major and concentration. Each major and concentration requires an adequate number of upper level courses with appropriate prerequisites, the precise number varying according to discipline. The courses numbered 100 through 299 contain elementary or introductory level material. Upper level courses numbered 300 through 499 assume either previous course work or special competence in the field. According to a recent survey of undergraduate students, most students (82 percent) think the requirements for degree completion are clearly stated in the University Catalog (UgSv, Question 18).

All students must satisfy the general education requirements, which, beginning in the 1995-96 academic year, consist of two semesters in freshman writing, one course in mathematics, one of either speech or critical thinking, two semesters in world history, two semesters in natural science with one semester of laboratory, two semesters of humanities, two semesters of social sciences, two semesters of a foreign language, and either health or an activities course. This results in a general education requirement of as little as 37 semester hours, because the foreign language requirement can be satisfied without course work, by satisfactory scores on a CNU placement test, the appropriate CLEP test, or the appropriate AP

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test. To complete the freshman writing requirement students receive a "C-" or better in these courses. Though there is no specific component of the general education requirement that addresses computer skills, these skills are incorporated either directly, as in accounting or mathematics (with at least one computer science course being part of the required curriculum), or indirectly (as in the incorporation of computers in courses required in a major, e.g., PSYC 300 and SOCL 391-392). All students must successfully complete at least one course in mathematics chosen from a set of courses that develop fundamental math skills. Oral communication competence is assured for some students in large part by the addition of a speech course within the general education requirements, especially for students seeking professional degrees. For many students, speech is not just a part of general education but part of the major, as in seminar courses and requirements of upper-level courses in the major. The undergraduate student survey referred to above indicates that the majority of students believe CNU develops and requires proficiency in writing (84 percent), oral communication (78 percent), and mathematics (84 percent). Overwhelmingly, CNU alumni believe that they were graduated with competent reading (99 percent), writing (97 percent), oral communication (96 percent), and mathematical skills (95 percent), and that they are better citizens as a result of their CNU education (86 percent) (UgSv, Questions 28-30; AlSv, Questions 17, 19-22).

Though the majority of alumni and current students felt they are served well by the curriculum, it is possible for individuals to graduate without any instruction in or assessment of computer skills and oral communication skills.

RECOMMENDATION: Provisions must be made to ensure that all students achieve basic competence in oral communication and the use of computers.

A major is defined as a student's chosen field of study. The major may fall within a single department of instruction or may overlap several departments. In the latter case, the major is described as interdisciplinary. Major requirements must consist of a minimum of 30 and a maximum of 42 credit hours. A concentration is a subdivision of the student's major and must consist of a minimum of 12 credit hours focused within the major. There may be one or more emphases within a concentration. It is evident from the requirements for CNU majors and concentrations that an adequate number of hours in courses above the elementary level is required. This is done by way of specific 300- and 400-level courses being required in the curriculum of the major, (e.g., the B.A. in English,) or by way of a specific number of credits at the 300-400 level chosen by the student from all or a subset of such courses in the major, (e.g., the B.S. in Biology).

For degree completion, at least 25 percent of semester credit hours must be earned through instruction by the institution awarding the degree. Christopher Newport requires that 30 hours of the last 36 credit hours, including the last 12 credit hours within the major field, be taken at Christopher Newport University.

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4.2.3   Undergraduate Curriculum

The curricular offerings are directly related and appropriate to the purposes and goals of the University.   Through teaching, research (professional development), and service, the University faculty dedicate themselves to "the discovery, interpretation, dissemination and application of knowledge" to the benefit of the local community, the Commonwealth, the nation, and the world (Mission Statement).   In order to support this mission of the University, major requirements and electives build on the liberal arts orientation of the general education courses. This solid grounding in verbal and quantitative skills, combined with required course work in the liberal arts, enables CNU undergraduate students "to pursue studies in the humanities, in the natural and social sciences, and in business and the professional disciplines" (Mission Statement).   All members of the Board of Visitors believe that the University's educational programs are designed to achieve the purpose of the University (BvSv, Question 5).   The faculty survey indicates that 65.5 percent of the faculty agree that the curricular requirements for graduation are consistent with the institutional mission; 23.6 percent disagree (FcSv, Question 38).

Courses range from the 100- or, introductory level, which require no prior knowledge of the subject or previous course work, to the 400-level, which are highly specialized and are usually taken by majors in that discipline.   This range allows students of varied backgrounds and levels of preparation to pursue degrees in particular majors while taking courses outside of these majors.   Each course may be offered every semester to every fourth semester depending on the role the course plays in the curriculum, both general education and major, the demand for the course and the resources available to support the course (personnel, space, and materials, such as equipment and supplies in the sciences).

The University Handbook clearly defines the roles of individual faculty, departments, dean, the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC), the Faculty Senate, the administration, and the Board of Visitors in the process of curriculum formation, review, and revision.   Through a clearly defined process, the University establishes, reviews, and evaluates the curriculum on a regular basis.   Central to this process are the instructional faculty and Undergraduate Curriculum committee (University Handbook, V,1).   The committee consists of eight faculty members, one student representative, the dean for academic support services, the director of student records, and the provost.   The committee reviews the curriculum and writes reports to the Faculty Senate or the provost to recommend changes in the curriculum, priorities for the development of the curriculum, and all matters concerning the adoption and determination of undergraduate degree programs (University Handbook IV,7-8).   The administration and the Board of Visitors are also responsible for development of academic programs.   Proposed changes in curriculum are usually initiated at the department level, though they may be initiated at any level, and then forwarded to different levels for review: dean, Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, Faculty Senate, and provost.   The provost reviews the proposed changes and makes recommendations to the president for a decision.   In the event of an affirmative decision by the president, the changes

and incorporated into the next six-year curricular plan, which is submitted to the Board of Visitors (<u>University Handbook</u>, V,2-3). Although the Board of Visitors has the authority to approve any new curricular plan, the University can finally proceed only after necessary review and approval by the Commonwealth.

During the spring of 1994, the UCC requested that the provost appoint an *ad hoc* task force to review and revise the general education curriculum. This task force reported its recommendations to the UCC at the beginning of the 1994-95 academic year. Following its deliberations, the UCC sent its recommendations to the Faculty Senate in November of 1994. The Faculty Senate made its recommendations to the provost and president during March 1995. The president accepted some of the recommendations of the Faculty Senate but not all of them. This caused considerable discussion and debate concerning the actual role each constituent part of the University should play in the curriculum, especially regarding the general education curriculum. On April 10, 1995, the University faculty met and overwhelmingly passed the following resolution:

> Notwithstanding the statutory authority of the President and the Board of Visitors, the Faculty views with alarm the President's overriding the will of the Faculty in a curricular matter of central importance to the University, which is a violation of academic tradition and of the spirit of collegiality which ought to exist in a university. Such actions are contrary to the expectations of major accrediting and professional organizations.

RECOMMENDATION: Curricular changes recommended by the faculty should be accepted by the president, except under extreme, unusual, and extraordinary circumstances.

Recent extensive discussion and debate among the faculty regarding general education has raised questions concerning the linkage among goals, curriculum, and assessment. The goals of general education are needed as a broad guide to the curriculum but should be specific enough to be assessable. A lack of linkage appears most problematic with regard to the goal of developing "a global perspective of the world's history, cultures, and societies." As presently constructed, the new general education curriculum allows students to complete requirements without addressing this goal except for a sequence of world history. Similarly, students could complete general education requirements without addressing the goal of developing "an understanding of the human condition and the significance of the individual." Without clear linkage between goals and curriculum, assessment is more difficult.

RECOMMENDATION: The general education curriculum should be tightly linked to its goals in such a way that allows for meaningful assessment.

The University has always maintained a focus on quality classroom instruction provided

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by an experienced faculty. With an FTE student-to-faculty ratio below 20-to-1 (with a goal of 18-to-1 in the Restructuring Plan), teachers frequently work individually with students. Special programs include an adequate amount of advanced course work in each subject field. In each curricular area at least one full-time faculty member with appropriate credentials has a primary teaching assignment. The 1994-95 University Catalog lists all full-time faculty in each department (69-262) and the directory in the Catalog (277-88) lists the academic degrees of those faculty. The University requires official transcripts of all persons applying for academic positions and keeps those and the curricula vitae of all currently employed faculty on file in the Office of the Provost. In accordance with the University's curricular and departments' programs, qualified adjunct instructors also make their contributions to undergraduate teaching.

The Board of Visitors exercises ultimate local authority for the number and types of degrees offered, the number and nature of departments through which the curriculum is administered, and the extent to which the University offers graduate work and off-campus programs. The State Council for Higher Education in Virginia (SCHEV) has regulatory authority. The Board delegates this authority to the president, who in turn delegates various responsibilities to the faculty and its Undergraduate Curriculum committee (University Handbook, III,1).

Although the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee is charged with recommending changes in the undergraduate program (University Handbook, V,1), administrative officers also initiate new programs. The president may appoint a special committee to work with the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee for the establishment of new programs. The faculty and the Board of Visitors are consulted about the development of programs when deemed appropriate by the chief administrative officers.

While the established process for curriculum change has ensured that there be a rationale for developing new courses and programs, institutional needs and resources have not always been taken into account prior to such changes. Especially in this period of restructuring and fiscal restraint, there should be careful assessment of the needs of the institution and of the adequacy of resources prior to curriculum revision.

RECOMMENDATION: New academic programs should be undertaken only after an assessment of needs and a review of financial resources by the president of the University in consultation with the provost, the deans, and the executive vice president.

Undergraduate academic policies, procedures, and standards are evaluated by the Undergraduate Academic Program Review Committee (PRC) on an ongoing basis. The PRC is made up of six faculty members and the director of the assessment and evaluation. Every six years, the departments complete their self-studies and submit their reports to the PRC, which meets almost every week during the academic year to assess each department's ability to handle student curricular needs, to ensure quality of programs, and to support the University's mission

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and goals. The PRC's reviews also provide a thorough evaluation and assessment of departmental courses. The PRC's detailed review reports are submitted to the provost. The provost, in consultation with the deans, reviews these reports and forwards them with his comments and recommendations (Action Agendas) to each department and related dean for improvement of teaching effectiveness, scholarship, and service. The departments respond to areas identified as needing improvement and report changes made to address these needs to their respective deans. An update in the action agenda becomes part of the next PRC self study. The deans report the changes to the provost and to the director of assessment, who prepares a biennial report to the State Council of Higher Education. These reports are made available to the Budget Advisory Committee for University Planning (BACUP) and the Executive Planning Council (EPC) for use in planning and evaluation. The University's program review process has received praise from SCHEV for its comprehensiveness and effectiveness. Also, the careful assessment of available financial resources and physical facilities avoids the unwarranted proliferation of course offerings and degree programs. As part of the University's Restructuring Plan, an even more focused look at duplication of courses will be undertaken by the UCC during the 1995-96 academic year.

There is a perception among the faculty that graduate programs are draining resources from undergraduate programs (FcSv, Question 148). This is an opinion that is easy to embrace when one finds graduate courses being taught with five or fewer students while undergraduate courses are canceled with 5-12 students. Also, the granting of three hours of release time per year to graduate faculty often has the effect of eliminating undergraduate courses for lack of a qualified instructor. Thus, the need to staff graduate courses can result in undergraduate courses going untaught.

RECOMMENDATION: A study should be made to examine the impact of the graduate programs on the undergraduate programs.

The University's curricula have been designed in such a way that the students planning to lay academic groundwork here as a basis for more specialized work at other institutions can normally transfer their credits. In addition, as part of the Virginia system of higher education, the University is in full compliance with the "Virginia State Policy on Transfer," which requires public colleges and universities within Virginia to accept transfer credit for courses taken at other Virginia universities or community colleges. The University's Office of Admissions carefully reviews all application materials to weigh grades, test scores, and professional or military experience and informs transfer applicants and their advisors of its decision.

CNU has no programmatic partnerships with secondary schools resulting in the award of college credit. Secondary school students who take CNU courses do so in the same manner as regular CNU students and receive the same course and credit as these students.

4.2.4   Undergraduate Instruction

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CNU's attention to the values expressed in its Mission Statement is reflected in its general requirements for graduation, which require a foundation of basic courses distributed across the spectrum of academic disciplines, with a particularly strong emphasis upon liberal studies (32-34 semester hours) (Catalog, 48-49). The methods used by the instructional staff to pass on these values are diverse, including lectures, discussions, labs, field trips, tutorials, senior research projects, internships, and programs for study abroad. Innovative teaching methods instituted at CNU in recent years include the Writing Center and CNU ONLINE, a computer-based method of offering courses that is leading CNU into the virtual, interactive classroom. The recently inaugurated Summer Seminar in London provides an opportunity for faculty from different fields to make use of London as a physical resource in a summer course in their discipline. Examples of areas in which creative teaching at CNU has received outside funding, include critical thinking, technology in the classroom, and the development of an integrated social sciences course. These varied modes of instruction provide ample learning opportunity for CNU students. Of the 23 percent of alumni who responded to a survey, 70 percent agree that CNU's instructional techniques and policies are in accord with CNU purposes (AlSv, Question 11).

CNU's primary means of evaluating instruction is the Instruction Evaluation Survey (IES). Each semester faculty are required to administer the IES to those class sections designated by the provost. Tenured faculty, with approval of the appropriate dean and upon application to the provost, may apply for a waiver of summer and fall term courses (University Handbook, May 1994, VII, 30). As a result, non-tenured faculty are evaluated in all courses taught while tenured faculty may elect to have only their spring semester courses evaluated.

In response to item 16 on the IES, "Course Was Valuable," lower-level courses over the past four years yielded an average of 3.84 out of a maximum of 5.00. (A summary of IES responses is available from the Office of the Provost.) In response to the same question, upper-level courses over the same period yielded an average of 4.37. The overall average for all courses taught over the past four years is 4.11. The overall average suggests that students highly value their instruction at CNU. However, students are more challenged by upper-level teaching at CNU. This is likely due to the fact that many of these upper-level courses are in the major field of the students. Also, since these courses are more directly related to their career objectives, students may value these courses more than those that seem distant from their occupational interests. Furthermore, students at this point in their academic careers are more mature and academically experienced and thus generally better able to fairly evaluate the value of a course.

One way that faculty address improvement in their instruction is through a rigorous process of self-evaluation (each step is detailed in the University Handbook, VI, 40-54). Every year all probationary faculty must evaluate and document their performance during the past year. Prior to 1995-96, full professors could petition for a waiver of evaluation for up to eight

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consecutive years, while other tenured faculty could petition for up to four consecutive years, (University Handbook, VII, 42). Beginning in 1995-96, all faculty will be evaluated annually. A major focus of self-evaluation is the area of teaching. In order to help them in evaluating their teaching, faculty members are provided with copies of all IES results and comments from the preceding year. They are also provided with a summary of their IES performance over the three preceding years. Faculty have an opportunity in their Annual Activities Report (EVAL-6) to address areas needing improvement as noted by students. The IES results form part of the dossier that is used to make determinations for retention and salary increases. Thus, peer committees, deans, the provost, and the president have an ample opportunity to review the IES's and the individual instructor's responses to them. In addition, in some departments (Biology, for example), the chairman visits classes and evaluates the performance of members of the departments.

Since teaching is of "paramount importance" at CNU, and "poor teaching cannot be redeemed by superiority" in professional development and service (University Handbook, VII, 41), this rigorous process of evaluation ensures that only faculty performing their duties in a satisfactory manner are retained, promoted, or given salary increases. Though there is heavy reliance on the IES to evaluate teaching, faculty question the validity of this instrument. Dissatisfaction with the IES shows up in the Faculty Survey. Only 48 percent of the faculty think that the IES "employs clearly defined, objective, and appropriate criteria for faculty evaluation" (FcSv, Question 119). Even fewer faculty (43 percent) believe that the results of the IES "help improve teaching effectiveness" (FcSv, Question 120). Many faculty suspect that this method of evaluation measures factors other than academic issues (such as the popularity and gender of the instructor and the perceived degree of rigor of the course) and are aware that there are other means available for evaluating teaching. Students are almost as dubious of the value of the IES, since only 56 percent agree that it is a "valid way to evaluate instruction" (UgSv, Question 34).

RECOMMENDATION: The University should implement means of evaluating instruction in addition to the IES.

As reflected in students' responses to Question 3 on IES forms over the last five years, students appear satisfied that they are receiving sufficient information about the goals and requirements of each course, the nature of the course content, and the methods of evaluation that will be used by the instructor. This information is summarized for students on syllabi, which faculty are required to provide for students at the beginning of each course (University Handbook, V, 17).

Students agree very strongly that courses are consistent with their catalog descriptions (4.67 our of 5.00). Eighty-three percent of students agree that they understand the goals and requirements of their courses (UgSv, Question 19). Seventy-three percent agree that the course offerings in their major department are described accurately in the CNU catalog (UgSv, Question

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22; the question of courses other than those in their major fields is not addressed in the survey). Seventy-eight percent agree that they understand how instructors evaluate their work. Eighty percent agree that "instructors evaluate student performance by a variety of methods (UgSv, Question 32).

Faculty members have the primary responsibility for understanding the requirements, contents, and evaluative methods of the courses that they and their departments teach. There is extra-departmental oversight, however, insofar as proposals for new courses must be recommended by the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and approved by the provost (University Handbook, V, 3-4). Eighty-eight percent of the faculty think that their students understand the goals and requirements of their courses (FcSv, Question 35). The undergraduate survey showed that 78 percent understood the way instructors evaluate their work, with only 19 percent indicating they did not understand how they were evaluated (UgSv, Question 31). As part of the regular evaluation of departments and their programs, the Program Review Committee (PRC) considers the appropriateness of the methods of instruction to the goals of the courses and the background and preparation of the intended student audience.
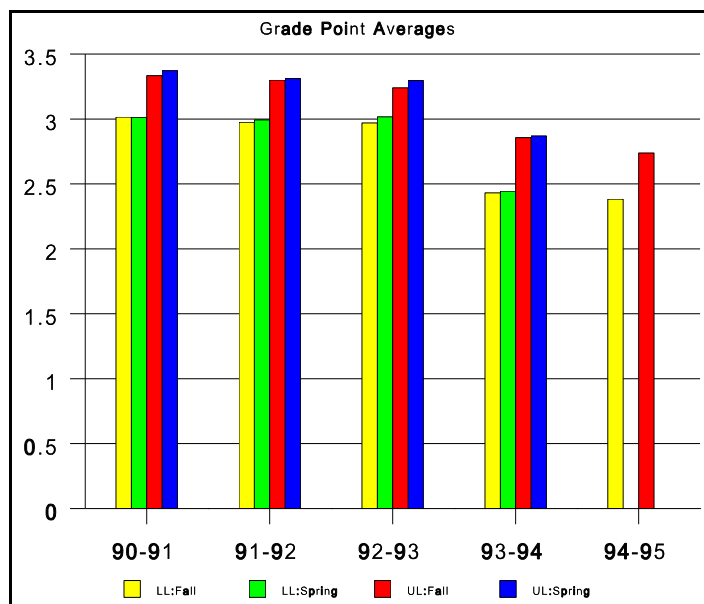
As indicated above, experimentation in instructional methodology has occurred across the campus in the past and continues. This experimentation has received support on the state level from the State Council for Higher Education in Virginia, and on the federal level from the National Science Foundation (NSF's) Statewide Systemic Initiative for the Reform of Math & Science Instruction. Evaluation of such experimentation has been a component of each such project, ranging from locally produced assessment surveys and tests to nationally normed assessment examinations. A good example of such experimentation is CNU ONLINE, which is discussed in detail in section 4.5.

The faculty use a variety of techniques to evaluate student performance, including papers, classroom performances, exhibitions, essay exams, multiple-choice exams, group projects (presented both online and in class), classroom reports, computer simulations, computer-generated laboratory experiments, and projects. Faculty also assess student participation in class discussions and projects. Mid-semester grades are required for first-year and nursing students. Final examinations are required in courses that fulfill a general education requirement. While final exams in other lower-level courses are preferred, they are not required. The giving of final examinations in upper-level courses is at the discretion of the instructor and departments (University Handbook, V, 18). Sixty-three percent of students agree that CNU encourages variety in instructional technique, and 90 percent agree instructors evaluate their performance by a variety of methods (UgSv, Questions 23, 32). Sixty-five percent of faculty agree that CNU encourages variety in instructional technique (FcSv, Question 40).

