

Report to the
Faculty, Administration, Trustees, Students

of

MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE
Middlebury, Vermont

by

An Evaluation Team representing the
Commission on Institutions of Higher Education
of the
New England Association of Schools and Colleges

Prepared after study of the institution's
self-evaluation report and a visit to Middlebury College
October 30 – November 2, 2011

The members of the team:

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This report represents the views of the evaluation committee as interpreted by the chairperson. Its content is based on the committee's evaluation of the institution with respect to the Commission's criteria for accreditation. It is a confidential document in which all comments are made in good faith. The report is prepared both as an educational service to the institution and to assist the Commission in making a decision about the institution's accreditation status.

COMMISSION ON INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION
New England Association of Schools and Colleges
Preface Page to the Team Report

Please complete during the team visit and include with the report prepared by the visiting team

Date form completed: October 30, 2011

Name of Institution Middlebury College

1. History Year chartered or authorized 1800 Year first degrees awarded 1802

2. Type of control: State City Other; specify:
 Private, not-for-profit Religious Group; specify:
 Proprietary Other; specify:

3. Degree level:
 Associate Baccalaureate Masters Professional Doctorate

4. Enrollment in Degree Programs (Use figures from fall semester of most recent year):

	Full-time	Part-time	FTE	Retention ^a	Graduation	# Degrees ^f
Fall 2011 Undergrad. Coll.	2,480	27	2,489	95%	90% ^b	689
Fall 2011 MIIS	703	77	739	95%	84% ^c	361
Fall 2011 SA	342	0	342	n/a	n/a	n/a
Summer 2011 LS	1,514	0	1,514	n/a	83% ^b	142
Summer 2011 BL	452	0	452	n/a	59% ^d	92

(a) full-time 1st to 2nd year (b) 6 year graduation rate (c) 3 year graduation rate (d) 7.5 year graduation rate
(e) number of degrees awarded most recent year

Note: MIIS=Monterey Institute of International Studies, SA=Schools Abroad, LS=Language Schools, BL=Bread Loaf School of English

5. Number of current faculty:

Fall 2011 Undergraduate College	Full time	267	Part-time	56	FTE:	286
Fall 2011 MIIS	Full time	73	Part-time	83 ¹	FTE:	101
Fall 2011 SA	Full time	0	Part-time	196 ²	FTE:	65
Summer 2011 LS	Full time	0	Part-time	95	FTE:	32
Summer 2011 BL	Full time	30	Part-time	21	FTE:	37

¹ Includes many adjunct faculty that are not active during MIIS official faculty count in December.

² Faculty include those teaching courses, independent studies, tutorials, as well as overseeing academic internships and thesis.
Note: MIIS=Monterey Institute of International Studies, SA=Schools Abroad, LS=Language Schools, BL=Bread Loaf School of English

6. Current fund data for most recently completed fiscal year: (Specify year: FY2011)
 (Double click in any cell to enter spreadsheet. Enter dollars in millions; e.g., \$1,456,200 = \$1.456)

Revenues		Expenditures	
Tuition	\$180.201	Instruction ¹	\$75.003
Gov't Appropriations	\$0.000	Research	\$9.706
Gifts/Grants/Endowment	\$77.020	General ²	\$141.044
Auxiliary Enterprises	\$6.972	Auxiliary Enterprises	\$7.585
Other	\$6.747	Other ³	\$37.602
Total	\$270.940	Total	\$270.940

¹ Instruction & Academic Support ² LIS, Student Services, Financial Aid, Institutional Support, M&O and Initiative ³ Equipment Depreciation, RRR, Debt Service, Restructuring, Reserve

7. Number of off-campus locations:
 In-state 1 Other U.S. 4 International 36 Total 41
8. Number of degrees and certificates offered electronically:
 Programs offered entirely on-line 0 Programs offered 50-99% on-line 0
9. Is instruction offered through a contractual relationship?
 No Yes; specify program(s):
10. Other characteristics:

Introduction

The evaluation team met in Middlebury, Vermont from October 30 – November 2, 2011 for the purpose of conducting a comprehensive evaluation of Middlebury College. In addition, the Chair and a team colleague visited Monterey, California (September 2011), a team member visited Madrid, Spain (October 2011), and the Chair visited the summer programs on the Vermont campus (July 2011) in order to become thoroughly familiar with the institution and its diverse programs. The team's Chair also conducted a preliminary visit to Middlebury College in March 2011.