The methods of evaluating student work reveal a concern for the quality and levels of performance. The letter system (A-F) is used for grading course work. This system is translated into the numerical system (4.0-0.0). In order to further discriminate between levels of

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performance between students, the University instituted in Fall 1993 a plus/minus system (excepting A+). Seniors may take up to two elective courses from outside their major and exclusive of general education requirements on a Pass/Fail basis.   No student may take more that three Pass/Fail courses. Students whose GPA is 3.50 or above and have not received an incomplete grade or grade below "C" are placed on the Dean's Academic Honor List for the next semester (Catalog, 39-41). Seventy-six percent of students agree the methods of instruction used at CNU are appropriate to their capabilities (UgSv, Question 33). Grading policies are clearly stated in the University Catalog (39-42). One way in which the University ensures that its grading policies and the grading policies of individual instructors are fair and accurate is through the detailed process whereby a student may challenge a grade (University Handbook, V, 4-V, 7). The distribution of grades over the past five years at CNU indicates that the average grade is in the "B" range.

Grade Point Averages

	90-91	91-92	92-93	93-94	94-95
LL:Fall					
LL:Spring					
UL:Fall					
UL:Spring					

Examination and grading policies are spelled out in the Catalog (39-40) with "plus/minus" optional with the professor. An examination of grade point averages presented in the following graph shows an increased achievement in the upper level courses. The pattern is consistent. The overall drop in grade point averages beginning in 1993-94 corresponds to the implementation of a plus/minus system with no A+. Overall, grades tend to appear high due to a liberal withdrawal policy. Withdrawals averaged between 5.8 percent and 9.2 percent of total enrollment for the last eight years. Students are allowed to withdraw until the midterm and receive a "W" regardless of their classroom achievement. After that time they can only get a "W" if they are passing at the time of withdrawal from the course.

Chart 4.1.A

IV. Educational Programs

To evaluate the instructional program, the University uses various techniques, including the Program Review Committee (PRC), that are integral to all programs. The PRC meticulously evaluates every program in the University. The PRC requires programs to demonstrate an effective relationship between curricular contents and current practices in fields of specialization. The functioning of the PRC in program evaluation has been used as a model by SCHEV.

When appropriate, outside accrediting standards are followed, e.g., the National League of Nurses and the American Nurses Association for nursing, the National Association of Schools of Music for music, and the American Association of Collegiate Schools of Business for business programs. Also where outside agencies have established minimal standards, appropriate programs are evaluated against these minima, e.g., AICPA standards for sitting for the CPA Examination.

Exit interviews, portfolios, locally produced comprehensive exams, and outside consultants are used to evaluate instructional programs. This information is part of the report submitted to the PRC for program evaluation. Graduates are also surveyed, and many programs track their students throughout their careers, particularly noting certification completion where applicable, e.g., CPA certification for accounting graduates.

CNU has recently begun online instruction, which allows students to take courses from CNU while physically being almost anywhere in the world. While this program is subject to all the usual controls and reviews, the University has developed a special assessment plan for CNU ONLINE. This is discussed in section 4.5.

CNU has regularly offered summer courses in abbreviated periods of time--a three-week session in May ("Term 2"), four-and-a-half week sessions in June and July ("Terms 3 and 5"), and a nine-week session in June and July ("Term 4"). These courses require the same number of

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class hours as full-semester offerings, and as syllabi confirm, cover equivalent material. In the 1995-96 academic year, some courses (example: Spanish 101 and 102) have been taught in subsemesters (half semesters), allowing a full year's courses to be taken in a semester. Designed to increase student scheduling options, these courses require the same number of class hours as full-semester offerings by doubling the length of meetings. The material covered in the subsemester courses is also equivalent, as syllabi demonstrate (and faculty emphasize to enrollees). The University plans a careful comparative analysis of the new courses during and after the 1995-96 year.

As has been stated previously, the overwhelming opinion among students, graduates, faculty, and administration is that CNU is successful in achieving its stated mission of educating students. It does so because of the academic soundness of its programs and the professional activities of its faculty.

Since CNU has no strictly professional, vocational, or technical programs, all learning experiences for which credit is awarded are under the direct control and supervision of this institution.

As part of the program review process, the connection between curricular content and current practices in the field of specialization is evaluated. This is also of concern in the evaluation of curricular matters by the UCC. For programs that are accredited there are very specific criteria dealing with this relationship that must be addressed to remain in good standing. In addition, a number of departments utilize advisory boards, e.g., the Physics and Computer Science Department, in order to obtain feedback on their programs that is both current and appropriate to the community being served.

Program length, credit hours, and tuition and fees are ultimately under the control of the Commonwealth through SCHEV. Under guidelines provided by SCHEV, total program length and tuition and fees are set by the Board of Visitors. Tuition and fees can change from year to year depending on state authorizations and the actions of the Board of Visitors. Program length is presently set at 120 credit hours for completion of most CNU degree programs. The number of credits for each course depends upon standard values of one credit hour of each hour of lecture per week of the semester and one credit for each 3-4 hours of laboratory per week. All of these practices conform to those around the state and country.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

1.   Provision must be made to ensure that all students achieve basic competence in oral communication and the use of computers.

2.   Curricular changes recommended by the faculty should be accepted by the president, except under extreme, unusual, and extraordinary circumstances.

3.   The general education curriculum should be tightly linked to its goals in such a way that allows for meaningful assessment.

4.   New academic programs should be undertaken only after an assessment of needs and a review of financial resources by the president of the University in consultation with the provost, the deans, and the executive vice president.

5.   A study should be made to examine the impact of the graduate programs on the undergraduate programs.

6.   The University should implement means of evaluating instruction in addition to the IES.

IV.   Educational Programs

SOURCES CITED

- 1993 Assessment to Report to the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (Vol. 1)
- Christopher Newport University <u>Catalog</u> 1994-95, 1995-96
- Christopher Newport University <u>Handbook</u> 1994-95
- Data from Institutional Research on Class Size, Grade Point Average, Grade Distribution and Admission Percentages
- Personal Communication with Admissions Office, Office of Continuing Education and Special Programs, and members of the Faculty Senate and Undergraduate Curriculum Committee

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4.2.5   Academic Advising of Undergraduate Students

The advising process at CNU has noteworthy strengths, but   also   weaknesses, especially in evaluation.   The two primary goals of the advising program are to aid each student in the selection of courses for general distribution requirements and major requirements for graduation and to aid students in their progress towards a degree.   This process involves a number of personnel and offices.

The provost oversees advising--the disbursing of funding, allocating responsibility to faculty, and the informal monitoring of the system.   The delivery of advising services is accomplished through six venues:

1.   Freshman advising is administered by the dean of arts and humanities.   This program includes summer advising services to incoming freshmen and ongoing advising for those students until they declare a major and are assigned a departmental advisor.   To staff this program, a summer coordinator and about 15 faculty advisors are hired from the full-time faculty.   Each freshman advisor works for three days during the summer and agrees to participate in ongoing advising for his or her advisees as needed.

2.   Departmental advising is administered by each chairperson.   Each student majoring in a program is assigned a faculty advisor.   Departmental academic advising occurs generally during the pre-registration period each semester, while career and personal advising occurs   as needed.   Specific advising procedures and policies vary considerably by program.   For example, some departments assign interested faculty members to do advising; other departments arbitrarily assign advising to all faculty members.   In some departments advisees choose their own advisors; in others, they are assigned.

3.   On-site advising is provided at registration and   administered by the registrar, to serve students who may be transferring, who are returning after an absence, or who have not maintained contact with their freshman or departmental advisor.   To provide this service, the registrar hires a team of eight faculty advisors to handle a rotating schedule (two faculty advisors each day for about five days).

4.   The director of student life administers peer advising--during summer orientation and for residential students.   Summer student orientation leaders and residence hall managers respectively provide such peer advising.

5.   Informal academic and personal advising is not formally administered, yet occurs when students seek out mentoring and counseling relationships with   faculty members. Students generally contact faculty before or after classes or during office hours.

6.   Additional advising occurs with help from the Office of Career and Counseling Services.

IV.   Educational Programs

The office also provides academic advising for those students who are unable to contact their regular faculty advisor. This occurs primarily during summer months when regular faculty may not be available for advising.

The policies and procedures for the different advising programs are outlined in various documents. Training materials have been published for summer freshman advisors (C&C, Document #1), and resource materials are provided for on-site registration advisors (C&C, Document #2). Different departments have advising procedures that are described in a variety of ways (C&C, Document #3). The Registration News outlines registration procedures for students.

There are several noteworthy strengths to CNU's academic advising efforts. First, the summer freshman advising process and the on-site registration advising process are well-funded and well-designed programs with trained faculty. Numerous students receive quality advising services from these advisors. Other state schools in the Commonwealth have used the CNU summer advising program as a model. Second, efforts to publicize the advising services are regular and emphatic. Student orientation materials, the Registration News, and correspondence from the registrar explain procedures and stress the importance of using faculty advisors. Third, a variety of CNU academic departments provide intensive advising services with clear and explicit procedures and conscientious faculty academic advisors. Many of these departments have developed useful advising sheets for their students and keep ongoing files of their advisees.

There are various weaknesses in the advising program. First, although all faculty are expected to serve as advisors, CNU has not rewarded outstanding service in this area. Generally, advising is not considered differentially in decisions regarding tenure, promotion, or merit pay increases. In fact, advising is rarely if ever mentioned as a key to professional advancement, although it is required that faculty members report their advising activities during their evaluation by peers and administrators. Second, it appears that the quality of advising varies greatly across faculty and programs, and for some students advising assistance is minimal or not useful. Third, there are groups of students--late enrollees, transfer students, returning students, tardy students--who may miss the traditional advising paths. In mid-August, for example, many freshman faculty advisors take their summer vacations. Thus there are two weeks when such students have difficulty obtaining assistance. Fourth, faculty advisors often lack easy access to all records. Students may have to request hard copy advising transcripts from the Registrar's Office to provide the advisor with information on GPA, prior course work, etc.

The time between initial freshman advising and the acquiring of a major advisor seems especially problematic. Students are supposed to continue to see their assigned freshman advisor but, in reality, few do. In 1993-94 a major change in policy lifted the requirement which dictated that all students obtain a faculty advisor's signature on the registration form. This was bewildering to many faculty members, some of whom reported a 50-75 percent drop in advising

IV.   Educational Programs

contacts.   Thus, at present, many students do not meet with their assigned advisors each semester.   According to informal faculty reports, this has resulted in various avoidable problems related to course selection, major choice, continuance in school, and timely graduation.

RECOMMENDATION: A system should be instituted to ensure that all students are advised regularly throughout the period from initial advising to declaring a major, especially at-risk students in the fixed curriculum.

Other than the recent efforts by the director of student life to evaluate the new peer summer advising program begun in 1994, no formal evaluation of academic advising at CNU exists.   Specific programs such as the summer freshman advising program and the on-site registration advising are not evaluated either by student users of such services or by the faculty and administrators who are involved in the program.   Departments and programs are not mandated to evaluate for University purposes the quality of their advising efforts.   In some cases certain programs do informal monitoring of their advising, often for outside accrediting bodies.

It is clear that academic advising is an area which needs attention.   In the faculty survey, (Question 171) more faculty members disagree than agree that academic advising is effective: 41 percent agree, 43 percent disagree.   Student survey results are not as negative   (UgSv, Question 75), but over 22 percent of students surveyed responded that the advising program is not effective.

Department chairs assign advisees to department members, usually on an alphabetical or a specialization basis.   For example, in both the Math and History Departments two department members exclusively advise education students.   The chair attempts to equalize the distribution of the advising load, and informal conversations with faculty members indicate that this does occur.   However, across departments there is a wide discrepancy in the number of students that an individual faculty member advises.   Departments such as English and History report that each advising faculty member has on the average about 25 advisees, whereas the mathematics faculty reports only 10 advisees per faculty member.   However, the Department of Management and Marketing reports 30 advisees per faculty member, and professional programs such as Nursing and Education report much larger advising loads--as many as 50-75 students.   This is probably a function of the fact that these departments have large numbers of majors but no distribution courses for which they are responsible, and thus have fewer faculty members to whom the majors can be distributed.   Any evaluation and revision of the advising program will need to take into account the inequities in advising loads which exist across the University.

RECOMMENDATION: The system of academic advising should be adjusted so that the number of advisees assigned to faculty is reasonable.

The 1994 Restructuring Document (Strategy 13) emphasizes the need for enhanced academic advising.   It proposes faculty training and incentives attached to advising activities and

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proposes identification of alternate vehicles for advising. This process is assigned to the academic deans and the dean of academic support.

RECOMMENDATION: Each component of the advising process should be evaluated to ensure that the goals of the program are met.

RECOMMENDATION: Faculty advisors should have computerized access   to the records of their advisees, with appropriate safeguards, so that student progress toward graduation can be monitored more closely over the entire collegiate career.

The orientation program is administered by the Office of Student Life.   It consists of three to four summer orientation programs for freshmen and two for transfer students. The freshman programs are intensive, lasting two and a half days and including placement testing, advising, and registration, as well as programs regarding academics, multi-culturalism, wellness, and student life. At each session students also tour the campus and learn to use the library and bookstore, guided by student orientation leaders trained by the Office of Student Life. A large number of students attend the summer orientation--in 1994, approximately 200, 180, and 160.

The programs in the orientation session are evaluated by the use of three questionnaires, one administered to students, one to parents, and one to the student orientation leaders. The Student Life staff reviews the results in the fall and implements suggestions for improvement.

The orientation programs appear to be helpful to students in preparing them for Christopher Newport University.   On the undergraduate survey, 47 percent of the students agreed that the orientation programs were effective, while only 14 percent disagreed; (the rest were neutral) (UgSv, Question 80). Clearly, not all students attend the orientation programs. Many students enter the University simply by enrolling and attending classes.   Nevertheless, the orientation programs appear effective for those who attend.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

1. A system should be instituted to ensure that all students are advised regularly throughout the period from initial advising to declaring a major, especially at-risk students in the fixed curriculum.

2. The system of academic advising should be adjusted so that the number of advisees assigned to faculty is reasonable.

3. Each component of the advising process should be evaluated to ensure that the goals of the program are met.

4. Faculty advisors should have computerized access   to the records of their advisees, with appropriate safeguards, so that student progress toward graduation can be monitored more closely over their entire college career.

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SOURCES CITED

- C&C, Document #1   Training materials, summer freshman advising
- C&C, Document #2   Resource materials, on-site registration advising
- C&C, Document #3   Departmental advising policies, collected

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4.3   Graduate Program

The Virginia General Assembly authorized Christopher Newport University to offer master's
degrees beginning July 1, 1991. As of 1995-96, CNU has five state-approved and operational graduate programs--the Master of Arts in Teaching (concentrations in Mathematics and Science and in Language Arts), the Master of Science in Applied Physics, the Master of Science in Applied Psychology, the Master of Science in Environmental Science, and the Master of Science in Nursing. A director of graduate studies and the Graduate Faculty Council oversee these programs, each of which has a coordinator.

After reviewing each of the Graduate Program criteria contained in section 4.3 of the accreditation guidelines, the criterion committee found evidence of sound planning, high quality teaching, and generally well satisfied graduate students. Many of the problems discovered during this investigation appear to be directly related to the recentness of CNU's graduate program(s). We do not yet know the success of even the oldest program, in existence since 1991.

There was obvious concern about resource availability and effect of the budget shortfall for the 1994-95 academic year on the graduate programs, which were in the initial stages of development. Although sources of concern and tension remain, a solid framework for graduate education is in place.   Students seem satisfied that they are being provided with challenging and appropriate graduate programs. Fully 95 percent of students responding to Question 25 of the Graduate Student Survey felt intellectually engaged by their program.   Comments like "Extremely competent professors who are caring and available to the students" seem to indicate that graduate education is continuing the CNU tradition of student-centered education (GrSv, Questions 25, 36).

But there is need for a clear vision of how graduate education fits into the institutional plans of CNU. The next few years will require careful analysis of assessment data so that informed decisions can shape a solid graduate program.

4.3.1   Initiation and Expansion   of   Graduate Programs

The administration and faculty at Christopher Newport University work closely together in   the development of new academic programs which are recommended to the governing board. Before the University initiated graduate programs, a committee composed of administrators and faculty was formed to investigate the feasibility of master's level programs at CNU.   After careful investigation, consideration, and planning, proposals for graduate programs were solicited and received from individual departments, as well as across departments. Each graduate proposal was approved by the dean of the sponsoring department(s), the Graduate Faculty Council and its chairman, the provost, and the president. The president forwarded

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recommendations to the Board of Visitors. Subsequent graduate program proposals have followed the same procedure.

There is ample evidence that curricula for the graduate programs are substantially advanced beyond those provided for an undergraduate program. The Graduate Faculty Curriculum and Planning Committee rigorously enforces curricular guidelines which provide for substantive curricular differences. Based on program requirements outlined in the Graduate Catalog and individual course syllabi, the curriculum of each graduate program differs qualitatively from undergraduate curricula. All potential graduate courses are examined by the Graduate Faculty Curriculum and Planning Committee for evidence of research requirements, primary source readings, advanced content, the infusion of scholarly activity, advanced professional training, and other evidence of higher order thinking skills. This review process ensures that these characteristics are integrated throughout graduate courses, as examination of course syllabi confirms.

Except for library acquisitions, for which there is a clear plan for separate graduate holdings, monetary resources to support the graduate program over and above the undergraduate program are more nebulous. No additional funding was granted by the Virginia General Assembly at the time of graduate program approval. Institutional resources have had to be carved out of existing funds to ensure specific attention to the graduate programs. Resources have been designated for the graduate programs; e.g., department budgets factor one three-credit release time per academic year for each graduate faculty member, and faculty recruitment efforts for new positions have specifically targeted the needs of new graduate programs. However, the burden of resource allocation falls directly on the departments in which graduate programs are housed. There is a constant need to readjust resources because of the graduate program's effects on other University programs.

Concern for resources was consistently cited in the results of the Faculty Survey distributed by the Self-Study Steering Committee. The survey pointedly reflects a perception that the University has a more effective resource plan for undergraduate than for graduate programs. When asked if the University has an effective plan for allocating resources to provide high quality, liberal arts-oriented undergraduate programs, 54% of responding faculty either strongly agreed or agreed; 35% disagreed or strongly disagreed. However, when asked the same question regarding graduate programs, the responses clearly shifted with only 34% of responding faculty in either strong agreement or agreement and 46% in disagreement or strong disagreement. A consistent negative comment listed on the open-ended question of "Weaknesses of Graduate Program?" was related to resources, e.g., "Drain on resources (space & equipment)" and "Programs run essentially without money." It is difficult to track the exact impact of the graduate programs on the University budget due to the ambiguity of graduate costs (FcSv, Questions 148, 191, 192).

To date there has not been a financial analysis of the impact of the graduate programs on

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other aspects of the University budget. This is understandable given the newness of CNU's graduate programs. However, as each program undergoes program review, it would seem prudent to analyze both enrollments and the financial impact of the program on the University budget.

RECOMMENDATION: The Office of Institutional Effectiveness, in conjunction with the Office of Graduate Studies, should perform a financial analysis of the graduate program in its entirety in order to assess the effect of the graduate program on the University budget and the allocation of faculty time.

RECOMMENDATION: At the time of each regular program review, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness should provide a financial analysis of the revenues and costs associated with that graduate program.

There is strong evidence that CNU's graduate faculty are competent and productive. Results of the Graduate Student Survey administered by the Self-Study Steering Committee indicate that 95% of graduate student respondents felt intellectually engaged in their program to either a great or adequate extent; 95% of graduate student respondents also felt their professors were creative and productive scholars. When asked about the challenge offered by graduate courses, 90% of responding graduate students rated the challenge excellent or good with only 8% responding fair and no one responding poor (GrSv, Questions 19, 25, 26).

The strict criteria for graduate faculty status ensures that all graduate faculty are continuously productive. Faculty members teaching in each of the graduate programs must be members of the graduate faculty and have been carefully screened by the Graduate Faculty Credentials Committee. Each graduate faculty member must apply for renewal of graduate faculty status every three years. The Graduate Faculty Credentials Committee thoroughly examines the application and supporting evidence to document productive scholarship. Criteria listed on the Application for Graduate Faculty Status include a publication record, evidence of teaching effectiveness, experience in directing student research projects, active membership in two or more professional associations, as well as dean and chair endorsements. As of December 1994, 67 faculty members have applied and obtained graduate faculty status at CNU. The cumbersome nature of this graduate faculty review process warrants the suggestion that graduate faculty status be reviewed for renewal on a less frequent basis.