The evaluation team carefully reviewed the institution's Self-Study Report and extensive institutional materials including the strategic plan, budget, various handbooks that outline institutional policies, admissions brochures, financial audits, statistics around issues of admission, retention, faculty hiring and salaries, course catalogues, and a broad variety of other print and electronic documents that describe the work of Middlebury College. Middlebury used technology effectively in its dissemination of information which made for easy 24-hour access to materials during our visit.

On the Vermont campus, the team conducted extensive meetings both one-on-one and with small groups that included trustees, administrators, faculty, students, staff and alumni. A meeting with six trustees, including the Chairman of the Board, took place, as did meetings with the president and his senior team, members of the Faculty Council, and others who hold strong connections to the Standards for Reaccreditation of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. In addition, the team held three well-attended open meetings – for faculty, students, and staff – and provided the opportunity for confidential email comments to the team. The team notes that similar one-on-one and open meetings were held at Middlebury's locations in Monterey, Madrid, and in Vermont in conjunction with Middlebury's summer programs. At all times, at all locations, the team's work was facilitated cheerfully by the Middlebury College community. Indeed, the team expresses its gratitude for the excellent organization and support Middlebury provided throughout this process.

These sessions, along with the extensive data provided by Middlebury College, inform the evaluative judgments contained in the 11 sections of this report, which address the Standards for Accreditation of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

This evaluation of Middlebury College is a comprehensive evaluation following its fifth-year report submitted and accepted in 2004, and its report on plans to acquire the Monterey Institute of International Studies, submitted and accepted in 2008.

1. Mission and Purposes

Middlebury College may appear a quintessential New England liberal arts college to the casual observer, but its programs and impact extend far beyond Vermont's bucolic Champlain Valley.

Since its founding in 1800, Middlebury College has exhibited a commitment to excellence in undergraduate education and an underlying innovative spirit. In 1915, the College opened the German Summer School, the first of its Middlebury College Language Schools – a move that sparked program development at the undergraduate and graduate levels and shaped the culture of the institution in ways still present. In 1920, another graduate program, the Bread Loaf School of English, opened to encourage the study of literature and writing, the teaching of writing and theater arts. In 1949, Middlebury College established its School in France, a bold first step beyond U.S. borders that set the foundation for Middlebury’s presence today in 13 nations. And most recently, in 2010, Middlebury College acquired the Monterey Institute of International Studies in Monterey, California, which brought to Middlebury a professional school that reflects the institution’s traditional strengths in language, international studies and environmental affairs. Thus Middlebury is, indeed, a quintessential liberal arts college with a rich tradition of academic excellence and commitment to undergraduate education at the highest possible level. But the Middlebury of today is also something far greater with enormous synergistic opportunities for students, faculty, and staff throughout the world at both the undergraduate and graduate level.

Middlebury College’s current mission statement was developed in conjunction with a strategic planning process that began in 2005. The College’s Board of Trustees adopted the (current) overarching mission statement in the spring of 2006. Middlebury College’s mission speaks clearly of commitments to intellectual inspiration, environmental stewardship, and highly engaged undergraduate and graduate programs within a vital academic community.

The mission statement has undergone revision twice in 12 years. The College understands the importance of continuing to focus and sharpen its message as Middlebury evolves. Community involvement was key to the development of the most recent mission statement, and included faculty endorsement although faculty did not endorse the recent acquisition of the Monterrey Institute.

In addition to the institution’s comprehensive mission statement, each school expresses a mission that both supports the core values of Middlebury College and focuses more keenly on program-specific thrusts. The Board of Trustees of Middlebury College reviewed and affirmed the program-specific mission statements for the Language Schools, C.V. Starr-Middlebury Schools Abroad, Bread Loaf School of English, and the Monterey Institute of International Studies in February 2011.

In recent years, Middlebury College has faced the challenges of a difficult and uncertain economy, and it has embraced opportunities designed to strengthen and expand Middlebury’s programs. In fact, the institution has continued a tradition of innovation that began long ago. These factors have generated thoughtful debate within the community about mission, purpose, and the future of Middlebury College.

Institutional Effectiveness: The process of mission review, revision and reaffirmation in 2006 and 2011 was comprehensive and reflective of Middlebury College’s evolution. Mission continues to be a lively topic of discussion across the institution. The Board of Trustees intends to engage in mission review every five to six years.