SUGGESTION: Graduate Faculty status should be reviewed for renewal every five years, rather than every three years.

Library, computer, and laboratory facilities appear to be adequate for support of CNU's graduate programs. Sixty-one percent of responding faculty indicated on the faculty survey that the library supports graduate courses to a great or adequate extent, while 39 percent indicated poor to non-existent support. The majority of responding faculty (65 percent) indicated that

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computer facilities were not applicable to the graduate courses they teach.   Two-thirds of those using the facilities found them greatly or adequately supportive, while the remainder said there was poor to non-existent computer support (FcSv, Questions 56, 58).

The library has a separate budget for graduate holdings, and graduate faculty submit specific requests for graduate library holdings. Each year the collection development/reference librarian sends a letter to each chairperson of a department with a graduate program, specifying the funds available for that program. The chairperson solicits requests for holdings from his or her graduate faculty and forwards the requests to the acquisitions department. Routine requests for holdings are filled; however, some requests require ongoing fund allocations (e.g., journals) and may require special consideration.

In addition to the departmental collections, the library participates in the approval plan with several university press publishers.   In the approval plan, each department sets up a profile of the type of books its faculty are interested in seeing. When new books are published which meet this profile, these books are sent to the library. A brief description of the book(s) is sent to the graduate program's department(s) requesting a review and decision regarding this particular acquisition. If a department indicates interest in this acquisition, the library retains it. These acquisitions have a separate budget allocation.

Different graduate programs have different facility needs. The Master of Science in Applied Psychology program generated little or no concern related to laboratory facilities since the Industrial/Organizational (I/O) concentration does not require special laboratory facilities beyond those available at the undergraduate level.   On the other hand, some concern was expressed about financial, spatial, and temporal resources. In contrast, the M.S. in Applied Physics has a great need for specialized laboratory facilities. Two national laboratories in close proximity to the University, NASA-Langley Research Center and the Continuous Electron Beam Accelerator Facility (CEBAF), provide that program with access to vast technical libraries. Computer databases and the state-wide library network for sharing books and articles further enhance the volume of research material available to that   program.

The administrative organization of the graduate programs is suffering the pangs of program diversification. The director of graduate studies also serves as dean of the college of arts and humanities and thus has tremendous administrative responsibilities. The secretary to the Office of Graduate Studies is employed half-time, but must handle increasing amounts of graduate program details.   A specific graduate liaison has recently been appointed by the admissions office to handle graduate admissions paperwork.   This may relieve some of the administrative burden from the Office of Graduate Studies.   Additionally, each separate graduate program has its own coordinator, who serves as liaison to the Graduate Faculty Council and the director of graduate studies. The program coordinator and the program committee, composed of graduate faculty members involved in a particular program, monitor student progress and oversee the operation of   the program.

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Although each graduate program appears to have the appropriate amount of administrative direction, centralized oversight will become more important as the programs grow in number and in strength. Disparate program needs must be reconciled with the strategic plan of the University and the impact of graduate studies on the University budget. The critical monitoring and evaluation of the overall graduate program requires more administrative time than is presently allocated.

RECOMMENDATION: The university should appoint a director of graduate studies who has no other significant administrative duties.

As with supporting any new enterprise, the administrative organization is responsively shifting to accommodate new needs. It is clear that the Graduate Faculty Council currently maintains a solid administrative structure for overseeing and managing all graduate programs. Overall, results of the graduate student survey of students' perceptions of administrative management of graduate programs was favorable. Seventy-four percent of the graduate students responding to the steering committee's survey indicated the administrative management of the graduate program was excellent to fair, while only 2% felt the management was poor. It will be important to monitor administrative effectiveness continually, particularly if new graduate programs are added or enrollments increase significantly (GrSv, Question 15).

After almost a decade of planning for graduate level instruction, Christopher Newport University was authorized by the 1990 session of the Virginia General Assembly to offer degrees at the master's level, effective July 1, 1991. On June 22, 1990, CNU submitted a prospectus for substantive change in accreditation status (from level II to level III) to the executive director of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. The State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) authorized CNU to offer the Master of Arts in Teaching degree in summer 1991, and the Master of Science degree in Applied Physics in fall 1992. A SACS Candidacy Committee for Substantive Change visited CNU during summer 1991 and submitted its report in November. Christopher Newport University responded to the report's seventeen recommendations by April 1992. In June of the same year, the Committee on Criteria and Reports for Institutions at Levels II-IV conferred candidacy status for Level III. The institution was formally notified of its candidacy by the executive director of the Commission on Colleges on July 7, 1992. The first progress report of Christopher Newport University was accepted by the Committee on Criteria and Reports for Institutions at Levels II-IV in December 1992. The second progress report was accepted in December 1993.

The first Christopher Newport University MAT degree was conferred in May 1993. A year later, the first MS degree was awarded. In January 1994, a Substantive Change Committee visited the Christopher Newport University campus to investigative the graduate programs. The report from that visit was sent to CNU on May 20, 1994. The formal institutional response to
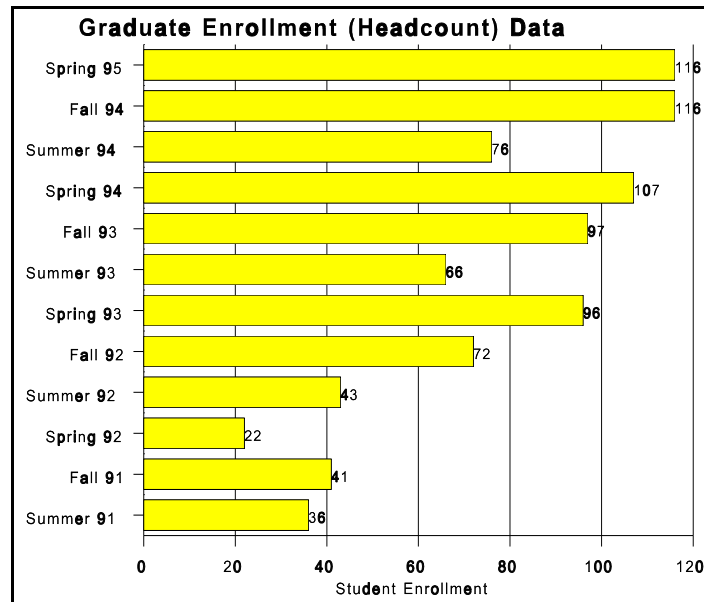
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the three committee recommendations was returned three months later. In January 1995 the executive director of the Commission on Colleges informed the University that membership was granted at Level III to offer the MAT in Science and in Math and the MS in Physics. Membership at the new degree level was retroactive to January 1, 1994. A copy of this letter is on file in the Office of Graduate Studies.

As of 1994-95, Christopher Newport University had four operational SCHEV-approved master's programs--the MAT in Mathematics and Science, MS in Applied Physics, MAT in Language Arts, and the MS in Applied Psychology. Two approved programs began in the fall of 1995: a Master of Science of Environmental Science and a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN). In all cases, program proposals were carefully prepared by the initiating department(s) and presented to the Graduate Faculty Council for internal review and then approval by the Board of Visitors of Christopher Newport University. All program proposals were sent to SCHEV for state approval. Letters of approval for each graduate program are on file in the Office of Graduate Studies.

Each proposal contains a thorough program description; instructional goals; entrance, continuation, and exit requirements; a curriculum outline; course descriptions; faculty credentials; and an explanation of how the program relates to CNU's mission and other programs. Projected enrollment figures are presented with evidence of student demand. A full outline of program resource needs is presented in each proposal. All proposals address the need for the   program, market forces and other environmental factors, and resource requirements and financial implications for the institution. One potential problem is that financial implications are predicated on estimated enrollments which are predicted through the needs analysis done for each program. For example, the planned resources for the MSN program are derived from the non-general Education and General (E&G) revenues generated by the program itself. Actual versus predicted enrollment figures could change the financial impact on the institution. For example, predicted numbers of students in the MAT program as presented to SCHEV in 1989 for 1994-95 were 489 (headcount) and 176 (FTE). As of spring 1995, there were 25 classified students in the MAT mathematics and science programs and three classified language arts students. Unclassified students raise the figures, with the total (classified and unclassified) enrollment for all graduate programs standing at 116 students for spring of 1995.

As indicated by the graph below, there has been steady growth in total graduate student headcount enrollments since the initiation of graduate study. The increase in enrollment from fall 1992 to spring 1993 is related to the addition of the MS in Applied Physics and the offering of recertification courses.

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Graduate Enrollment (Headcount) Data

Term	Enrollment
Spring 95	116
Fall 94	116
Summer 94	76
Spring 94	107
Fall 93	97
Summer 93	66
Spring 93	96
Fall 92	72
Summer 92	43
Spring 92	22
Fall 91	41
Summer 91	36

Student Enrollment

There is a documented long-range plan for CNU graduate programs, but it is not clear how this plan relates to the University strategic plan. Comments on the faculty survey indicated concern for the future planning of graduate programs, e.g.,   "Need for a clear sense of institutional priorities" and "No long range plan discernible." It is not clear how ultimate graduate program viability is determined (FcSv, Question 148).

Certainly there needs to be time given to program development. However, it would appear prudent to forestall the implementation of new programs until a thorough analysis has been done on graduate programs which have been in existence long enough to have undergone a full evaluation cycle. As mentioned earlier in this report, it will be important to continuously monitor enrollment figures for each graduate program and the concurrent financial impact on the larger institution.

SUGGESTION: Consider delaying the sending of new graduate program proposals to SCHEV until a full enrollment and financial analysis of existing programs has been completed and program viability has been determined.

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RECOMMENDATION: The Office of Graduate Studies should submit the long-range plan and financial analysis of the graduate program to EPC and BACUP so as to better inform long-range institutional planning.

Christopher Newport University presently has no doctoral programs.

4.3.2 <u>Graduate Admission</u>

The Christopher Newport University graduate programs have each established both qualitative and quantitative admission requirements. Admission requirements for all graduate programs are designed to ensure that students admitted to CNU's graduate programs are prepared to do graduate work. These requirements for admission are published annually in the <u>Graduate Catalog</u>. Each applicant requesting admission to graduate studies must submit official transcripts of undergraduate course work from the college or university that awarded the student's baccalaureate degree. Official transcripts of any other graduate work must also be submitted. Degree-seeking (classified) applicants must also submit a report of their scores on the General Test of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). This examination should have been taken within the five years prior to the date of the student's application to graduate study at CNU. No specific minimum score on the GRE is required for any graduate program except the MS in Applied Psychology. This program specifies combined GRE scores of 950 or higher on the quantitative and verbal section and the applicant must take the GRE Advanced Psychology test. Although the present graduate admission policies provide indicators for potential of a high level of performance, the appropriateness of the standards cannot be verified until there is a larger exiting cohort of students.

Applications to graduate programs arrive in the Office of Admissions. Copies of student application information and supporting documentation then proceed to the appropriate program coordinator. Faculty within the program evaluate each file and decide whether the applicant meets the program criteria.

A maximum of six semester hours of graduate credit may be transferred from another regionally accredited institution. The course work is accepted for transfer only if the following conditions are met: a grade of A or B must have been earned, the courses must be applicable towards a similar degree at the institution where they were taken, and the courses to be transferred must not have been used to fulfill the requirements of another earned degree. The student must provide an official transcript showing the credits to be transferred and documentary evidence of the applicability of the requested credit toward the appropriate CNU graduate degree. The director of graduate studies and the student's advisor must approve any transfer of credit. Transfer credit is not awarded for experiential learning. There have been no exceptions to this policy, but it is the responsibility of the director of graduate studies to document any that might occur in the future.

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There is only one level of graduate study offered at CNU. The <u>Graduate Catalog</u> does indicate admission requirements pertinent to each program. For example, applicants to the Applied Physics program are encouraged to submit in support of their applications descriptions of interesting research or design projects which were completed as undergraduate assignments or as part of their vocational duties. Applied Physics applicants are also expected to have completed a three-semester sequence in physics including modern physics, a five semester sequence in mathematics including calculus, linear algebra and differential equations, a one-year sequence in programming, a course in data structures, a course in computer architecture and organization, and a course with a lab in circuit analysis.

Approved applicants for graduate study enter CNU with classified or unclassified status. A classified student participates in a program leading to a master's degree, while unclassified status indicates the student is not seeking a graduate degree. In exceptional instances students whose applications for admission are incomplete may be granted provisional admission, which can be extended only to the date for withdrawal without penalty published in the <u>Registration News</u> for the academic session in which the application is submitted.

If an applicant fails to meet the minimum standards for admission, but is judged to have academic and professional potential, the appropriate department(s) may grant probationary admission. A student admitted with probationary status must earn a minimum of 3.00 grade point average on the first six hours of course work attempted in order to continue in graduate studies.

Admission criteria have been formulated by faculty members teaching in the specific graduate program and are designed to ensure that admitted students are properly prepared and capable of a high level of performance within that graduate program. Admission criteria published in the <u>Graduate Catalog</u> include both those general to graduate studies (i.e., holding an appropriate baccalaureate degree) and those specific to individual programs.

Each program coordinator (in consultation with the faculty members teaching in the program) must formally review the admission policies; a written report of conclusions and recommendations about admission policies is sent to the Admissions, Assessment and Program Review Committee during the third year of the program's five-year program review cycle.

4.3.3 <u>Graduate Completion Requirements</u>

The general completion requirements for a master's degree offered by CNU are established by the Graduate Faculty Council. Students must complete a minimum of 30 credit hours of graduate course work within a six-year time limit. At least 24 of these credits must be taken at CNU. An overall grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale must be maintained, and no more than two grades of C may be submitted toward completion of the degree. Students must request candidacy for the master's degree prior to the semester in which they desire to receive the

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degree. To be eligible to petition for candidacy, students must have achieved classified status and have completed 21 semester hours of graduate work. A comprehensive written and/or oral examination, designed to evaluate a student's proficiency in his or her chosen field, is required by all existing programs. A thesis may be required by the department involved in the degree program. If a thesis is required, the required oral defense may be considered as part of the comprehensive exam. Currently, all graduate programs have a thesis requirement except the M.A.T. Language Arts program, which requires a master portfolio project and 36 credit hours of coursework. These general requirements are published in the Graduate Catalog, which is distributed to all incoming graduate students.

Special completion requirements established by the individual graduate programs are also published in the Graduate Catalog. For example: all MAT degrees require at least 34 credit hours without teacher licensure; if licensure is desired, additional credit hours are required; the Applied Psychology program requires a practicum; and the Applied Physics program requires a thesis defense before a panel that includes outside observers. The outside observers are required to evaluate the quality of the research, the appropriateness of the research to the departmental mission, and the clarity and quality of the presentation.

Graduate degree completion is certified by the Graduate Degrees Committee of graduate faculty members.

4.3.4 **Graduate Curriculum**

Christopher Newport University maintains a substantial difference between undergraduate and graduate instruction. When the graduate faculty Curriculum and Planning Committee reviews new graduate program proposals or individual courses within those programs, it requires a statement of program and course objectives. These proposed outcomes are evaluated in relation to their appropriateness for graduate level education; i.e., the committee looks for indicators that the outcomes extend the knowledge and intellectual maturity of the student. Graduate degree programs at CNU are designed to enable students to increase their knowledge, to enhance their skills, and to become independent thinkers. Curriculum assignments are scrutinized by the Curriculum and Planning Committee to see that they require students to analyze, explore, question, reconsider, and synthesize old and new knowledge and skills. All CNU graduate programs are designed to enable students to practice in and contribute to a profession or field of scholarship. In order to achieve this outcome, each master's degree provides, through course work and research projects, an understanding of the subject matter, bibliography, theory, and methodology of the discipline(s) involved. Thesis requirements provide an understanding of research and the ways in which it is conducted. An examination of graduate syllabi confirms the use of graduate level textbooks, reading assignments from current research journals, and advanced references; a heavier workload with greater out-of-class demands; and indications that a greater burden for learning is put onto the students than is typically expected of undergraduate students.

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Examination of graduate syllabi indicates that the graduate curriculum emphasizes a high level of critical thinking. Assignments allow students to both practice in a profession (e.g., specific MAT assignments are particularly relevant to practicing teachers) and contribute to a field of scholarship (e.g., the thesis project is particularly relevant as a scholarly endeavor). Results of the Graduate Student Survey indicate that 90 percent of responding graduate students rated the challenge offered by graduate courses excellent or good, while only 8 percent judged them fair and no one judged them poor. When asked about the infusion of research, scholarly activity, and/or advanced training, 81 percent of responding graduate students indicated this was done to either a great or adequate extent; 10 percent indicated poor or not at all (GrSv, Questions 19, 22).

There are only a few cross-listed courses, which are all taught by graduate faculty. The syllabi for these courses spell out the different expectations for the two levels of work. Data from the Graduate Student Survey indicate a small number of responding students (24) who have taken a cross-listed course. Sixteen of those students said that separate provisions were made either to a great or adequate extent. Only four indicated that separate provisions were made to a poor extent, and four said no separate provisions were made. Anecdotal evidence gleaned through student interviews demonstrates unevenness in the ability of graduate faculty to differentiate adequately instruction in cross-listed graduate/undergraduate courses. In cases where there is no undergraduate course, the enrollment of undergraduate students in the graduate course is severely restricted. These undergraduates must have senior standing, a grade point average of at least 3.00 and the written permission of the director of graduate studies (GrSv, Question 23).

Course numbers for cross-listed classes are listed separately in the University Catalog and Graduate Catalog. The only time that the listings of these classes are married is in the "Registration News" if a professor informs the registrar that the class contains something different from the description in the Catalog. Thus, it is possible for a course to be cross-listed without either group of students being aware of the fact.

RECOMMENDATION: Clearly indicate cross-listed courses in the Registration News.

SUGGESTION: Provide periodic faculty development opportunities on differentiated instruction for faculty teaching cross-listed courses.

The Graduate Catalog clearly describes all graduate courses. This catalog is updated each year and proofread by the program coordinators to insure accurate representation of all courses. The curricula offered by CNU graduate programs clearly relate to the purpose and goals of CNU. Each new program proposal must state how the program fits the institutional mission, a fact confirmed by faculty and administrators. Also, graduate program proposals must verify the availability of financial and instructional resources.   All resources necessary for

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program maintenance must be clearly articulated, and a plan for allocation of those resources must be in place. A review of graduate program proposals on file in the Office of Graduate Studies demonstrates that this procedure has been followed. As indicated earlier in this report, there is question as to what happens if necessary resources become unavailable at a later date. This concern reinforces the earlier recommendation that at the time of each regular program review, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness should provide a financial analysis of the revenues and costs associated with that graduate program.

There is a clearly defined process by which the graduate curriculum is established, reviewed and evaluated. Both faculty and administration must implement and monitor the general curriculum and the academic programs approved by the Board. Additionally, there is an institution-wide process to coordinate programmatic and curricular changes. Each graduate program is carefully developed by an initiating academic department. Graduate programs are developed through the initiative of one or more departments. Faculty must develop a program proposal with careful consideration given to instructional goals; entrance, continuation and exit requirements; course design; and faculty availability. Graduate curriculum proposals are reviewed by the Graduate Faculty Council, which requires a statement of program and course objectives. These goals and objectives form the basis upon which the program will evaluate itself at the stipulated three- and five-year intervals. Individual faculty members in graduate programs write student outcome objectives for each course they offer. These proposed outcomes are evaluated by the Graduate Faculty Council in relation to their appropriateness for graduate level education.

While the Graduate Faculty Council has general responsibility for graduate studies planning and evaluation, two committees of the graduate faculty play central roles. First, the Curriculum and Planning Committee is charged both with the review of new graduate program proposals as they appear and also with long-range planning for areas of program development. Second, the Admissions, Graduate Assistantship and Degrees Committee recommends admission standards and procedures to the Graduate Faculty Council, and plans and oversees the evaluation of existing graduate programs.

Proposed course syllabi are scrutinized by the Curriculum and Planning Committee of the Graduate Faculty Council. Once approved by the Graduate Faculty Council, new graduate programs must be forwarded to the provost with a recommendation by the director of graduate studies. After the Provost gives approval, programs then are forwarded to the president and the Board of Visitors.