2. Planning and Evaluation

The complexity of Middlebury College underscores the necessity for thoughtful planning across the institution. Middlebury's multiple programs utilize the College's facilities and administrative infrastructure far more intensively than is typical for a liberal arts college. As a result, the College must plan carefully and thoughtfully so as to not overtax human, financial and physical resources. The days have passed when the College can operate purely opportunistically.

Planning at Middlebury is conducted by a variety of committees, offices and individuals represented by trustees, faculty, staff and students. In 2006, the institution concluded a strategic plan – Knowledge Without Borders - that updated and reaffirmed the mission of Middlebury College. That same year the College created a campus master plan to guide the development of outdoor spaces and long-range building projects. In preparation for its reaccreditation visit in 2011, the College undertook a comprehensive assessment of programs and presented this assessment in the form of a self-study. Perhaps most notably, the distressed worldwide economy of the past few years pressed Middlebury to engage in inclusive financial planning that resulted in broad community ownership of actions and outcomes. In fact, the visiting team heard many positive comments about this process for its transparency and effectiveness. (The College successfully reduced overall staff employment significantly without any layoffs.) Now that some of the financial challenges have passed, the time might be right for an updated comprehensive institutional strategic plan that preserves the momentum Middlebury has created.

Overall, planning occurs at the departmental, school, administrative and trustee levels and is appropriate for an institution of Middlebury's complexity.

To strengthen its capacity for centrally coordinated planning and evaluation, Middlebury upgraded two existing positions to create the new posts of Vice President for Planning and Assessment, and Associate Vice President for Planning and Assessment. Working with other community members, the Office of Planning and Assessment identifies institutional purposes and challenges. It also broadly communicates plans and outcomes to maximize program quality and synergies across all parts of Middlebury College.

The President recently created the Middlebury Council, a new advisory body, to consider institutional priorities, plans and initiatives. The heads of all the major schools and programs serve on the Council. We believe that the Council will help to establish institutional priorities and ensure intellectual integration across programs especially between those on the historic Vermont campuses and those at the Monterey Institute. Collaboration with the Office of Planning and Assessment will ensure coordinated efforts.

With regard to assessment, Middlebury is making progress and realizes that work remains to be done. Processes now are being implemented both to effectively gather and utilize data to the institution's advantage. Student and faculty assessments are conducted in a rigorous manner, as noted in reports on Standards 4 and 5. Program assessments, including external reviews, have begun, as described in the report on Standard 4. Middlebury recently hired a specialist in the assessment of learning to better understand students' progress in writing and other skills. Similarly, the Director of the School Abroad in Germany is assessing student

progress in language learning by means of tutorials, diagnostic tests and graphics. The acquisition of cultural perspective, through student-created portfolios and analytical notebooks, also is being measured. Once these techniques are refined, other Middlebury Schools Abroad will adopt them for the assessment of language and cultural learning.

The Office of Planning and Assessment will continue to systematize data collection to better serve the community. In addition, the institution will continue its collaborations with external organizations, such as The Wabash Center of Inquiry in the Liberal Arts and the New England Consortium on Assessment and Student Learning to learn from and share best practices.

Institutional Effectiveness: Middlebury's culture is shifting away from opportunistic advances to more deliberate, long-term planning that clearly supports institutional mission and cultivates institutional synergies. The new resources dedicated to planning and assessment signify a strong commitment to thoughtful evaluation. The effectiveness of these efforts will be better judged by future visiting teams; however, Middlebury's steady record of student and faculty evaluation, coupled with the administrative emphasis now placed on planning and assessment, bode well for the entire institution.

3. Organization and Governance

The organization and governance of Middlebury College are appropriate to the institution, facilitate the accomplishment of its mission, and support institutional effectiveness and integrity. At the trustee level, leadership appears clear and strong. Moreover, the trustees communicated to the visiting team a clear and sophisticated understanding of institutional risk management.

The Board of Trustees is actively engaged in the oversight of the institution, a responsibility that is heightened by Middlebury's complexity, i.e., its multiple sites and variety of programs. Trustees meet four times per year (with additional committee work conducted separately), and there are regular opportunities for conversation with campus councils and students. In addition, because trustees participate in extracurricular activities of the institution, many informal discussions take place with community members.