Graduate degree programs, their curricular offerings, and program requirements are regularly and systematically evaluated. The program review process requires analysis of the quality of a program's curriculum. Thorough program reviews of each graduate program are scheduled on a five-year cycle. During the third year, each program must assess how its general goals and course objectives are being met. In addition, on the third year of the five-year review

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cycle, a summary of assessment information to-date must be submitted to the Admissions, Assessment and Program Review Committee. The standing membership of this committee consists of three graduate faculty members, no more than one from any college of the University. The terms of these members are rotated to ensure reasonable continuity in membership. For each review, the Committee will be augmented by the addition of two graduate faculty members who have expertise in the area being evaluated. The terms for these members lasts only the length of time required to complete the review. These two members are appointed by the director of graduate studies after consultation with the coordinator of the program under review, the Graduate Faculty Council, and the Admissions, Assessment and Program Review Committee.

The program review process has yet to be fully tested because CNU's first MAT graduate program is just completing its first cycle. The first full evaluation of the MAT program has been completed, but has not yet been reviewed by the Graduate Faculty Council. It is not clear what will happen if a program does not successfully meet its goals. The question remains open as to who or what will determine ultimate graduate program viability. This uncertainty prompted the previous suggestion to consider delaying the sending of new graduate program proposals to SCHEV until a full enrollment and financial analysis of existing programs has been completed and program viability has been determined.

The Board of Visitors is ultimately responsible for approving the number and types of degrees and the number and nature of departments, divisions, schools, or colleges through which the curriculum is administered. The Board acts on these matters after graduate program proposals have completed the full review process from the graduate faculty level through recommendation by the director of graduate studies, the provost, and the president. It is not clear how long-range planning for graduate studies correlates with long-range institutional planning. This is the basis for the previous recommendation that the Office of Graduate Studies should submit the long-range plan and financial analysis of the Graduate Program to EPC and BACUP so as to better inform long-range institutional planning.

The Board of Visitors is also responsible for deciding the extent to which the institution should offer distance learning programs. This was an issue for serious consideration as the CNU distance learning program, CNU ONLINE, is completing its trial period and being evaluated, and the first graduate on-line course was scheduled during the summer of 1995.   As the governing board considers action on CNU ONLINE, it will be important to weigh the evaluation data.   Further discussion appears in Section 4.5 of this Self-Study Report.

RECOMMENDATION: The Graduate Faculty Council should recommend the extent to which on-line graduate courses should be offered in the various graduate programs.

There are no specialist or doctorate degrees presently offered by CNU.

All graduate programs currently offered are the equivalent of at least one year of full-time

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graduate study. A minimum of 30 semester hours of graduate course work is required. Tuition for graduate courses at CNU is the same for undergraduate courses, and registration fees are comparable. Thus, the program, credit hours, and tuition and fees are appropriate for CNU master's programs.

An understanding of research and the manner in which research is conducted is infused throughout the program. The required thesis for the research degrees is designed to address specifically the manner in which research is conducted. In addition, the MAT degree program requires two courses which specifically address the nature of research in language arts, mathematics, and science education; these courses are Education 502 (Teachers as Researchers) and Education 695 (Capstone Seminar). These courses provide an understanding of the extant research and the manner in which research is conducted in the disciplines of language arts education, mathematics education and science education. The capstone course is taken during the semester of degree completion, when the student completes the thesis or portfolio. Students examine current issues in language arts or mathematics and science education and link the findings of their thesis research to other current research literature.

The MS in Applied Physics program emphasizes application through student involvement in the design, building, and evaluation of a system of instrumentation, computers, software, and/or graphical computer interfaces to stated specification. This design project is the core of the thesis. The MS in Applied Psychology involves both a practicum in a work setting and a thesis.

Courses throughout each curriculum provide an understanding of the subject matter, literature, theory, and methodology of the discipline. Individual courses provide primary source bibliographies and reading assignments and require student research proposals and/or projects. Present graduate faculty members bring their research interests into the classroom. Establishment of research and teaching assistantships will add to the opportunities for graduate students to have even more direct experience in theory development, hypothesis testing, research publication, and application of research knowledge to problems within their disciplines. Grant-funded support for assistantships was put on hold until 1995-96 due to a University budget shortfall.

One of the benefits of the small size of CNU's graduate programs is that students work closely with resident faculty, who can make individual evaluation of a candidate's capabilities. Such cooperation occurs both in courses and during the thesis or portfolio project. Students work especially closely with their advisors and committees while completing these final projects.

Knowledge and skills of all graduate students are certified upon completion of each graduate course and at the culminating oral examination and thesis or project defense. At the time of the comprehensive exam and/or the oral thesis defense, each student is asked a minimum of five questions which specifically assess the student's mastery of course-related objectives.

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Five graduate faculty judge the student's knowledge and skill competency regarding course/program outcomes. The MAT Language Arts degree emphasizes accepted professional practices in the field through a final master's portfolio, rather than the scholarly research required for a thesis.

Evaluation of program and course content during the program review ensures an effective relationship between curricular content and current practices in the field of specialization. Additionally, program advisory boards help to ensure congruence between theory and practice. For example, the Applied Physics program has an active advisory board made up of scientists from NASA and CEBAF. Not all programs have an active advisory board.

SUGGESTION: External advisory boards should be considered for each graduate program.

When compared to other graduate programs in the state, CNU's program length is rigorous; credit hours, and tuition and fees are highly comparable. These comparisons were all done at the time of program inception. At the present time, credit hour graduate tuition is the same as the undergraduate credit hour rate. However, graduate students are not eligible for a full-time rate and thus must pay for each credit taken making for a total overall program cost. This policy is consistent with other institutions in the state.

Christopher Newport University presently has no doctoral degree programs.

As indicated earlier, there are frequent systematic evaluations of graduate curricular offerings and program requirements. As also previously described, research is thoroughly integrated with instruction. Instruction Evaluation Surveys (IES) of individual graduate courses allow students to evaluate the rigor of a course. Program coordinators review the IES results and also collect both syllabi and examinations of graduate courses to insure that program goals are addressed. Evaluation also results from oral examination responses (which are audio taped and kept on file in the Office of Graduate Studies), exit interviews, and surveys of graduates. These indicators verify the rigor of the graduate curriculum. At the time of a student's oral examination, a professor from each of the core program courses asks two pivotal conceptual questions. Student responses to these questions are used to monitor the rigor of the curriculum. The audiotaped oral examination responses are indicative of program rigor. At the conclusion of the examination, student responses are discussed and evaluated by all members of the examining team.

The director of graduate studies interviews each master's degree candidate upon completion of the graduate program. According to the director, student responses to interview questions have consistently praised the rigor of the graduate curriculum. The most consistent response is that our program is difficult, but "worth it." Ninety percent of graduate students who responded in the Graduate Student Survey indicated either good or excellent when asked about the challenge offered by graduate courses (GrSv, Question 19).

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4.3.5   Graduate Instruction

Christopher Newport University achieves effectiveness in its graduate programs through close faculty and student interaction.   The selection process insures that graduate faculty members are productive, creative scholars.   The structure and size of the graduate programs create many opportunities for student/faculty interaction.   The relatively small size of CNU's programs provides a context in which student and faculty interact closely, especially during completion of the thesis and the portfolio.

Responses to the Graduate Student Survey indicate that 75 percent of the respondents found scholarly interactions between faculty and students to be excellent or good; only 22 percent judged them fair to poor.   Faculty accessibility was also rated high, 86 percent of responding graduate students indicating a great to adequate extent.

In each graduate course, students are informed of goals, the requirements associated with the students' achievement of those outcomes, and the methods to be used by the faculty member in evaluating student achievement.   Methods include examinations, essays, oral presentations (e.g. teaching modules), annotated bibliographies, lesson and unit plans, theses, and portfolios. An analysis of a random selection of the graduate syllabi on file in the Office of Graduate Studies indicates that the syllabi effectively transmit this information.   These syllabi are collected by the department chairs and are available for review in the Office of Graduate Studies.   Syllabi are reviewed to ensure that methods of instruction reflect levels of thinking, research, and expression appropriate to graduate course work.   The syllabi of cross-listed courses provide assignments for graduate students that require more sophisticated thinking and research than the assignments for undergraduates, and clearly distinguish the two levels.
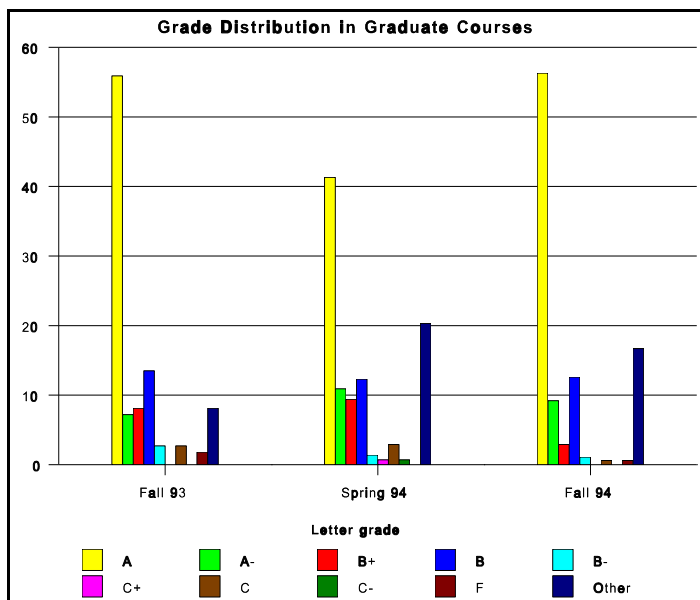
Each graduate course is also evaluated as to its effectiveness through the IES completed by the students.   The results of these evaluations are made available to the faculty member and to the faculty member's dean and chairman.   One problem has been that courses with fewer than four students do not have to be evaluated.   Several graduate courses have not had a formal IES evaluation due to low course enrollment.   Although the IES does an adequate job of informing general instruction, it is not specifically designed to evaluate graduate level courses.   A proposed IES specific for graduate courses has been under consideration by the provost's office.   This modified IES for graduate courses will address some of the issues pertinent to graduate level courses.

RECOMMENDATION: Develop with significant faculty participation a separate Instruction Evaluation Survey specific to graduate education.

SUGGESTION: Once the graduate program Instruction Evaluation Survey is developed, it should be implemented for all non-thesis graduate courses.

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As previously described, a variety of means are used to evaluate student performance. These means include individual course assignment assessments, oral examination questions, and thesis or project defense presentations. A rating scale is used by faculty members administering the oral examination and the thesis defense in order to ensure quality and discern levels of student performance. Grading policies are published in the Graduate Catalog and incorporated into syllabi. As indicated in the following table, grade distribution statistics indicate a grade range from A through F, clearly discriminating levels of performance and indicating that grading practices are consistent with policy.

Grade Distribution In Graduate Courses

Letter grade

A   A-   B+   B   B-
C+   C   C-   F   Other

Fall 93   Spring 94   Fall 94

Table 4.3.A

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Very few graduate courses have been offered in non-traditional formats. These have been contract recertification courses offered for teachers during either extended dual-semester or intensive summer institutes. In all cases, provision was made to allow at least one calendar week of reflection and analysis for each semester hour of graduate credit awarded. The recertification courses that have been offered in non-traditional formats have undergone the same scrutiny by the Curriculum and Planning Committee as all other graduate courses so as to insure equivalent levels of knowledge and competencies as traditional courses. Student and course evaluation methods have been equal for both traditional and non-traditional formats.

Students are assigned to an advisor upon acceptance into a graduate program. The student is notified of the advisor's name in the acceptance letter. Students choose a thesis advisor and two additional thesis committee members. The student must have all thesis committee members indicate their commitment by signing a thesis committee form. Academic progress is monitored by the initially assigned advisor until formulation of the thesis committee, at which time the thesis adviser handles academic progress. To date, the number of graduate students has been small enough to allow for close supervision of student progress. This may change as the number of graduate students increases. Section 4.3.6 discusses this issue further.

As previously described, there is frequent, systematic evaluation of graduate instruction. The evaluation results are used to revise the instructional process. For example, when science faculty realized that the basic requirement for middle school teachers of four science courses was inadequate, they modified the prerequisites to specify a semester of physics, chemistry, biology, and one other science course.

All graduate students are given an exit interview. Information gleaned informs the program review process. To date there have been ten students who have completed a graduate degree at CNU.

4.3.6   Academic Advising of Graduate Students

CNU presently has a systematic, effective program of graduate academic advising. Each graduate student is assigned an advisor upon admission and notified in writing of the name. Each program coordinator balances the number of advising assignments among faculty.

A copy of the graduate student's record is available to the advisor through the program coordinator. It is the responsibility of the graduate student to seek out the assigned advisor. Many students do not meet regularly with their advisor, making advising inconsistent. Graduate advisors are faculty members who have experience advising CNU students in the department in which the faculty member teaches. Given the youth of CNU's graduate programs and the fact that the first cohort of students is only beginning to affect advising loads, all graduate faculty have not had experience advising graduate students. Advising loads will need to be monitored

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to ensure that the number of advisees assigned to faculty is reasonable.

RECOMMENDATION: As graduate programs grow, advising loads must be monitored to ensure that the number of advisees assigned to faculty is reasonable.

When graduate students begin thesis work, they choose three graduate faculty members to serve on a committee. These faculty members work closely with the student to mentor his or her student's research and monitor progress toward degree completion. Often these faculty (particularly the chair of the committee) supplant the advisor. Students have a formalized procedure for selection of their thesis committee; however, there is no formal transference of advising responsibilities. As the numbers of thesis students continue to increase, it will be important to monitor the number of theses a faculty member can appropriately supervise. The credit awarded to faculty supervising thesis committees is inappropriate to the time required to effectively monitor a thesis. Faculty must chair 18 credit hours of thesis work in order to receive a faculty release. The formula for released time is 1/6 of an LHE for 1 credit of thesis work. Faculty who serve as thesis committee members but do not chair receive no released time. The time involved in thesis advising is getting more problematic as graduate faculty are being asked to serve on more thesis committees.

RECOMMENDATION: The Graduate Faculty Council should examine the issue of the amount of faculty time expended on thesis direction and recommend increased compensation.

RECOMMENDATION: The administration should be prepared to increase released time for thesis direction.

The Applied Physics and Applied Psychology programs have had effective orientation programs available to all full- and part-time graduate students in those programs. The first orientation for students in the MAT (both concentrations) occurred in the fall of 1995. Other graduate programs do not have an orientation program. Advisement programs have not been regularly evaluated to ensure effective assistance to students.

RECOMMENDATION: As graduate programs grow, advising loads must be monitored to ensure that the number of advisees assigned to faculty is reasonable.

RECOMMENDATION: A graduate orientation program should be regularly scheduled for all full- and part-time graduate students.

RECOMMENDATION: A system for regular evaluation of both graduate orientation and advisement programs should be implemented.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

1   The Office of Institutional Effectiveness, in conjunction with the Office of Graduate Studies, should perform a financial analysis of the graduate program in its entirety in order to assess the effect of the graduate program on the University budget and the allocation of faculty time.

2   At the time of each regular program review, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness should provide a financial analysis of the revenues and costs associated with that graduate program.

3   The University should appoint a director of graduate studies who has no other significant administrative duties.

4.   The Office of Graduate Studies should submit the long-range plan and financial analysis of the graduate program to EPC and BACUP so as to better inform long-range institutional planning.

5.   Clearly indicate cross-listed courses in the Registration News.

6.   The Graduate Faculty Council should recommend the extent to which on-line graduate courses should be offered in the various graduate programs.

7.   Develop with significant faculty participation a separate Instruction Evaluation Survey specific to graduate education.

8.   The Graduate Faculty Council should examine the issue of the amount of faculty time expended on thesis direction and recommend increased compensation.

9.   The administration should be prepared to increase released time for thesis direction.

10.   A graduate orientation program should be regularly scheduled for all full- and part-time graduate students.

11.   A system for regular evaluation of both graduate orientation and advisement programs should be implemented.

12.   As graduate programs grow, advising loads must be monitored to ensure that the number of advisees assigned to faculty is reasonable.

SUGGESTIONS

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1.   Graduate Faculty status should be reviewed for renewal every five years, rather than every three years.

2.   Consider delaying the sending of new graduate program proposals to SCHEV until a full enrollment and financial analysis of existing programs has been completed and program viability has been determined.

3.   Provide periodic faculty development opportunities on differentiated instruction for faculty teaching cross-listed courses.

4.   External advisory boards should be considered for each graduate program.

5.   Once the graduate program Instruction Evaluation Survey is developed, it should be implemented for all non-thesis graduate courses.

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SOURCES CITED

- Admissions, Assessment & Program Review Committee Statement of Criteria and Policies
- Application for Admission to Graduate Study
- Application for Graduate Faculty Status and Credentials Committee Worksheet
- Correspondence with Southern Association of College and Schools Commission on Colleges Letter addressed to Dr. Santoro with notification of membership granted at Level III.   Responses to SACS Recommendations (1991 through 1993)
- Graduate Catalog (1994-1995)
- Graduate Course Syllabi (e.g., Computer Science 502, Education 695, Math 583, Physics 503, Psychology 501 etc.)
- Graduate Faculty Council Minutes (1991 through 1994)
- Graduate Faculty Membership and Governance
- Graduate Program Proposals
- Graduate Studies Annual Reports (1990 through 1994)
- Interviews with Provost, Director of Graduate Studies, Former Director of Graduate Studies, Secretary of Graduate Studies Office, Program Coordinators of Each Graduate Program, Selected Graduate Faculty and Students.
- Library Report on the State of Collection Assessment for Areas Supporting Graduate Degrees
- Master of Arts in Teaching Degree Program, Checklist for Degree Completion
- New Course Proposal: Graduate Curriculum (MAT in Elementary Mathematics)
- Oral Examination/Defense of Thesis Policies and Procedures
- Orientation Program 1994 for the Master of Science in Applied Physics
- Policy and Style Manual for Master's Theses at Christopher Newport University
- Strategic Planning Form: Mission/Goals/Initiatives and Action Plans of Graduate Studies

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4.4   Publications

The University Catalog, published by the Office of the Provost, and the Graduate Catalog, published by the director of graduate studies, are distributed once a year to students, applicants, and faculty.   These publications describe the University, course offerings, degree offerings, faculty, admission policies, and facilities.   Tuition, fees and financial aid information also appear.   The University Handbook is published and distributed to faculty and staff annually by the Provost's office.   It contains the bylaws and policies of the Board of Visitors of CNU, regulations, and information concerning the University's operations.   These publications undergo annual revision.   Committee members review the documents for accuracy and completeness, but this review should include similar suggestions from the University's standing committees.

In addition, course information appears in the Registration News.   The accuracy of this semi-annual publication, which the Registrar's Office distributes,   is maintained through rigorous attention to detail and close interaction with academic departments.

The Office of Development ensures that the content and design of all publications produced and distributed by Christopher Newport University reflect the institution accurately, completely, and consistently.   The assistant vice president for development reviews all publications for proper content and language.

The Office of Development directly publishes the CNU News and The Chronicle.   The CNU News, published on a quarterly basis, is distributed primarily to alumni, faculty, staff, and friends of the University.   This newsletter provides information related to campus events, faculty accomplishments, student activities, and successes of the University.   Events of particular interest to alumni are highlighted.   The Chronicle, published bi-monthly for faculty and staff, provides information regarding scheduled campus events and faculty and staff accomplishments.

Twice yearly, the Office of the President, with the assistance of the Office of Development, distributes the President's Newsletter to alumni, friends, and supporters of the University.   Another official publication is the Compass, a monthly magazine published and distributed by the Athletic Department with assistance by the Office of Development, ensuring that this publication satisfies publication standards.

Self-Study surveys posed a number of questions regarding the accuracy, honesty, and adequacy of University publications.   The respondents' answers to these questions were generally positive.   In all categories of evaluation, the majority (or plurality) of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that each criterion was satisfied.   The undergraduate Student Survey indicated that 90 percent of CNU students agreed admission policies were clearly stated and available, 6 percent disagreed, and 4 percent did not know (UgSv, Question 12).   The Faculty Survey revealed that 64 percent of faculty agreed that CNU's recruiting activities portray the University accurately and honestly, while 7 percent disagreed, and 29 percent didn't know (FcSv,

Question 32). Of the undergraduates responding, 67 percent agreed, 11 percent disagreed and 22 percent did not know (UgSv, Question 14).   Of the alumni responding, 49 percent agreed, 12 percent disagreed, and 39 percent indicated "don't know" or "doesn't apply" (AlSv, Question 28).   Given this   alumni response, the Development Office might explore their concern.

All University publications, whether produced by the Office of Development or other departmental units, are subject to close scrutiny to maintain the highest publishing standards. To guarantee personnel compliance with publishing standards, memos containing publishing guidelines and procedures were distributed by the vice president for administration and finance and the provost to deans and department heads. However, it will be important in the future to disseminate and reconfirm these guidelines and procedures periodically, particularly as new media, such as Home Pages, are employed. Ensuring that publications accurately reflect the institution and employ principles of good practice is a responsibility not only of the Office of Development, but of all University personnel.

RECOMMENDATION: In order to comply with the University's written and electronic publication standards, the assistant vice president for development should periodically disseminate and reinforce all relevant guidelines and operating procedures to appropriate University personnel.

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RECOMMENDATION

1.   In order to comply with the University's written and electronic publication standards, the assistant vice president for development should periodically disseminate and reinforce all relevant guidelines and operating procedures to appropriate University personnel.

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SOURCES CONSULTED

- Publications
- Memoranda relating to publications

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4.5   Distance Learning Programs

Description and Analysis

CNU ONLINE is a new computer-managed learning program located on the campus of Christopher Newport University.   It is the only distance learning program on the CNU campus. The Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies and the Department of Government and Public Affairs began the program by offering individual courses online.   These departments then proposed that the University offer an online degree program, including general education and elective courses, and a budget request was prepared.   The State Council of Higher Education granted a $390,000 allocation for the 1994-96 biennium.   This allocation committed numerous academic departments to offer online courses.   Since some departments were not consulted in advance, few departments have questioned their role in the new program.

RECOMMENDATION: Before CNU commits academic departments to new courses or programs, the University must involve the related departments in a study of the new plans.

In its first semester, the fall of 1994, the program offered eight courses online, and in the spring of 1995, twelve.   Enrollments increased almost three-fold from a fall 1994 enrollment of just over 100 to a spring 1995 enrollment of almost 300.   The online program is preparing a budget request for the 1996-98 biennium.   Each academic and administrative department was invited to participate in this proposal in order to ensure compatibility and support across the University.

There are two criteria by which distance learning programs are to be evaluated.   The first states that "the institution must formulate clear and explicit goals for its distance learning program and demonstrate that they are consistent with its stated purpose."   To this end, CNU ONLINE has written its own Mission Statement, which complies with and supports the goals stated in the University's Mission Statement.   CNU ONLINE's goal is to provide efficient, flexible, and effective online instruction, as stated in the first paragraph of its Mission Statement:

> The mission of CNU ONLINE is to provide a customized computer communications system and pedagogical guidance in the delivery of efficient and effective online instruction, training, research, and information services to University participants.   Through these activities CNU ONLINE will assist in the positioning of the University in the global market through the delivery of services in a flexible format.

The program's mission to supply pedagogical guidance and effective instruction parallels the University's mission to discover, interpret, disseminate, and apply knowledge.

The CNU ONLINE Mission Statement also delineates six specific goals that guide the

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program:

1. Provide a high quality computer communications system that delivers undergraduate and graduate courses,
2. Provide pedagogical guidance and training,
3. Provide administrative support,
4. Provide support services for quality instruction and research,
5. Provide quality faculty,
6. Serve a student audience that needs a flexible format.

These objectives support University goals: high quality, liberal arts-oriented programs; an excellent faculty; student support services; opportunities to address the needs created by societal and technological changes; a climate that offers learning and sharing among students; a well-qualified professional staff; and vitality through assessment, program review, and strategic planning.

Besides supporting the mission of the University, CNU ONLINE is an integral component of the University's restructuring plan, The Continuous University. The ONLINE program is highlighted in a seventeen-page annex to this plan as one method by which the University will fulfill its goal to offer "continuous" education. The online program fits the University's future plans well because it is efficient and flexible and thus should assist in effectively accommodating an increasing student population while maintaining high standards.

The second criterion by which distance learning programs are judged requires that such programs demonstrate how they achieve their goals while maintaining the quality and effectiveness prescribed by the criteria. The remainder of this report will delineate the extent to which CNU ONLINE has met, is meeting, and will meet its and the University's goals.

CNU ONLINE follows University standards for admissions. Students are admitted to the University before they are admitted to online classes; thus, admission procedures and requirements are the same for online students as they are for students who attend classes on campus. The transfer of credit from other institutions and the admission of students are effected by the University, not by the online program. While online courses will be offered to high school students, the students in these programs must enter the University through the regular admission procedures, and the students must enroll in courses that are offered to all University students. In other words, the online program does not offer special classes or special admission procedures.

In addition to following University standards for admissions and other administrative procedures, the online program offers only courses that are taught on campus. All of these courses are described in the University Catalog. The online program describes its program, resources and degree in its own publications, in the Registration News, a publication of the Registrar's Office, and in the 1995-96 Catalog.

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The online program now offers a bachelor's degree in governmental administration with concentrations in public management, criminal justice administration, legal studies, and international administration, providing all courses necessary for the degree by the end of the 1997 academic year.   The online degree program obligates students to fulfill University requirements; thus, a student completing an online degree must satisfy all University requirements for a bachelor's degree.   If students decide to take all of their courses online, those students will choose from a limited selection of electives since not all University courses will be offered online.   Special provisions are made for courses requiring an oral component.   For example, Spanish is now taught online, and a telephone line has been installed to allow students to speak and hear the language.

Since the courses offered by the online program are designed and approved by the various academic departments and since each department supplies the faculty members to teach these courses, the courses and faculty of the online program meet the same standards for all University faculty and courses.   In other words, the online program offers faculty and courses that are comparable in content and learning outcomes to the faculty and courses offered in Christopher Newport University classrooms.   This ensures that each academic department regulates the design and implementation of these courses and that each department controls the quality of the courses.   To safeguard compatibility and continuity, to guarantee that CNU ONLINE courses meet the standards set by each department, and to ensure that the program does not develop more quickly than would be prudent, each academic department offering online courses must remain actively involved in assessing and selecting faculty, in determining the curriculum, and in developing the pedagogy that the online medium offers.

RECOMMENDATION: Each academic department offering online courses must remain actively involved in assessing and selecting faculty, in determining the curriculum, and in developing the pedagogy that the online medium offers.

For students to benefit from the online program, the staff developed a unique pedagogy. The CNU ONLINE program has identified teaching strategies for effective, interactive, online teaching.   The staff trains teachers to implement these modalities.   The online program encourages innovative, education technologies that deliver course content using both text-based and multimedia methods suitable for online instruction.   The essay "Teaching Online Computer Managed Conferencing," written by the CNU ONLINE staff, details the methods suitable for online instruction and the modalities that the program employs.   The pedagogy outlined in this article requires students to anticipate actively by involving them in guided reading, critical thinking and writing, computer-managed communication, and cooperative learning, including group work.   The three online faculty interviewed for this report stated that in their opinion students who successfully participated in these modalities learned as much as or more than students in traditional classrooms, but these teachers also noted that the group work did not suit

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all students, nor did the group work fit all subjects. The faculty stated that they adjusted their teaching strategies to suit the students and the subject matter.

The online pedagogy should be flexible enough to accommodate the varied curricula at Christopher Newport University, and the online staff and faculty must continue to explore the best teaching strategies for each course. Instructors should be encouraged to find pedagogies that fit their disciplines and that contribute to the learning goals. If CNU ONLINE is to explore the best possible teaching strategies and implement them effectively, the University should provide released time and training programs for faculty development in the areas of online pedagogy and skills, as is outlined in the CNU restructuring document and as planned by the Faculty Development Task Force.

SUGGESTION: The University should provide released time and training programs for faculty development in the areas of online pedagogy and skills.

As mentioned above, the faculty interviewed stated that the present system and modalities worked well for many students, especially highly motivated students, non-traditional students, computer-literate students, and students with some background in the subject matter. They observed that these students worked harder, wrote more, and received higher grades than comparable students in traditional classes. But they also observed that the ONLINE program is not for all students, and they expressed a concern that some students were enrolling in the courses for the wrong reason. Although the online classes require students to use a computer, to work independently, to write intensively, and to read more, certain students enrolled because they thought the course would be easier. This problem should in part correct itself as students learn from one another that the courses are not easier. But CNU, through advising and through its publications, should inform students and faculty that the program suits some students better than others.

SUGGESTION: CNU, through advising and publications, should inform students and faculty that the program suits some students better than others.

As discussed earlier, the goals of the online program are clearly stated in its Mission Statement. The ONLINE program has also written strategic, initiative, and action plans. These plans describe the means by which the program's goals will be achieved. However, the University is highlighting this program in its restructuring. Moreover, the program is growing quickly, and CNU ONLINE is not fully implemented. Therefore, continuous and careful evaluation of CNU ONLINE, including students, faculty, courses, and organization, must be assured. To this end the CNU ONLINE program has devised an assessment plan that has been approved by the University. The Assessment Plan outlines four levels on which the program will be evaluated:

Level One: Online program/institutional efficiency

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Level Two: Learning outcomes
Level Three: Teaching effectiveness
Level Four: Student satisfaction

The approved assessment plan details the methods to be used regularly to evaluate the program's success on each of these levels. The University assessment officer is charged with the responsibility for this implementation. This will require expanded participation by the University administration and the academic departments under the leadership of the University's assessment officer.

RECOMMENDATION: The online program, under the leadership of the University's assessment officer, must fully implement its assessment program.

Faculty evaluation of the program is achieved on several levels, including a review of the permanent message log produced by course participant interaction, an end-of-term meeting with online faculty, and departmental review. The faculty and departmental reviews of the online program are incorporated into the assessment plan via the dossier and peer group processes. But these activities serve a secondary function by allowing faculty to communicate their successes, concerns, and problems to the online staff. Since some peer evaluation groups and administrators have had difficulty utilizing the message logs, the online staff will supply each teacher with a disk copy of the log, and the online instructors will be responsible for identifying those parts of the log that are relevant for peer group review.

As stated in their respective Mission Statements, the University and CNU ONLINE both desire to deliver support services to students. University services, such as admissions, registration, business office, library, and bookstore are being offered to distance learners by three methods: U.S. Mail, telephone, and online. Most University services are not offered online, but these services should also be available by the spring of 1997. The ONLINE program plans to offer fully computerized and integrated student support services, including but not limited to registration, admissions, library, counseling, and bookstore. To be able to offer all student support services online, the University must continue to integrate the computer systems on campus. This means that the University must improve its technical infrastructure. Such improvements will be expensive, but these are changes that will benefit the entire University, will be required whether or not the online program exists, and should eventually save the University money.

RECOMMENDATION: To be able to offer all student support services online, the University must continue to integrate the computer systems on campus and improve its technical infrastructure.

CNU ONLINE is not only a new program but also a program that involves new

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technologies and new teaching methods. These are innovations that not all students, faculty, or University administrators will accept readily. The key components of the CNU ONLINE program, as outlined above, are in place, but they must be integrated into the University if the program is to succeed as a quality distance learning program that supports its mission. The elements of the online program that must be fully integrated include student services, marketing, Internet access, the assessment plan, and instructional supervision. Such an integration should act as a catalyst prompting various elements of the University to work together more closely and productively. As a new program on campus, a program utilizing new technologies and new teaching strategies, CNU ONLINE can facilitate this integration by implementing the program prudently, encouraging participation by students, faculty, departmental chairs, college deans and University administrators in determining the future of CNU distance learning.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

1.   Before CNU commits academic departments to new courses or programs, the University must involve the related departments in a study of the new plans.

2.   Each academic department offering online courses must remain actively involved in assessing and selecting faculty, in determining the curriculum, and in developing the pedagogy that the online medium offers.

3.   The online program, under the leadership of the University's assessment officer, must fully implement its assessment program.

4.   To be able to offer all student support services online, the University must continue to integrate the computer systems on campus and improve its technical infrastructure.

SUGGESTIONS

1.   The University should provide released time and training programs for faculty development in the areas of online pedagogy and skills.

2.   CNU, through advising and publications, should inform students and faculty that the program suits some students better than others.

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SOURCES CITED

- Assessment Plan for CNU ONLINE
- The Continuous University: The Plan for Restructuring CNU
- The CNU Mission Statement
- CNU ONLINE Mission Statement
- CNU ONLINE Overview
- Teaching Online, Computer Managed Conferencing

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4.6   Continuing Education, Outreach and Service Programs

The Office of Continuing Education and Special Programs is an expression of the University's commitment, as described in the Mission Statement (1994-95 Catalog, 6), to "community service" to the Virginia Peninsula and nearby communities.   This office comprises the entirety of the University's outreach and service programs.   Continuing Education defines its mission as follows: "to develop, plan, implement, coordinate, and evaluate noncredit programs, classes, workshops, seminars, and conferences on and off campus" (The Office of Continuing Education and Special Programs, 1993-94).   It is one way in which the University shares the fruit of its research and teaching with those who are not otherwise students at the University.   Thus Continuing Education views itself as "a valuable public relations vehicle for the University." Records of such community outreach extend back to 1979.

In the last two years, under the leadership of a new director, the program has been rapidly increasing the number and scope of its offerings.   In 1994-95, over 50 classes were offered, three times as many as in the previous year.   In addition to the director and the volunteer coordinator of the LifeLong Learning Society, the Office has a full-time program support technician.   Duplication services and audio-visual resources are available to Continuing Education instructors, who   receive a brochure describing the guidelines and expectations of the program ("Continuing Education Instructors' Guidelines").

Numerous programs are offered by the Office of Continuing Education.   Most notable is the LifeLong Learning Society, founded in 1988 and coordinated by a volunteer from the regular faculty under the direction of the director of continuing education.   Offering a variety of lectures, classes, and field trips, the LLS has reached an annual enrollment of 300.   In recognition of its excellence, the program received a national award from the Association of Continuing Higher Education (ACHE).   Other programs offered by Continuing Education are the annual Writers' Conference, the Leadership Institute of the Virginia Peninsula, the Community School of the Arts (in association CNU's Department of Arts and Communication), the Teen Health Conference, the Middle School Health Conference, the Service Systems Forum, the Forum on Aging, the Newport News Public Schools' Summer Institute of the Arts, the Peninsula Business Breakfasts, the Secretary's Day Retreat, and numerous occasional programs (Continuing Education brochures and Catalog, 13-14).

Continuing Education courses are evaluated in two ways.   First, the instructors of Continuing Education courses evaluate both their own courses and the overall program.   Second, the students evaluate their particular course and instructor.   These evaluations are reviewed by the director of continuing education, who discusses the results of these surveys with the instructors and determines which instructors and courses to retain.   Given the nature of these programs, using these evaluations to schedule subsequent offerings appears to be effective and appropriate.   At present there is no formal evaluation of the role of the Continuing Education program in the institution.

RECOMMENDATION: An evaluation of the Office of Continuing Education and Special Programs as a component of the overall institution should be conducted regularly.

In the current five-year plan for the Office of Continuing Education are components that call for the investigation of establishing a certificate program and of offering academic credit as well as Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for courses.

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To date no action has been taken on either of these items.

No courses for credit and no degrees or certificates are offered by the Office of Continuing Education.   CEUs are awarded for students taking courses designated for such recognition.   These courses meet the SACS criteria, and appropriate records are kept by the Office of Continuing Education and Special Programs (University Catalog, 13).

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RECOMMENDATION

1.   An evaluation of the Office of Continuing Education and Special Programs as a component of the overall institution should be conducted regularly.

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4.7   Student Records

Student records are maintained by the Registrar's Office, which handles a wide and demanding array of tasks despite equipment, space, and personnel shortages. The office is charged with maintaining and protecting student records, issuing transcripts, preparing degree checks prior to graduation, and preparing reports for administration and faculty. The office does not formulate policy but is charged with implementing policies originating with the administration and faculty. The office determines internally how these policies will be implemented.

The Office of the Registrar consists of eight full-time staff members (two professional, five classified, and one hourly). Of these, all work at least some of the time on student records. Three to five students are also employed at any time.

The office maintains information on each student including address, enrollment status, declaration of major, course grades, grade changes, withdrawals, and academic honors or probation. Hard copies of student grades are kept as they are turned in by class at the end of each semester, and duplicates are included in each student's file, which is secured in the vault adjacent to the Registrar's Office. Computerized records are kept on each student in the Registrar's Office and are preserved on tapes kept in the Computer Center. The Registrar's Office prepares the student roster for each class. By filling out the proper forms, students may request that a transcript be sent, add or drop a course, declare a major, challenge a grade, take courses elsewhere, take a course pass/fail, challenge a course, take more than 18 semester hours per semester, or change their name and/or address on the record (SR, Document #1). Faculty members may request information on students or change grades by using the appropriate forms. Faculty members may also submit written requests for unofficial student transcripts for purposes of advising.

Security is maintained in several ways.   If a transcript is requested in person, the student must show an identification card. If the request is done by mail, identifying information such as the Social Security number, name, signature, and year of graduation must be present on the letter request or form. All transcript request forms are kept for one year so that signatures can be compared if necessary.   Grades for transcripts are obtained from the hard copies in the storage room rather than from the computers in the main office. All applicants for staff and student positions are screened carefully. Only faculty and staff members are authorized to enter the vault containing student records.

Although it is clear that there are standard practices for establishing, maintaining and purging student records, these have not been formalized in writing. One of the goals of the current registrar is to establish a written set of standards, and one of the office staff has been assigned to begin this task. It is important that the written guide be completed as soon as possible.

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RECOMMENDATION: The Registrar's Office should prepare a written policy manual which articulates stated guidelines for establishing, maintaining and purging student records.

The Office is in the process of computerizing its student information. Information on transfer students is not always up-to-date and, therefore, not available to the Registrar's Office. Information on returning students prior to 1989 is gradually being updated.

There are several problems with student records in the Registrar's Office:

1.   There is inadequate storage space for records. However, when the pre-1989 returning student information is completely computerized, some of the hard copies can be destroyed, creating more space.

2.   Until recently, staff morale was high and turnover rates low. In the last 3 years, however, there has been greater turnover and lower morale. This pattern may result from the increased work load and lack of opportunities for promotion. Some faculty members have informally complained of inefficiency in the office. The perception of inefficiency is contradicted by the alumni survey, which targeted recent alumni. The survey indicated that for the 293 respondents, 186 responded "yes" to the statement "Transcripts that I have requested were sent promptly by the Office of Student Records." (AlSv, Question 48)   Only 22 answered no (75 said they did not know or it did not apply).

3.   Although the forms completed for each procedure detail the information and signatures needed for each task, there is no manual describing them. Office employees do not have overlapping experience to perform different tasks within the office, so prolonged absences or turnover of employees may lead to a backlog of work. Additionally, there has been considerable delay in automating some tasks, although software is available. For example, two employees are still hand-analyzing student transcripts during the degree audit process, although a computer software package has been created to do this.

SUGGESTION: Cross-training for all the procedures in the Registrar's Office should be implemented so that more employees are able to perform requisite functions.

SUGGESTION: The computerized degree audit should be implemented.

4.   The increased workload is due in part to added duties which have nothing to do with student records. For example, the office assigns rooms for classes and special events. This has become increasingly time-consuming. In fact, there has been a doubling in course offerings in the past ten years (approximately 500 courses to nearly 1,000 courses)

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using the same 31 classrooms.   Additionally, the Office is responsible for renting faculty gowns for all formal events.   As faculty numbers have increased, so has the workload in this area.   However, the <u>Restructuring Document</u> (1994) addresses the need for more coordination of scheduling and proposes implementation of an automated master scheduling system by FY 97 (<u>Restructuring Document</u>, Strategy 19).   It is hoped that this will reduce the workload.

SUGGESTION: Duties currently assigned to the Registrar's Office should be evaluated for suitability.   For example, responsibility for renting faculty gowns should be reassigned, perhaps to the bookstore.

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RECOMMENDATION

1   The Registrar's Office should prepare a written policy manual which articulates stated guidelines for establishing, maintaining and purging student records.

SUGGESTIONS

1.   Cross-training for all the procedures in the Registrar's Office should be implemented so that more employees are able to perform requisite functions.

2.   The computerized degree audit should be implemented.

3.   Duties currently assigned to the Registrar's Office should be evaluated for suitability. For example, responsibility for renting faculty gowns should be reassigned, perhaps to the bookstore.

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SOURCE CITED

SR, Document #1   Student Records form

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4.8   Faculty

Christopher Newport University follows an orderly and effective recruitment process that has yielded an admirably qualified faculty that is capable of carrying out its teaching and research responsibilities competently.   Eighty-three percent of the full-time faculty hold terminal degrees in their disciplines.   Faculty personnel files are in the Provost's office.

4.8.1   Selection of Faculty

The Handbook of Christopher Newport University contains detailed guidelines   outlining the procedures that must be followed to carry out the search process and make the selection for faculty positions   (pp. VII, 12-VII, 15).