The Board of Trustees appreciates the value of self-evaluation. In the past 10 years, two board assessments have been done, and trustees have reacted positively to their findings. Recent attention has been paid to better orienting, mentoring and communicating with newer trustees so that they have a fuller understanding of decision-making.

The Board of Trustees has ensured clear lines of authority for the Board of Governors of the Monterey Institute of International Studies, such that the Board of Governors acts as an advisory body to the Middlebury College Board of Trustees. It is recognized that the Middlebury College Board holds sole fiduciary responsibilities for the entire institution. For purposes of continuity and communication, some trustees now sit on Monterey's Board of Governors.

The institution's self-study presented trustees with the opportunity to focus on Middlebury's various schools / programs in relation to the whole. The Board demonstrates a keen investment in Middlebury's mission and distinctive programs, and it shows firm support of Middlebury College's president and senior administration. In particular, the visiting team commends the partnership shown by trustees, the president and administration in their considerable due diligence around the acquisition of the Monterey Institute – a process that extended more than four years. Likewise, a newly formed Graduate and Special Programs Committee of the Board brings trustees closer to the financial and academic complexities of Middlebury's graduate programs and programs abroad.

Overall, the visiting team was left with the strong impression that the Board of Trustees is actively engaged in the institution's governance, shares an enthusiasm for Middlebury's long tradition of innovation, is appropriately careful in balancing risk where new initiatives are concerned, and is deeply committed to Middlebury College's educational mission.

The visiting team expresses similar sentiments about President Ronald D. Liebowitz whose leadership has extended Middlebury College's reputation for excellence and innovation in higher education. The president is taking steps to further expand and solidify institutional commitment with the establishment of the Middlebury Council to share strategic initiatives and coordinate new opportunities in a meaningful way. President Liebowitz has assembled a talented and dedicated administrative team who work well together. In open meetings with faculty, staff and students, the visiting team heard heartfelt praise for the president's handling of the 2008 financial crisis, with favorable comments about transparency, inclusion, compassion and restraint around personnel issues.

Faculty hold an important role in the governance of the Middlebury College. Many administrative appointments come from the faculty. Faculty elect colleagues to key committees to help decide matters of appointment and promotion, and to make recommendations (to the provost, and ultimately the president) for position allocations. An elected Faculty Council meets weekly to take up timely issues. The visiting team heard confusion and concern about the faculty's role in some decisions made at the Middlebury campus in Vermont. The institution's structure supports faculty governance in its respective areas, but faculty committees may not be utilizing that opportunity to their full advantage. Given that there will be ongoing conversation about position and budget decisions, Middlebury's mission, and other important topics to be determined, the visiting team recommends that the administration and faculty work together to strengthen communication, clarify responsibilities and collaborate on academic planning in a way that makes all feel invested.

The visiting team wishes to commend the way in which Middlebury College has developed diverse revenue streams to support the overall mission of the institution. The creation of a representative faculty / administrative committee that discusses Middlebury's diverse revenues and builds understanding for how program / revenue diversity supports the sum of Middlebury College may contribute to institutional unity.

As with any complex organization, there are reporting lines at Middlebury College that appear unconventional. Some of these include the reporting structure for the Director of Athletics and for the Dean of Library and Information Services. The visiting team thinks that

simply holding up a mirror to these issues, to generate administrative discussion, is sufficient. Clearly the most unusual organizational aspect of Middlebury College is its use of the presidential title in two places: at Middlebury College and at the Monterey Institute of International Studies, which is a graduate school of the institution. While it is understood by the visiting team that this structure ensures a certain continuity and stature following Middlebury's acquisition of the Monterey Institute, it should be a topic for evaluation among the institution's leadership.

Finally, the visiting team took notice of Middlebury's lack of a chief academic officer who oversees all academic programs at the institution. While several individuals function capably in academic leadership positions, the overall academic vision of the institution centers with the president, and the visiting team raises for the trustees' and administration's attention whether Middlebury would benefit from a single, dedicated, academic officer to coordinate the institution's diverse academic programs.

Institutional Effectiveness: The visiting team witnessed leadership, responsibility, clarity of mission, and dedication among the leaders of Middlebury College. That being said, some areas of the institution may benefit from additional attention. One area is the reporting structures mentioned above. Another is to build a broader understanding between faculty and administration about the governance structures that already are in place to facilitate cooperation and communication between both groups. The structure appears sound to the visiting team, but its use may be faltering at present. The visiting team encourages the leadership of Middlebury College to be mindful of the impact of major decisions on all members of the community, including staff. On the whole, the team finds Middlebury's organization and governance to be appropriate, effective, open to comment, and prepared for the next decade.

4. The Academic Program

Middlebury College's academic programs include an academically rigorous undergraduate liberal arts B.A. program which enrolls approximately 2500 students, three masters programs (M.A., M.B.A., and M.P.A.) at the recently acquired Monterey Institute which enrolls approximately 750 students, a Master of Arts programs in its summer Language Schools and its Schools Abroad which enroll approximately 100 students, a Master of Arts and Master of Letters program offered through the Bread Loaf School of English (approximately 88 students), and a Doctor of Modern Languages program which enrolls 5 students in the summer Language Schools. Because previous accreditations by NEASC have examined only the liberal arts undergraduate program, this report provides a reaccreditation analysis of that program, plus a separate discussion of the graduate programs more akin to an initial accreditation.

Undergraduate Program

Middlebury's undergraduate program is a thoughtfully conceived liberal arts degree program which includes a strong general education component plus 48 fields in which students may choose to major, minor, and double major. By special arrangement, students may also devise interdisciplinary majors of their own design. The general education component meets

CIHE's standards for general education. Staffing and curricular matters are overseen by the faculty's Educational Affairs Committee in consultation with the Provost and other members of the administration.

The Middlebury faculty is highly interdisciplinary, and there is good institutional support for faculty hiring in areas of study that bridge traditional disciplines. Although the undergraduate college is best known for its programs in foreign languages and cultures, international studies, and environmental studies, all of the fields in which study is offered have coherent curricular designs, and develop the requisite knowledge base, skills, and competencies, including English writing competency and the use of information technology, pertinent to the field of study. Students may also participate in a variety of co-curricular, service learning, research, and internship opportunities that enhance more traditional classroom-based study.

The undergraduate program operates on a calendar that consists of two regular semesters during which students normally enroll in four courses, separated by a one-month January term ("J-term") in which students enroll in a single, intensively taught course, credit-bearing internship, research or other independent study project. Most students find the J-term experience to be extremely positive, though they note that courses differ widely in terms of amount and type of work required during this short time period. Faculty views on the effectiveness of J-term are mixed. The institution may wish to review educational outcomes associated with J-term and the effectiveness of these courses in order to settle upon general guidelines faculty could use in designing courses that made the most effective use of the one-month term.

Systematic evaluation of educational outcomes at the programmatic level is still under development at Middlebury. Every major now offers some form of evaluated "senior work" (i.e., an honors thesis, seminar paper, independent study, or other summative exercise) through which students can demonstrate their proficiency in their chosen field of study. The institution also has begun systematic external reviews of its programs, with programs that have not been reviewed for a very long time being evaluated first. The schedule of reviews (about 3 per year) is such that the interval between successive reviews for any single program might be a decade or more. The institution should look for ways to manage a larger number of reviews each year so that a full cycle can be completed on a timely basis.

A significant component of the Middlebury undergraduate experience is the option to study abroad, with about 60 percent of undergraduates actually doing so. Of these, approximately 60 percent study at one of the C.V. Starr-Middlebury Schools Abroad sites run by the institution itself, and the remainder in sites sponsored by partner schools and other non-Middlebury institutions. Middlebury has been extremely successful at arranging positive study abroad opportunities not only for students majoring in foreign languages and literatures or international studies, but also for students majoring in most fields including the sciences. The Middlebury Schools Abroad provide a full immersion experience and students who study in these sites take the "language pledge" to speak nothing but the language of the country/culture in which they are studying. Students and faculty recognize these experiences as extremely effective ways of improving language and cultural literacy skills. Survey data suggest that the programs are achieving their designed educational goals. Each foreign study site has a Faculty Advisory Board (FAB) that regularly reviews the program at the site.

In summary, the Middlebury undergraduate programs are in substantial compliance with the NEASC-CIHE's standards for accreditation.