The recruitment process is initiated by the department, which submits a written request to the dean of the appropriate college.   The department chair is required to include in his request a detailed description of the instructional needs for the position and the specific qualifications needed to fill the position.   The provost, with the approval of the president, authorizes all faculty positions and approves the qualifications for each position.

The dean who is responsible for conducting the search process oversees the formation of a search committee and names its chair in consultation with the department chair.   The search committee prepares a plan of action including budget and timetables and submits it to the dean for approval.   It develops selection criteria based on the qualifications required for the position and determines the procedures it will follow in considering candidates.   The search committee also prepares the advertisements for the position, including the title and duties of the position, the deadline for application, and other relevant information.   The job advertisement is coordinated with the special assistant to the president who oversees multicultural affairs and affirmative action.   The advertisement is placed in appropriate newspapers, magazines and professional journals, or with recruitment agencies.

The search committee, in consultation with the dean, determines the number of applicants who will be in the final pool and the number of applicants to be invited to campus for an interview.   After the cutoff date has passed and all applications have been read, each member of the search committee ranks the candidates qualified for the position according to the rating system devised by the search committee and documents reasons for selection or nonselection of each applicant.   The ratings are compiled and candidates for the final pool are selected to be invited for an interview.   Their names, together with a complete file on each of them consisting of vital information including their transcripts, curriculum vita, and letters of recommendation, are forwarded to the dean.   A list of the finalists is submitted to the special assistant to the president.   The latter must approve the interview questions prepared by the search committee.

After the completion of the interview process, which may include testing the candidate's

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proficiency in oral and written communications through a review of writing samples, through the interview process, and through a public presentation, as well as through actual classroom teaching performance, the search committee discusses all candidates, votes for its preference, and informs the dean in writing of its recommendations for appointment in order of preference.   The dean reviews the process and makes a recommendation to the provost, who ascertains the successful candidate's willingness to accept an appointment.   Final approval of the appointment is made by the president.

The investigation of the recruitment process and a general evaluation of the faculty appointments made in recent years at Christopher Newport University indicates that the University follows an orderly process of selection and appointment and makes a conscientious effort to select faculty with the best possible academic and professional preparations. Eighty-three percent of the full-time faculty have terminal degrees, and their degree granting institutions include some of the best in the country.   None of the highest earned degrees comes from a non-regionally accredited institution in the United States.   Two faculty have their Ph.D.'s from foreign universities: The Free University of Berlin and the Université Blaise Pascal in France.   Both of them have excellent academic preparation.

The faculty survey conducted by the Self-Study Committee in the fall of 1994 indicates that there are some concerns over delays in getting approvals from higher university officials to advertise positions in time.   In response to Question 111, 58 agreed and 29 disagreed that the process for recruiting and appointing faculty is an orderly well-defined process; also two comments on Question 111 refer to problems with delays.

SUGGESTION: The University administration should expedite approvals in order to enable search committees to do their screening before the better candidates are hired by other schools.

4.8.2   Academic and Professional Preparation

4.8.2.2 Baccalaureate

Among the 177 full-time faculty members teaching credit courses in the fall of 1994, 147 (83 percent) held terminal degrees in their disciplines, including M. F. A. and M.S.W. degrees for which the University has accepted justification for considering them equivalent to terminal degrees, as indicated in the University Handbook (VII, 55). All except four faculty members satisfied the appropriate SACS criteria.   Of the 130 adjunct faculty listed in the 1994-95 University Catalog, 30 had the terminal degree.   The Institutional Response to the Report of the Substantive Change Committee submitted by CNU lists four probationary faculty who did not satisfy the appropriate criteria related to the terminal degree, but there are strong reasons given to show CNU is still in compliance.

The professional and academic competence of the full-time faculty teaching at the

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baccalaureate level at Christopher Newport University is adequate. The level of competence is not as great in the relatively large adjunct faculty; however, 23 percent hold terminal degrees in their discipline. One adjunct meets the criteria because of his outstanding professional experience and demonstrated contributions to the teaching discipline. He is a practicing artist who has won a large number of prizes, has taught in Newport News schools for three decades, and has twelve hours of graduate work. He is clearly qualified to teach the studio courses to which he is assigned. See Section 4.8.3 for a discussion of the biology department's lab instructors.

The few interdisciplinary courses offered by the University (for example, Social Science and Professional Studies 295 and Honors 490) are taught by teams of qualified faculty. Each faculty member teaches only in the academic area in which he or she is qualified.

Personnel files for full-time faculty are maintained in the Office of the Provost, while files for part-time faculty are kept by deans. All files contain official transcripts and other appropriate documentation of faculty credentials.

At least 25 percent of the discipline course hours in each undergraduate major are taught by faculty members holding the terminal degree in that discipline as indicated by departmental self-study reports and the fact that 83 percent of the full-time faculty and 23 percent of the adjunct faculty hold terminal degrees.

As stated in the first paragraph, the University has reviewed the preparation of persons with degrees such as M. F. A. and M. S. W. and accepted justification for considering them equivalent to terminal degrees.

As of the fall semester 1995 there are no remedial programs or courses at CNU. This is part of the restructuring of the University as mandated by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

As discussed in section 4.5, qualifications for faculty teaching in CNU ONLINE, the University's only distance learning effort, are the same as for on-campus courses. Thus, the credentials of full-time and part-time faculty teaching online courses conform to the criteria in section 4.8.2.2.

4.8.2.3 Graduate

Christopher Newport University currently offers five graduate degrees: the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) (concentrations in Mathematics and Science and in Language Arts), the Master of Science (MS) in Applied Physics, the Master of Science (MS) in Applied Psychology, the Master of Science (MS) in Environmental Science and the Master of Science (MS) in Nursing.

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The criteria for admission to the graduate faculty are published in the "Graduate Faculty Membership and Governance" document approved by the Graduate Faculty Council. These requirements include the terminal degree, evidence of superior teaching, the ability to direct student research, and a record of sustained scholarly contributions to the field. These contributions may include publications in refereed journals; the publication of scholarly books, articles, and reviews; public performance or exhibition of works; and conference presentations.

One problem uncovered in this review is that in the Graduate Faculty Membership and Governance document the eligibility requirements regarding the terminal degree contain one poorly worded phrase. It currently reads "Highest earned degree in field," which appears to be open to misinterpretation.

RECOMMENDATION: Change the wording under the section "Eligibility for Graduate Faculty Membership," subsection B-1, in the Graduate Faculty Membership and Governance document from "Highest earned degree in field" to "Terminal degree in field."

The Graduate Faculty Council Credentials Committee screens each faculty member applying for selection to the graduate faculty. He or she must submit a curriculum vita and an application for graduate faculty status to this committee. This application requires the faculty member to provide evidence of his or her excellence in teaching and research as mentioned above. Transcripts for all graduate faculty members are filed in the provost's office, after checks of the transcripts are made. Each graduate faculty member must reapply to be certified every three years, which helps to insure the vitality of the graduate faculty. (See Section 4.3.1 of this report for additional analysis.)

The University also has provisional graduate faculty. This status may be granted only under special circumstances, such as a demonstrated need for an instructor in a graduate program for which no regular faculty member qualified for the graduate faculty is available. New faculty members in their first two years of teaching at the University who are needed to teach graduate courses may also be awarded provisional status. In Spring 1995 there were four provisional graduate faculty members. Provisional graduate faculty must re-apply every year. Provisional status may be held for a maximum of three years. During Fall 1995 all but two of the graduate faculty had the terminal degree. These two provisional faculty taught reading discovery in the Newport News schools and received specialized training from the Ohio State University in precisely this area of teaching. Furthermore, they hold master's degrees.

Currently all CNU graduate faculty members, both regular and provisional, hold terminal degrees.

The graduate faculty at CNU demonstrate a high level of competence in teaching and scholarship. As explained in Section 4.3.1 of this report, graduate faculty must sustain a record of

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scholarly publication.   The quality of graduate teaching is monitored by means of the Instructional Evaluation Survey (see analysis in Section 4.3.5).

In the latter half of the 1980s, Virginia's state government made a strong commitment to bring faculty salaries at all state supported colleges and universities up to the 60th percentile in terms of salary at comparable institutions   (referred to as the peer group).   This peer group was to be revised every two years to reflect changes in the nature and size of the institutions.   The initial peer group for CNU was developed in 1985, with two revisions made in 1987 and 1989 reflecting various aspects of growth.   This commitment by the Commonwealth of Virginia led to favorable salary growth at Christopher Newport University and aided recruitment and retention efforts.

Over the past five years, however, due to the state budgetary problems, the legislature has not maintained this commitment and faculty salaries around the state have risen very slowly. Faculty salaries at CNU have fallen below the 40th percentile relative to the old peer group. Exacerbating this problem is the fact that within the last five years CNU has begun offering master's degrees and has changed from a college to a university, yet the composition of the peer group has remained the same.   This decline in comparative faculty compensation, if not reversed, will make it increasingly difficult to attract and retain qualified graduate faculty.   This seems to be borne out by the recent faculty survey in which 45 faculty members agreed that CNU salaries are adequate to attract and retain able faculty and to maintain faculty morale but, an almost equal number, 43 disagreed.

There are other resources that help to attract and retain faculty besides salaries.   Most faculty have private offices.   In May 1994 in the College of Science and Technology there were just two two-person offices and one three-person office; all the other faculty had private offices. When CNU occupies Ferguson High School there should be enough space so that all faculty have private offices.   Faculty sometimes care about parking.   There is adequate parking and a faculty member is charged only $10 a year for all the cars used by the faculty member.   The attractiveness of the campus helps to attract and retain faculty.   The facilities for cultural events and athletic events are not particularly good and do not help attract or retain faculty.

RECOMMENDATION: The University administration should seek a change in the peer group composition of CNU to reflect its change to a master's-level university.

RECOMMENDATION: The University should urge the state legislature to return to its commitment to provide salaries at the 60th percentile relative to comparable institutions.

Since graduate faculty status requires the terminal degree, all members of the Graduate Faculty meet the SACS criterion.

The University does not offer programs for which there are interdisciplinary courses;

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thus, no faculty members are responsible to have the academic and professional preparation appropriate for such programs.

Personnel files for full-time faculty are maintained in the Office of the Provost, and files for part-time faculty are kept by deans.

In support of its master's programs, the University has 49 regular members holding graduate faculty membership. Thirty-six are associated with the four current programs, with at least five supporting each program. The other 13 are graduate faculty by virtue of meeting the graduate faculty criteria. The graduate faculty all satisfy the appropriate criteria for master's programs.

4.8.2.4 <u>Distance Learning Programs/Activities</u>

As described in section 4.5, the University has a single distance learning effort, CNU ONLINE, utilizing computer bulletin boards to conduct classes in several disciplines.

The academic departments supply the faculty--full-time and part-time--for online courses. Thus, all faculty involved in CNU ONLINE meet the criteria related to faculty. (See sections 4.8.2.2 and 4.8.2.3 for full analysis.)

The pedagogical method of computer bulletin boards guarantees frequent, structured access to faculty. Students are required to communicate at specific intervals with instructors, as well as with other students. The same computer access used to transmit course materials and assignments allows students to contact faculty with questions and other concerns. In the case of online courses in Spanish, an 800 number is available for students to demonstrate their oral ability with the language.

4.8.3 <u>Part-Time Faculty</u>

Adjunct, temporary, and part-time faculty represent three of the eight categories of faculty appointments listed in the <u>Handbook</u>. The <u>Handbook</u> provides specific written policies on all aspects of academic life for part-time faculty at CNU including affirmative action guidelines, hiring, orientation, and office hours, as well as grievance and dismissal procedures, although the majority of these written policies are intended for full-time faculty. As the analysis in this section indicates, the number of full-time faculty at CNU is adequate to conduct the necessary activities of the institution (teaching, advising, scholarship, curriculum development, policy making, institutional planning and governance).

Part-time faculty are recruited and evaluated primarily on the departmental level, although some deans also participate. These faculty are persons from the community; their credentials and experience are appropriate for the level of the classes they teach. Credentials are primarily checked at the departmental level and stored in the department or the dean's office.

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Most part-time faculty members teach on the 100-200 level where a master's degree represents minimally adequate preparation. Master's level preparation is a basic criterion for hiring part-time adjunct faculty. The biology department occasionally uses well-qualified adjuncts with bachelor's degrees for introductory laboratories. These positions are considered to be equivalent to teaching assistantships and are held by people with considerable laboratory experience. In one or two cases they have been graduate students from another local university. These instructors are always used under supervision and with the permission of the appropriate dean and the provost. However, the assignment of grades by these individuals is not always reviewed. All part-time faculty are given some type of orientation to their departments, but only some departments have written orientation materials. Many departments use classroom visitations, and all use the standard IES form to gather information for teaching evaluation. All departments expect part-time faculty to hold regular office hours, although these are usually either just before or just after class. Two-thirds of the faculty (responding either positively or negatively to question 75 of the faculty survey) generally agree that part-time/adjunct faculty are provided appropriate orientation, supervision, support, and evaluation. However, 52.3 percent of faculty expressing an opinion on question 76 disagreed with the statement "The University cares about the morale of part-time faculty."

The total number of full-time equivalent (FTE) faculty used as compared to adjunct/part-time FTE faculty used for the past 5 years is shown in Table A below. Most of the adjunct/part-time category consists of adjunct faculty. For example, in the fall 1994 semester CNU had only eight part-time faculty (other summary data for the fall 1994 semester were not available for the chart below). The percent adjunct/part-time FTE faculty used since October 1990 ranged from 18 percent to 28.4 percent.

Table 4.8.3.A
Adjunct/Part-Time (ADJ/PT) and Full Time (FT) FTE Faculty 1990-94.

	Fall 1990	Fall 1991	Fiscal 91-92	Fiscal 92-93	Fall 1993	Fiscal 93-94
ADJ/PT FTE FACULTY	30.32	39.48	53.47	42.85	36.73	50.84
TOTAL FTE FACULTY	168.42	175.04	188.26	197.07	196.38	209.52
PERCENT ADJ/PT	18.0	22.6	28.4	21.9	18.7	24.3

Based upon Program Review Committee reports, only one department complained that it had more adjuncts than it wanted, but it was in the process of hiring additional full-time faculty to alleviate the problem. The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) has recognized that many colleges and universities are over-using part-time and adjunct faculty. This is often a financial expedient which works against the establishment of sound academic programs. The AAUP recommended that no more than 15 percent of faculty should be adjunct or part-time. CNU's faculty has averaged 22 percent or over (28.4 percent in fiscal 1992) in four of the last five years. In fiscal 1992/1993 many new full-time faculty were hired, reducing the

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adjunct/part-time percentage to 18.7 percent.   However, since then the percentage in this category has grown. In Fall 1994 the colleges in the University used the following number of adjuncts: Arts and Humanities, 50; Business and Economics, 10; Social Science and Professional Studies, 47; and Science and Technology, 42, for a total of 149 adjuncts. The number of full-time faculty is adequate for our present needs, yet the percentage of part-time/adjunct faculty is now approaching a critical stage. The number of part-time and adjunct faculty is certainly limited, but it has been and continues to be too large. We recommend, therefore, that steps be taken to reduce the percentage of adjunct/part-time to below 20 percent.

Although there are some statements in the <u>Handbook</u> which establish policies for part-time and adjunct faculty and various departments also have rules for them, all these policies relating to adjunct/part-time faculty should be gathered into one place in the <u>Handbook</u>, and copies of these policies should be distributed to all adjunct/part-time faculty. Currently many adjuncts do not receive copies of the <u>Handbook</u>. Part-time and adjunct faculty meet the same education requirements as full-time faculty with the exception of biology lab instructors. The provost, dean, and department chair carefully screen part-time and adjunct faculty to ensure that this is the case.

RECOMMENDATION: The University should take steps to reduce the percentage of adjunct/part-time faculty members below 20 percent.

RECOMMENDATION: All policies relating to adjunct/part-time faculty should be gathered into one place in the <u>Handbook</u>, and copies of these policies should be distributed to all adjunct/part-time faculty.

RECOMMENDATION: The University should ensure that adequate supervision is provided in the giving of grades for those faculty teaching biology laboratories whose highest earned degree is the bachelor's degree.

4.8.4   <u>Graduate Teaching Assistants</u>

CNU does not have graduate teaching assistants and therefore does not depend on them in the classroom. However, the role of CNU is changing with the recent introduction of graduate programs. To assure that appointment of graduate teaching assistants in the future complies with this SACS criterion, a committee of five graduate faculty, one from each of the current graduate programs and the Director of Graduate Studies, is formulating policies pertaining to graduate teaching assistants at CNU.   These policies will include the following:

1.   A published set of guidelines for institution-wide graduate teaching assistantship administration, including appointment criteria, remuneration, rights and responsibilities, and reappointment.

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2.   A policy insuring that all graduate teaching assistants who are responsible for final grades in a course have at least 18 graduate semester hours in their teaching discipline and are under the direct supervision of a faculty member.

3.   A policy to test the proficiency in written and oral communication of graduate teaching assistants for whom English is their second language.

In addition to these policies, there is a plan to form a graduate faculty committee to provide administrative oversight of graduate teaching assistants at a level above that of the individual academic units to assure conformity with institutional policies and procedures. This committee will report to the Graduate Faculty Council where policies regarding graduate teaching assistants will be implemented.

RECOMMENDATION: The University should complete and implement graduate teaching assistant policies and guidelines before hiring graduate teaching assistants.

4.8.5   Faculty Compensation

Faculty disagree regarding the adequacy of salaries and benefits. Forty-five faculty members strongly agreed or agreed with the statement and 43 disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. Nine percent did not provide usable responses (FcSv, Question 112). The phenomenal growth in the number of junior rank faculty since 1992 has brought 88   new faculty to Christopher Newport University (42 in 1992, 22 in 1993 and 24 in 1994). Their opinions about faculty salaries, retention of able faculty, and maintenance of faculty morale will be critical to the well-being of the University.

The issue of salaries and its impact upon morale are ongoing concerns for faculty in the Virginia university system. In the summer of the 1990-91 academic year, the faculty received a raise, but in December 1990, faculty salaries were cut by two percent. No incremental dollars were apportioned for faculty raises in the 1991-92 academic year; however, full professors did receive a $1,250 raise on December 1, 1991. Faculty at CNU are aware that their institution and other state-supported institutions receive money from the General Assembly of Virginia based on recommendations from State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) according to a benchmark system in use since the 1960's. The benchmark system, upgraded to use national comparisons since 1978 and improved in the 1980's to encompass greater sensitivity to academic disciplines and levels of instruction, establishes salary parameters at 60 percent of the appointed benchmark group for each state institution. However, as noted, in CNU's case the benchmark group did not change when it became a comprehensive, master's degree-granting institution.

In addition to the issue of adequate faculty salaries, benefits available to the faculty and utilized to attract and retain able faculty must also be examined. Employment benefits for full-time instructional and administrative/professional faculty at CNU are comprehensive. CNU

participates in the Commonwealth of Virginia's Key Advantage Plan, administered by Trigon/Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Virginia.   Since the previous SACS report, the State of Virginia has remained with the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Virginia plans.   In 1992 the Key Advantage Plan replaced Key Care.   Also in 1992 health maintenance organizations (HMO's), such as Sentara and Cigna, became available in the Hampton Roads area of the state, increasing the options.

Faculty also have the opportunity to participate in a flexible benefits program.   This program gives employees certain tax advantages by having deductions for the cost of their health benefits premiums and certain qualified medical and dependent care expenses deducted before taxes are calculated.

Further, the Commonwealth of Virginia provides, at no cost to the faculty, group life insurance equal to the annual salary rounded to the next highest thousand and then doubled.   The accidental death benefit is double that amount.

Administrative leaves and reduced loads for non-academic reasons, as detailed in the University Handbook (VII, 35-38), appear to be adequate.   Specific policies delineate faculty leaves for illness and disability (with pay and benefits and without pay and benefits), parental leaves (with full pay and benefits and without pay), and parental reduced loads.

The retirement plan provided by the Commonwealth of Virginia offers to faculty members a choice of retirement systems.   If a faculty member selects the Virginia Retirement System (VRS), a defined benefit plan, CNU pays the entire contribution based on a percentage rate of the individual's semi-monthly gross pay.   A disability package is provided through VRS. If a faculty member selects the Optional Retirement Plan (ORP), a defined contribution plan, CNU pays an amount equal to 10.4 percent of the faculty member's salary into this plan.   New faculty recognize the advantage of portability of the ORP.   The Personnel Office reports that 50 percent of the faculty select each plan.

CNU, determined by the Internal Revenue Service to be a "qualified employer," provides for tax-sheltered annuity programs, such as VALIC, T. Rowe Price, TIAA/CREF, and Metropolitan Life Insurance.   Once the application and salary reduction agreement have been completed, semi-monthly deposits are made directly by CNU to faculty members' designated tax sheltered programs.

CNU has a process, directed by the provost of the University, for reviewing all salaries. This process is coordinated with the actions of the General Assembly each year, particularly its authorization of a certain number of full-time faculty positions for the coming academic year and funding for these positions at a specified average faculty salary.   Determination of individual salary increments relates directly to this appropriation each year.   Of course, fluctuating student enrollments reported in the yearly census to SCHEV cause the appropriation to be more or less

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than the institution had tentatively used for planning purposes.

Once each academic year is underway, recruiting has ceased, promotions have been made, and retirements have taken place, the University, through the Provost's Office, determines its empirical average faculty salary as of September 1 and can, therefore, specify the number of dollars to be allocated to returning faculty on December 1 in order to meet the appropriated average in the December 2 census.

For each faculty member there are three components associated with an increase: a "merit" component, a component for "correcting manifest inequities," and an "across-the-board" component. The Handbook describes the process in section VII-B-8-e (VII, 59, 60):

> The amount of contractual salary to be offered each instructional faculty appointee each academic year is determined annually by the provost on the recommendation of the appropriate college dean. Such amount is to be consistent with relevant considerations of rank, seniority, educational achievements, market forces and quality of service. (Regarding quality of service, the dean is guided in his recommendations by the results of applicable recent evaluations.) All final determinations of contractual salary are subject to negotiation between the individual employee and the provost (representing the University).

The "merit" component, in particular, addresses the "quality of service." The deans have individual latitude in how the merit pay is distributed within their colleges; however, to maintain consistency with the Handbook (VII.41), at least half of each dean's total award must be in the area of "teaching" with the remaining available award providing for professional development and service with differing levels of funding.

The above discussion leads to an affirmation of the recommendations regarding salaries detailed at the end of 4.8.2.3.

4.8.6   Academic Freedom and Professional Security

Academic freedom at CNU has seldom been directly questioned. Policies defining and protecting academic freedom and professional security are clearly stated in the Handbook (IV, 4a), which is distributed to all faculty members. The local AAUP chapter has had few complaints with regard to abuses of academic freedom. The faculty's perception of academic freedom (FcSv, Questions 82 and 137) showed that about 80 percent of those responding agree with this assessment. Since the other 20 percent added no comments, the committee remains unaware of any cause for concern. Furthermore, academic freedom is contractually guaranteed because faculty contracts specify that the contract and the "bylaws and policies of the Board of Visitors and the regulations of the University" (i.e. the Handbook) constitute the employment agreement.

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CNU's <u>Handbook</u> (Section VII) also contains clear, detailed policies with regard to employment issues, including tenure and promotion requirements and non-renewal and termination procedures that include deadlines as well as appropriate protections for academic freedom and due process. The same section of the <u>Handbook</u> stipulates that faculty must act in a manner appropriate to the profession and purpose of the University. Faculty contracts, issued yearly, clearly describe terms and conditions of employment including rank, salary, tenure status, and the location of the appointment.

A recent development relates to the academic freedom of the faculty. In April 1995 a feature of "The Plan for Restructuring Christopher Newport University: December 20, 1994" (The Plan) was used to mandate how general biology and introductory chemistry laboratories were to be taught. The Department of Biology, Chemistry, and Environmental Science went on record opposing this external regulation. The Faculty Senate, in a May 3, 1995 meeting, passed a resolution which objected to the mandated laboratory changes.

Nonetheless, the laboratory component was reduced from two semesters to one in the general education requirements adopted for 1995-96. The restructuring document also mandates that in that one semester half of the labs must be done on the computer. Even though labs in some sciences at some schools are done on computers, course and instructional design should remain the rightful and sole prerogative of the instructional faculty.

(See section 4.2.3 for the resolution and a similar recommendation that affirm this prerogative.)

4.8.7   <u>Professional Growth</u>

Christopher Newport University provides its faculty with a variety of opportunities for professional growth and development, and various efforts assist the individual in his or her development. These include receiving advice from the department chairman and senior members of the department, as well as support from both the dean and the Provost. However, these opportunities are not currently adequate for a University, and current plans in the restructuring document threaten to reduce these opportunities.

The University, within its limited budget, provides financial assistance to faculty attending professional meetings (for example, if they are presenting a paper), supports research and development of new curricula, and provides released time and a limited number of sabbatical leaves to both instructional and administrative faculty for the purposes of professional growth and enhancement of teaching abilities. Full-time faculty members are also eligible for educational leave. Guidelines for leaves are set forth in the <u>Handbook</u> (VII, 16-23).

According to the <u>Handbook</u>, the University also supports faculty development through a variety of fund sources. Private contributions support university-wide faculty development

grants. These grants aim to support the areas of professional development, instructional development, and preparation of dissertations. The University may also provide for the retraining of faculty when certain conditions exist. Procedures for securing grants are set forth in the Handbook (VII, 24.)

The Office of Sponsored Programs also encourages faculty growth by providing services above and beyond the University's faculty development grant program. It provides services to acquaint faculty with and obtain externally sponsored research and public service activities, such as postings in the Chronicle, memos to deans for internal distribution, memos to individual departments, and memos to individual faculty members. The Office also publishes an informative brochure called "What to Do: A Simple Guide for Faculty Thinking About Doing a Grant." According to information provided by the Office of Sponsored Programs, in a typical academic year between 40 and 50 proposals are prepared, with about 10 receiving funding. According to the faculty survey (Questions 134-38), however, a large proportion of the faculty do not know a great deal about CNU's policies regarding externally funded grants and contracts. The restructuring plan addresses the need for more staff in the Office of Sponsored Programs. Currently there is only one part-time person who works to coordinate grant activity.

RECOMMENDATION: The staff of the Office of Sponsored Programs should be increased.

Expenditures by Christopher Newport University on faculty development, from figures supplied by the Office of the Comptroller, are as follows:

Table 4.8.7.B

	Travel Program 101 Instruction	Sponsored Research	Office of Sponsored Programs	Faculty Development Grants	Sabbaticals
1985/86	$45,092.45	$131,875	$0.00	$32,183.40	$0.00
1986/87	52,524.30	159,017	0.00	54,524.00	0.00
1987/88	75,376.14	329,951	0.00	54,240.32	0.00
1988/89	78,232.56	267,370	766.99	20,065.72	100,842.00
1989/90	64,342.16	320,763	31,665.48	57,770.15	111,083.00
1990/91	34,578.33	347,804	25,039.70	16,967.32	0.00
1991/92	75,417.22	454,257	21,018.33	28,880.40	33,485.00
1992/93	76,042.33	529,979	24,018.33	21,245.48	65,401.00
1993/94	78,915.15	845,487	28,366.90	116,603.43	30,447.00

According to the provost, the entries in the column Faculty Development Grants are not just for faculty development grants, but for all expenditures related to faculty development. This

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includes personal services payments (salaries and fringe benefits) for individuals who are on educational leave of one kind or another, as well as faculty development grants in the traditional sense. Also, the figure includes local funds and appropriated state dollars combined. Given that salaries and fringe benefits are large in relation to faculty development grant amounts, the fluctuations in this column are largely attributable to fluctuations in the number of individuals with educational leave of one kind or another in the years in question. Apropos of 1993-94 in particular, records indicate that there were four individuals (2.5 FTE) on educational leave that year and that total expenditures associated with salaries and fringe benefits for these 2.5 FTE faculty amounted to $126,384. These were all E&G (appropriated) dollars. The remaining $20,666 came from local funds and supported faculty development grants that were paid for in the 1993-94 fiscal year.

The budget for contractual services, which includes funding for travel, is allocated by the provost to each dean based on the number of full-time faculty members in his or her college. For example, in fiscal year 1995, the amount of money allocated for each faculty member was $1,771. The deans must then decide how this money is to be allocated. Since the money budgeted for contractual services covers not only travel, but also such things as postage, telephones, freight, computer software, printing, skilled services, organizational memberships, production services, repair and maintenance services, and so on, it is obvious that the actual dollar figures allocated for travel in each college will be significantly less than $1,771.

Funds allocated in the University's budget for the Office of Sponsored Programs include the director's salary and all other expenses incurred in the operation of this office, such as telephone, postage, office supplies, reference material, software, equipment, and so on.

Each college within the University encourages the professional growth of its faculty. In addition to using the peer evaluation and merit pay processes, the deans also use mentoring programs, deans' faculty development grant programs, assistance in finding research grants, and notifications of conferences and workshops of interest. The dean of the College of Science and Technology has overseen the creation of a bureau to foster entrepreneurial activities and the professional growth of his faculty. Science and Technology Applied Research (STAR) is a college-wide bureau designed to facilitate entrepreneurial activities by its faculty to benefit the community, the University, and its students. It will both serve as a vehicle for faculty members in the College of Science and Technology and facilitate the establishment of professional laboratories in which students directly experience the practices of the business world.

While the University does provide some support for the professional development of its faculty, many faculty believe it is inadequate. Out of 97 respondents, 63 either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement "The University has an effective plan for allocating resources in order to accomplish the following institutional goals: support faculty scholarship and research" (FcSv, Question 199). Only twenty-six respondents agreed with the statement, and one strongly agreed. One faculty member stated:

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I am lately very unhappy with the atmosphere at CNU. Fierce competition among faculty, departments and colleges for scarce resources has become overwhelming. Inadequate support for teaching, service and professional development, especially when expectations in all these areas have increased, is demoralizing and sometimes paralyzing. Do more with less has gone beyond reasonable limits.

Since CNU is now a master's-granting institution, it expects appropriate professional development from its faculty. However, there has not been a corresponding increase in support for research. In particular, the standard course load is still four courses each semester with only one semester course of release time for graduate faculty.

RECOMMENDATION: The University must increase its level of support for professional development since it has increased its demands for research and scholarship.   Because new faculty members are especially under pressure to publish to earn tenure, the University must provide adequate support, such as released time and financial assistance in attending conferences, to help faculty achieve their potential.

The CNU "Plan For Restructuring" revised December 20, 1994, Section 1, seeks to effect a change in the long-term deployment of faculty. Part of the effort is made more explicit in a memo from the provost to the four deans on December 29, 1994, which says that, "By the summer of 1996, 75 percent of each of your college's summer offerings are to be taught by regular (salaried) faculty teaching as part of their normal salaried commitment to the University." Although the restructuring document says that such summer teaching will be "voluntary" for any given individual, it does not seem possible that it will be "voluntary" for every regular faculty member in a department if the quota is to be reached. Some faculty, at least, will be forced to teach during the summer. Summer is the time when faculty have done research and participated in grants. Many grants, such as those from the NSF and NASA, are often available only during the summer. Faculty may thus be hindered in their research and grant efforts. It is true that when a faculty member teaches a course in the summer for the 75 percent quota, then the faculty member has one less class to teach during the fall or spring semester. But during the year there is much committee work and other activities that make research more difficult than during the summer. Furthermore, the criteria for merit pay and promotion and tenure have gradually been stressing research more and more.

RECOMMENDATION: There should not be a quota requiring that a fixed percentage of summer school courses be taught by regular faculty as part of their regular load.

While the University assists all faculty members in their efforts to reach their full potential, the Handbook also states that faculty members themselves are responsible for determining their course objectives, deciding on course content, evaluating both student

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performance and their own performance, and choosing the appropriate level of instruction. Faculty members are also responsible for setting the administrative policies of each course and for conducting research that is complementary to their teaching.

Faculty members are expected to stay current in their disciplines. They are expected to become members of professional organizations, to participate in professional conferences, and to participate in research and publish the results of that research (Handbook, IV, 23). It is also clearly stated that "While the major responsibility of each faculty member is teaching and while it is expected that those faculty members who serve at the rank of Instructor and Assistant Professor will regard teaching as their overriding primary responsibility, promotion to the ranks of Associate Professor, Professor, and Distinguished Professor, suggests not only sustained excellence in teaching, but also increased involvement in the faculty member's academic discipline, his department and college, the University, and the community. It is the responsibility of each faculty member to demonstrate continued evidence of carrying out the expectations of his rank   (Handbook, VII, 15).

In the response to questions submitted by the Faculty Self-Study Committee, the provost stated:

> If, when asked, most of our faculty report that they understand that it is their responsibility to "take the initiative" in this regard, then apparently the "tone and policies" are clear; otherwise, they may not be. I believe, on the basis of my own experience as a faculty member and as an academic administrator, that it is in the nature of professionals to understand that the effective practice of their profession requires that they take such initiatives. That professional development is an expectation of the University for its faculty is certainly made plain in new faculty orientation and in the Handbook . . . . Perhaps the matter of where the initiative is expected to reside should be made clearer here, and I would be supportive of such a proposal. If such is not clear to a member of the faculty prior to his or her undergoing the first formal performance evaluation (usually a retention candidacy), I believe it is following such a candidacy. The comments of peer groups, deans, FRC, and provost on forms EVAL-7, 8 do tend to reinforce this.

According to the faculty survey (Question 114), most faculty members agree with the statement "CNU policies clearly encourage faculty members to take the initiative for their own growth as teachers, scholars, and practitioners." Sixty-three either agreed or strongly agreed, 26 disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 8 either did not know or did not respond. One faculty member stated on the survey, in regard to Question 114:

> The statement is ambiguous because the University possesses stated policies that require excellence in teaching, publication, etc., but it does not always have the

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institutional support for them. Faculty are supposed to increase publications, but requirements for service and teaching get in the way of doing so. This year especially I and many other faculty are spending as much or more time on administrative work as on teaching; that leaves little room for professional development. The situation is further aggravated by the shortfall in funds this year. We now are expected to attend conferences for professional development, but the funds to support us in that work when we find the time have been frozen. The form of the questions thus makes no distinction between the University's stated objectives and its ability to carry them out.

Even if they do not feel the University's policies are clear on the issue of faculty initiative for professional growth, it is obvious from the review of faculty dossiers, departmental annual reports, and program review reports that the faculty of Christopher Newport University take the responsibility for their own professional development very seriously. Faculty members are active in professional organizations; attend conferences and workshops; present papers to local, state, national, and international organizations; and publish books, reviews, and articles in both refereed and non-refereed journals. According to a random sample of information from 54 faculty members from all four colleges in the University, 29 had published papers, journal articles, or book chapters, and 30 had given presentations since the last self-study. In the Spring of 1994 the faculty of the University endorsed a statement on what scholarship means at CNU. This statement did not appear in the Handbook until 1995-96. This statement mandates that expectations for all faculty members in terms of professional development be clarified by individual departments, a process begun in the Fall of 1995. Expectations for faculty in professional development need to be clearly stated in the Handbook.

RECOMMENDATION: The Handbook should clarify the expectations for all faculty in the area of professional development.

4.8.8   The Role of the Faculty and Its Committees

The Handbook of Christopher Newport University clearly establishes the faculty's role in governing the University (IV, 1-6). Here the term "faculty" refers to both instructional faculty, defined as those holding teaching appointments as professor, associate professor, assistant professor, or instructor in an academic department, and to administrative and professional faculty, defined as those holding administrative and professional appointments with faculty rank. A subset of the instructional faculty is the graduate faculty. The Handbook devotes a special section to defining the membership and workload responsibilities of the graduate faculty, as well as the Graduate Faculty Council (IV, 3-6).

The Handbook explicitly charges the instructional faculty (IV, 1-2) with formulating, developing, reviewing, and altering the regulations for curriculum and transfer credit; the grading system, examinations, and appeals. The Handbook also presents policies concerning faculty

development; standards for retention, promotion, and tenure; faculty personnel matters such as fringe benefits, outside employment, leaves of absence, and other working conditions; and long and short range institutional academic and fiscal planning.

The instructional faculty meets twice each academic year, once in November and once in April. The president of the Faculty Senate schedules these meetings and publishes an agenda. The <u>Handbook</u> also outlines provisions for the calling of special meetings (IV, 3). When the faculty considers changes in policy and before it votes on proposals for change, standing committees of the faculty and/or the Faculty Senate usually do much of the detailed work.

Committee members are either elected by their college or appointed by the provost as prescribed for each committee by the <u>Handbook</u>, which also states their duties (IV, 6-19). The instructional faculty has three officers: a chairman, a vice chairman, and a secretary. The president of the Faculty Senate serves as the chairman, the vice president of the Faculty Senate serves as the vice chairman, and the secretary of the Faculty Senate serves as secretary (<u>Handbook</u>, IV, 2). The <u>Handbook</u> does not, however, describe the rules governing the Faculty Senate, an oversight that needs to be remedied.

RECOMMENDATION: The University should include in the <u>Handbook</u> the constitution and bylaws of the Faculty Senate.

The Faculty Senate has a constitution that prescribes its membership, officers, and duties. The Senate consists of sixteen at-large members, four from each college of the University. Members serve for two years and may serve no more than two consecutive terms. Office terms are staggered so that senators are elected each spring from each college. The by-laws of the constitution provide for the election of its officers. Meetings of the Faculty Senate must be held at least four times during each semester, and they are open to all members of the University community, who may attend as non-voting guests.

The relationship between the Faculty Senate and instructional faculty is fully defined. The Faculty Senate derives its authority from the instructional faculty and represents it in recommending policies to the president and other appropriate individuals and bodies. Upon petition of at least 25 percent of the members of the instructional faculty to the president of the Senate, any action of the Faculty Senate shall be submitted within thirty days for deliberation by the instructional faculty. Any action of the Faculty Senate may be overturned by a 2/3 vote of the members of the instructional faculty present and voting at a meeting of the instructional faculty.

The secretary of the instructional faculty informs the provost of the results of its deliberations in the form of written recommendations. Within 30 days, the provost must inform the faculty of his disposition of the recommendations. Failing such notification, the instructional faculty may forward the recommendations to the University's president (<u>Handbook</u>,

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IV, 2). The final authority on implementing the recommendations resides with the president (Handbook, V, 3).

Many faculty are of the opinion that they lack sufficient impact through committee work on some University policies. Questions 126 through 131 of the Faculty Self-Study Survey indicate that fewer than half the faculty feel that through their committees they have adequate impact on University distribution requirements, the hiring of faculty, the hiring of administration, admissions policies, promotion and tenure decisions, and affirmative action. However, with respect to distribution requirements and promotions and tenure decisions, respectively 48 and 49 percent feel they have adequate impact and about 25 percent of the faculty said "don't know" in each question.

Noteworthy is the faculty members' dissatisfaction with their impact on the hiring of administration (Question 128) where 14 percent indicated strongly agree or agree, 61 percent indicated strongly disagree or disagree, and 25 percent said "don't know" when asked if through their committees faculty have adequate impact on hiring of administration. The Handbook does not furnish a detailed account of the faculty's role in hiring administrators. However, faculty do serve on hiring committees. For example, there was a majority of faculty on the recent search committee for the dean of the College of Science and Technology.

SUGGESTION: The University should better inform the faculty of their role in hiring administrators and describe that role in the Handbook.

4.8.9   Faculty Loads

The University clearly offers an adequate faculty/student ratio that results in comfortable class sizes. The CNU faculty consists of 174 full-time, 8 part-time, and 149 adjunct faculty members in Fall 1994. When considering the ratio of students (headcount) to full-time faculty, the University has a student/faculty ratio of approximately 27:1. When considering FTE students, the University has a ratio of 16.6:1. Students report that they are satisfied with the size of classes at the University; 90 percent answered affirmatively that "In general, class size at CNU is conducive to effective instruction" (UgSv, Question 24).

The Handbook prescribes a 15-hour teaching load or the equivalent that meets the state-mandated 15 credit hours of full-time faculty equivalence (FTE). Because of the expectation that full-time instructional faculty participate in committee work, full-time professional development, student advising, and other forms of service to their department, the University, and the community, the full-time teaching load usually consists of 12 lecture hours or its equivalent (Handbook, VII, 28). The Faculty Survey indicates a pervasive feeling among CNU faculty members that this teaching load is too heavy to enable them to accomplish all their duties well.

Some exceptions to this 12-hour load occur. Chairpersons receive a one- or two-course

reduction to perform administrative duties. Additionally, some departments have been able to give a one-course reduction to some faculty.   Some reductions come from the department chairs, who reassign their own unused graduate course reductions to faculty engaged in research, as in the Departments of Biology, Chemistry, and Environmental Science, and Mathematics.   Others are given

to first year faculty as part of their entrance package, either by department chairs or upper-level administrators.

RECOMMENDATION: The <u>Handbook</u> should clarify the process through which faculty members receive course reductions.

A few departments have faculty who teach more than 12 credit hours, most frequently in departments that teach 4-credit classes with labs, as in the Department of Psychology and the Department of Biology, Chemistry, and Environmental Science.   Only the Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literature reported having an instructor teaching an overload because an extra course section was needed.   Most departments, however, clearly avoid teaching overloads beyond 12 credit hours.

Most department chairs report that the number of preparations they assign their faculty varies between two and three each term, although two departments occasionally go as low as one, and three departments admit that they sometimes go as high as four.   Most department chairs do not make distinctions between probationary and tenured faculty in terms of number of preparations.   In the Self-Study Faculty Survey, 57 percent of the faculty report that their chairs do take into account the number of preparations when scheduling teaching assignments (Question 77), but only 41 percent say that their chairs take the number of students in the course into account (Question 78); 55 percent say that their chairs take the nature of the course into account (Question 79), and only 45 percent say their chairs take professional development into account (Question 80).   The pervasive dissatisfaction with the number and kind of preparations faculty members teach suggests that department chairs should be more concerned about the number and kind of preparations they assign to faculty, especially junior faculty who have to meet greater demands for professional development.

RECOMMENDATION: Department chairs should minimize the number of preparations and take into consideration the kind of preparations they assign to faculty.

Faculty members generally respond that the heaviness of their teaching duties leaves them insufficient time to engage in scholarly activities.   To the question "If you are a member of the graduate faculty, to what extent does your schedule allow you time to engage in productive scholarly activity?" (Question 61), only 6 percent answered "to a great extent"; 19 percent said "to an adequate extent"; 56 percent said "to a poor extent"; and 19 percent responded "not at all."
 No question on the survey directly addressed the same question to the rest of the instructional faculty.   The general faculty response, however, to the statement "The administration recognizes the faculty's need for time for professional development" indicates great dissatisfaction with the

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current situation. Only 31 percent agreed with the statement, whereas 64 percent disagreed. Given the increasing demands that faculty members participate actively in scholarly activities within their disciplines, faculty members need more released time in order to proceed with professional development.

RECOMMENDATION: The University should reduce faculty teaching loads by offering more released time, so that faculty members have the chance to undertake increased professional development.

4.8.10 Criteria and Procedures for Evaluation

Beginning in the 1995-96 academic year, all faculty are evaluated annually by their deans, as required by the Commonwealth of Virginia. Each person must submit a yearly review of teaching, service, and professional development (EVAL-6) to the appropriate dean, who determines a merit rating based a common formula. In addition, the peer-evaluation process continues as described below.

The peer evaluation process for full-time tenure track faculty members is clearly detailed in the appropriate documents, and the faculty is in general aware of the process. The process is not as clearly described for non-tenure-track faculty. Periodic evaluations are made of faculty through the peer group process and through the merit pay process. All untenured tenure-track faculty are evaluated every year in the peer group process; non-full professor tenured faculty are evaluated at least every five years and tenured full professors are evaluated at least every nine years. The rules for peer group evaluations in the Handbook (VII, 40) are

> Faculty members holding other than tenured appointments are evaluated every year. Tenured faculty members are evaluated each year unless a petition for a waiver of evaluation for that year is approved by a majority of the tenured members of the department (evaluee excluded), the department chairman and the college dean; such waiver may be granted for no more than eight consecutive years for tenured faculty holding the rank of professor and for no more than four consecutive years for all other tenured faculty. Additionally, tenured full professors who have served in that rank at Christopher Newport University for 20 years and all distinguished professors may elect to waive the annual formal performance evaluation by so indicating in writing on an annual basis to their respective department chairmen, their college deans, and the Provost.

Thus there is periodic evaluation of almost all faculty in the peer group process.

All faculty in some of the colleges are evaluated every year in the merit pay process. The four deans evaluate faculty members for merit pay each year there is merit pay available; merit pay has been available recently for 1993-94, 1994-95 and 1995-96. The criteria for evaluation in the merit pay process are sent by the deans to their faculty. The merit pay process is different

in the four colleges, although the provost does allocate the same percentage of the total salaries in each college for merit in each college.   For example, two of the deans evaluate everyone and two of the deans evaluate only those faculty who ask to be evaluated.   Hence a faculty member in certain colleges who has been a full professor for twenty years is not subject to any evaluation.
  As of 1994-95, according to the <u>University Catalog</u> there are, in fact, precisely two faculty members who have been full professors at CNU for 20 years and no distinguished professors. One way to remedy this situation is to have all faculty evaluated each year in the merit pay process.   According to SACS guidelines something must be done to provide evaluation for the group of faculty who have been full professors for over 20 years.

RECOMMENDATION: A periodic evaluation process must be instituted to include all those full professors in rank over 20 years who are not now subject to any evaluation process.

The <u>Handbook</u> (VII, 11) indicates that probationary appointments follow the standard practice approved by the AAUP of "six years up or out."   Specifically, it says that "New probationary appointments may be made by the University at its discretion for a total of not more than six (6) years until tenure is granted or denied."   There has been at least one case in which a person after being denied tenure was given a restricted contract and told that after the restricted contract a probationary contract would be given.

RECOMMENDATION: The University should follow, without exception, its rules about the maximum number of years in a probationary contract.

In Spring 1995 there were 18 non-tenure-track full-time faculty in the University.   They are evaluated in their departments each year by a peer group process with a dossier; their merit pay evaluation process is the same as that of tenure-track faculty.   However, these departmental evaluations are not described in the <u>Handbook</u>.   Adjuncts are supervised by the deans and department chairs, and in at least one college every adjunct has a mentor in the department. Departments monitor the performance of adjuncts, but there is no university-wide performance evaluation process, and rules for evaluating part time faculty and adjuncts do not appear in the <u>Handbook</u>.

RECOMMENDATION: A uniform process should be in the <u>Handbook</u> for evaluating faculty who are on a restricted contract since collectively they teach a large number of classes.

SUGGESTION: A uniform process should be in the <u>Handbook</u> for evaluating adjuncts since collectively they teach a large number of classes.

CNU evaluates instruction through the use of the Instructor Evaluation Survey (IES). Faculty members administer the IES to classes according to rules in the <u>Handbook</u> and

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"according to such procedures, as might be specified by the Provost" (VII, 30). In the summer and fall terms a tenured faculty member may request waiver of IES administration for all their classes in that semester, and according to the Handbook the request is granted upon approval by the appropriate dean. One of the provost's rules has been that if fewer than four people are registered for the course the IES will not be administered. The results of the IES contain averages for the questions for the university, college, and the department. The IES reports are used in the peer group review process and in the merit pay process. They are also used to evaluate adjuncts who teach at CNU. Deans and chairs use the IES report to ensure that their department adjuncts are teaching acceptably. The faculty opinion of the IES shown in Question 120 of the faculty survey is split: 43 percent think that the IES helps improve teaching effectiveness and 48 percent think it does not. The current IES has not been changed in the last five years. Also the current IES was instituted before the University had graduate programs and, therefore, the questions were geared toward undergraduate instruction.

SUGGESTION: The current IES should be re-examined with substantial faculty participation in order to improve its effectiveness and appropriateness.

The criteria used in the peer group process are indicated in the Handbook, Section VII-B-8, and the criteria are made known to the faculty. This document is updated each year and is sent to each returning member of the teaching and research (T/R) faculty prior to the return deadline for the coming academic year's employment contract. This date of transmittal is typically in very early May, and the return deadline for employment contracts is on or about June 1. The document is also sent to each new appointee to the teaching and research faculty, along with other papers necessary to the appointment process. The annual evaluation calendar (Form EVAL-1) for the coming academic year is also sent to all faculty as an attachment to the "Getting Started" memorandum. This document describes the events of the week before classes begin in the coming fall semester and is typically sent to the faculty in early July. Also, the deans and chairs help faculty become aware of the Handbook rules for peer groups and the merit pay process. In the faculty survey (Question 208), 69 of the faculty agree that the procedures in the Handbook are clearly and adequately defined and 17 disagree. A new definition of scholarship has been passed by the faculty and the Faculty Senate, and it appears in the 1995-96 Handbook.

The faculty opinion of the peer evaluation process is split: 44 of the faculty think the peer evaluation process adequately rates performance and 36 think it does not (FcSv, Question 122). There were no comments in the faculty survey suggesting that the faculty want to use a different evaluation process.

The peer group process at CNU is unusual; we are not aware of any other school that uses the same process. The process is more time-consuming than some other processes, particularly when other processes often consist mostly of the chair of the department making recommendations and passing them along to the dean and other appropriate senior administrators. The CNU peer group process does provide significant participation by a faculty

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member's peers and not just from administrators. The faculty has a significant voice in the process not only at the peer group level but also when the Faculty Review Committee evaluates the faculty member's dossier. Since no evaluation process can please everyone, the fact that 55 percent of those with opinions support the process is positive (FcSv, Question 122).

The criteria used for evaluation in the peer group process and in the merit pay process are consistent with the purpose and goals of the institution in that the criteria emphasize teaching, professional development, and service. The Mission Statement and goals of the University make clear that the faculty's role is first to teach well. Good teaching requires scholarship (professional development), and scholarship also helps support the goals and mission. Service to the University's activities and the community also appears in the mission and goals statements.

The results of these two evaluation processes are used for improvement of the faculty and the University's educational program. Merit pay or lack thereof and promotion or lack thereof clearly influence faculty member performance. For example, teaching is weighted very heavily in the merit pay process, and this emphasis encourages faculty to teach well. The results of the merit pay process and the peer group process are made known to the faculty member orally and in writing, in order to improve performance. Faculty whose student evaluations are not acceptable are not granted tenure. Adjuncts whose IES results are not acceptable are not retained. Following are five specific categories included in letters from the deans involving evaluations which led to specific results: non-renewal of faculty members holding probationary appointments; the resignation of members of probationary appointments because of questions raised about the quality of their performances; cases where individual faculty members were given very specific advice about actions to take to address significant problems; advice for improvement in one or more areas of professional responsibility so as to make it more likely that an individual will receive tenure; advice for tenured faculty members intended to make more likely their receiving promotions and/or to improve the general quality of faculty performance in the University.

In addition to the peer group and merit pay evaluation procedures, there is the program review process detailed in the <u>Handbook</u> which is used to encourage curricular changes.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

1.   Change the wording under the section "Eligibility for Graduate Faculty Membership," subsection B-1, in the Graduate Faculty Membership and Governance document from "Highest earned degree in field"   to "Terminal degree in field."

2.   The University administration should seek a change in the peer group composition of CNU to reflect its change to a master's-level university.

3.   The University should urge the state legislature to return to its commitment to provide salaries at the 60th percentile relative to comparable institutions.

4.   The University should take steps to reduce the percentage of adjunct/part-time faculty members below 20 percent.

5.   All policies relating to adjunct/part-time faculty should be gathered into one place in the <u>Handbook</u>, and copies of these policies should be distributed to all adjunct/part-time faculty.

6.   The University should ensure that supervision is provided in the awarding of grades for those faculty   members teaching biology laboratories whose highest earned degree is the bachelor's degrees.

7.   The University should complete and implement graduate teaching assistant policies and guidelines before hiring graduate teaching assistants.

8.   Administrators should leave course design to faculty, who should have total control over how subject matter is presented.

9.   The staff of the Office of Sponsored Programs should be increased.

10.   The University must increase its level of support for professional development since it has increased its demands for research and scholarship. Because new faculty members are especially under pressure to publish to earn tenure, the University must provide adequate support, such as released time and financial assistance in attending conferences, to help faculty achieve their potential.

11.   There should not be a quota requiring that a fixed percentage of summer school courses be taught by regular faculty members as part of their regular load.

12.   The <u>Handbook</u> should clarify the expectations for all faculty members in the area of professional development.

13.   The University should include in the <u>Handbook</u> the constitution and bylaws of the Faculty

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Senate.

14.   The <u>Handbook</u> should clarify the process through which faculty members receive course reductions.

15.   Department chairs should minimize the number of preparations and take into consideration the kind of preparations they assign to department members.

16.   The University needs to reduce faculty teaching loads by offering more released time so that faculty members have the opportunity to undertake further professional development.

17.   A periodic evaluation process must be instituted to include all those full professors in rank over 20 years who are not now subject to any evaluation process.

18.   The University should follow, without exception, its rules about the maximum number of years in a probationary contract.

19.   A uniform process should be included the <u>Handbook</u> for evaluating faculty members who are on restricted contracts since collectively they teach a large number of classes.

SUGGESTIONS

1.   The University administration should expedite approvals in order to enable search committees to do their screening before the better candidates are hired by other schools.

2.   The University should better inform the faculty of their role in hiring administrators and describe that role in the <u>Handbook</u>.

3.   A uniform process should be in the <u>Handbook</u> for evaluating adjunct faculty members since collectively they teach a large number of classes.

4.   The current IES should be re-examined with substantial faculty participation in order to improve its effectiveness and appropriateness.

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SOURCES CITED

- Assistant to the Provost reports on I.E.S. Documentation and on Faculty files
- Biology Department report on teaching assistants
- Comptroller report on support for grants, travel and faculty development grants.
- Dean Reports:
  a. Evaluation of faculty and tenure, promotion and merit pay.
  b. Improvement of faculty based on faculty evaluation
  c. Merit pay
- Department Reports:
  a. On orientation & evaluation process for restricted contract, part-time and/or adjunct faculty.
  b. PRC reports
  c. Self-Study reports
  d. On graduate programs
- Faculty Files
- Graduate Director report on teaching assistants and transcripts
- Grants Director report on the support of faculty development and grants
- Institutional Response to Report of the Substantive Change committee
- Mission Statement
- Provost Reports:
  a. On scholarship
  b. Class schedules memo sent to Deans
  c. On faculty development
- Report on faculty recruitment process for Assistant to the President for Multicultural Affairs and Affirmative Action.
- University Catalog
- University Handbook

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4.9   Consortial Relationships and Contractual Agreements

Christopher Newport University has a diverse set of contracts for educational services and programs provided in conjunction with other education agencies. All contracts are consistent with the purpose, policies, and procedures of the institution.   In no case is credit awarded by the contractual partner; CNU maintains approval control for all off-campus programs.   CNU contracts are generally evaluated through the success of the contract itself, i.e., how well the contract continues to meet the needs of both parties.   However, there is not a consistent protocol for contract evaluation (InterDGD).

RECOMMENDATION: Each department or program that sponsors an educational contract should implement a formal evaluation plan which will assure a more careful decision as to whether or not to continue the academic contractual relationship.

To date, reporting policies and procedures related to substantive change have not been followed when entering into contractual agreements as CNU contracts were not considered to be of substantive nature (InterPr).

RECOMMENDATION: CNU should submit a copy of each contractual arrangement to the Commission on Colleges.

4.9.1   Consortial Relationships

Christopher Newport University does not participate in any consortium degree or certificate programs.

4.9.2   Contractual Agreements

All contracts and agreements for educational services support the mission and purpose of CNU.   Directly related to CNU's mission to promote global awareness, memoranda of understanding (MOU) exist between Christopher Newport University and twelve sister universities: Autonomous University of Guadalajara, Mexico; Beijing Polytechnic University; Enugu State University, Nigeria; Foshan University, Peoples Republic of China; Instituto Nacional de Salud Publica, Cuernavaca, Morelos, Mexico; Kansai Gaidi, Osaka, Japan; Karlova University, Czech Republic; Middlesex University, London, England; Osaka International University, Osaka, Japan; Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, Russia; Vavilov State Optical Institute, Petersburg, Russia; and Yonsei University, Seoul, Korea.

Memoranda of understanding with these sister universities provide for academic exchange, exchange of materials, exchange of management information, and exchange of students (MemUn).   The memoranda provide the same academic resources and supporting services at the host institution which are normally provided to the others of the same academic

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level in the department visited. Each institution must provide descriptions of its curricula and research programs. Scholarly publications by faculty and students, reports of university activities, and other pertinent institutional information are to be regularly exchanged in response to faculty and student interest at each institution. The directors of major academic support services (e.g., libraries and computing centers) are to exchange information and seek paths of mutual assistance. Although those provisions are built into each MOU, the small size of the exchange program (fewer than ten students) makes the monitoring of these facilities problematic. It is the opinion of CNU's provost that the benefits of foreign exchange outweigh any potential differential in services. Returning students indicate overwhelmingly positive cross-cultural experiences. In all cases, evaluation of courses and awarding of academic credit reside at CNU. The quality of these international exchange programs is monitored through interviews with exchange students upon their return to CNU. Interviews are conducted by the director of international studies and by the director of overseas internships. Additionally, periodic site visits are made by either of the international directors or the president of CNU (InterIS).

Regular contract courses are periodically offered off-campus by various departments. The most common off-campus courses are education courses offered on school sites in neighboring school districts (e.g., instructional strategies course offered at York High School). Contracts for such purposes are monitored by individual departments and must comply with the newly developed "Course Scheduling and Related Matters: A Manual of Instructions" procedures (InterDAH). These guidelines were under development during this self-study and were not fully implemented. All courses must be approved by either the undergraduate or graduate curriculum committee and are taught only by approved regular or adjunct CNU faculty. All contract courses are directly related to the primary teaching and service mission of the University. Courses within a 25-mile radius of the campus are technically considered on-campus courses, and students have access to all CNU services, including library and laboratory facilities. Contract courses are evaluated through the routine Instructional Evaluation Survey (IES) process, with specific provisions for special delivery to campus.

Additional contracts include five articulation agreements between the community colleges, Richard Bland College, and CNU. The provisions of these contracts provide for full transference of lower division credit toward a CNU degree (Office of Admission Articulation Agreements).

The systematic monitoring of standards of quality is absent at this time except by idiosyncratic means of periodic site visits which are neither routine nor formalized (InterPr). Given the divergent nature and geographic spread of our contractual relationships, periodic formal evaluation seems appropriate. This was the rationale for our previous recommendation "that each department or program that sponsors an educational contract should implement a formal evaluation plan which will inform the decision whether to continue the academic contractual relationship."

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Christopher Newport University has one teach-out agreement. The Cooperative College Program Agreement between Christopher Newport University and the School of the Environment at Duke University leads to the awarding of the BS from Christopher Newport University and the Master of Forestry or Master of Environmental Management degree from Duke (see Cooperative College Program Agreement). Students in this program attend CNU for the first three years of the program, then transfer to Duke for the final two years. Upon completion of 30 semester credits in the two-year program at Duke, CNU will award the student the BS degree. Upon completion of 30-or-more additional credits, Duke University will award the appropriate master's degree. This cooperative agreement has not been submitted to the Commission for approval.

RECOMMENDATION: CNU should submit a copy of the Cooperative College Program Agreement to the Commission on Colleges.

SUMMARY

It appears that CNU appropriately responds to a variety of community needs through implementation of off-campus courses and/or programs. The international education program provides a host of interesting opportunities for students which support our mission to be "an American university with a global perspective." This time of fiscal urgency may warrant an assessment of the financial impact of our international programs on the University at large. However, exit interviews with students returning from their overseas experiences indicate that the program provides overwhelmingly positive cross-cultural experiences. The stimulation of international opportunities for both faculty and students is of clear value to CNU and should be fostered to the extent of fiscal responsibility (InterPr).

RECOMMENDATION: BACUP should study the impact of the International Studies Program on the University budget.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

1.   Each department or program that sponsors an educational contract should implement a formal evaluation plan which will assure a more careful decision as to whether or not to continue the academic contractual relationship.

2.   CNU should submit a copy of each contractual arrangement to the Commission on Colleges.

3.   CNU should submit a copy of the Cooperative College Program Agreement to the Commission on Colleges.

4.   BACUP should study the impact of the International Studies Program on the University budget.

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SOURCES CITED

- Christopher Newport University Continuing Education brochures
- Cooperative College Program Agreement between Christopher Newport University and the School of the Environment, Duke University, Durham, NC.
- Interview with Dean of Arts and Humanities (October 10, 1994) and Copy of "Course Scheduling and Related Matters: A Manual of Instructions"
- Interview with Director of Grants Development (October 18, 1994)
- Interview with Provost (October 11, 1994)
- Interview with Provost (October 11, 1994) and Secretary of International Studies and Director of Overseas Internships (October 31, 1994).
- Interview with Secretary of International Studies and Director of Overseas Internships (October 31, 1994)
- Memoranda of Understanding
- Office of Admissions, Current Articulation Agreements (August, 1994)

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