Graduate Programs

Middlebury traditionally has been known as an undergraduate liberal arts institution, but it has, in fact, been awarding graduate degrees for decades through its well-known immersive summer Language Schools, Schools Abroad, and the Bread Loaf School of English. The extent to which Middlebury is actually a graduate, as well as undergraduate institution came into full focus with its recent affiliation with the Monterey Institute, which was a graduate degree-granting institution in its own right prior to the affiliation.

Monterey Institute. The Monterey Institute of International Studies is comprised of two professional graduate schools, one in International Policy and Management (GSIPM) and the other in Translation, Interpretation, and Language Education (GSTILE). Eleven master's degree programs are offered between them. There are also a number of joint degree, non-degree, and certificate programs offered, but all of these programs require an undergraduate degree, advanced foreign language proficiency and cultural knowledge as prerequisites for admission.

The graduate programs at the Monterey Institute do not duplicate programs at the Vermont campus; rather they complement and build upon the traditional strengths of Middlebury's liberal arts program and have already begun to provide opportunities for faculty and undergraduates to engage in academically enriching activities beyond the opportunities available in Middlebury's other programs. Middlebury should look for ways in which it can develop further synergies between the Monterey and Vermont campuses for the benefit of the students and faculty at each location.

All of the Monterey programs have well conceived structure and content which are appropriate to the program of study and were accredited by WASC prior to the affiliation with Middlebury. The content and levels of study in each program are clearly at an appropriate level for a graduate degree, and there are adequate faculty, both in terms of numbers and academic qualification, to provide instruction. The MBA program, accredited by AACSB International, and which had previously seen a decline in enrollment, has been reconfigured to permit students to take advantage of the full range of specialties the faculty are qualified to offer, and the strategic plan for the campus projects a substantial increase in enrollment in the program. A good start has already been made toward achieving that goal. Even at existing enrollment levels, however, the programs are financially stable and are actually generating extra revenue for the institution as a whole. The financial contributions of the Monterey Institute appear to be little recognized on the Vermont campus, which campus leadership has an opportunity to address particularly among the undergraduate college faculty.

As part of the strategic planning process instituted on the Monterey campus by Middlebury there are now plans for outcomes assessment in each of the programs, but much work still needs to be done in this area. The institution is urged to develop a comprehensive program assessment program as quickly as possible.

During the process of working out its affiliation with the Monterey Institute, Middlebury received donations totaling eight-figures that were earmarked for activities at the Monterey Institute. Using these funds, Middlebury has made a considerable investment in the physical and technological resources on the Monterey campus. Middlebury also provided staffing resources in financial and information technology management. The general view on the Monterey campus is that the affiliation with Middlebury has been a net positive.

In sum, it appears that the graduate programs on the Monterey campus are in substantial compliance with the sections of Standard 4 for graduate programs.

The Middlebury Language Schools and the C.V. Starr Middlebury Schools Abroad. Each summer Middlebury College offers summer immersion programs in 10 languages for undergraduate course credit. Language School programs take place at the Vermont campus and at Mills College in California. These programs offer graduate course work in addition to the immersive language training in six of the 10 languages. Students may enroll in a MA program in these six languages and complete the courses required for the degree either entirely during four summer sessions or through a combination of courses taken in at least one summer session in combination with academic year work at the graduate level taken at one of the C.V. Starr-Middlebury Schools Abroad. Students interested in continuing their language studies beyond the Masters level may enroll in the Doctor of Modern Languages (DML) degree program. The DML prepares teacher-scholars in two modern foreign languages, helping them develop as teachers of second-language acquisition, literature, linguistics, and language pedagogy. Both the Masters and the DML programs are geared to language educators, though they sometimes attract students who need expanded language and cultural proficiency in order to pursue graduate study in related fields such as international relations or the various programs offered at the Monterey Institute.

The courses offered in the graduate courses in the Language School programs are at an appropriate level of complexity and specialization to support the awarding of an advanced degree, and provide a coherent learning experience. When offered within the context of the immersive language environment of the Language Schools, in which all participants must adhere to the language pledge to communicate only in the language under study for the duration of the summer session, these programs provide an extraordinary opportunity for students to expand their language capabilities. The programs focus on applied topics relevant to language instruction in addition to more standard literature and linguistic content. Students who wish to progress beyond the Masters level must display proficiency in two languages and language pedagogy, and must complete a doctoral dissertation which must be defended in both languages being presented for the degree. The DML is not a research degree, but the requirements and level of attainment are appropriate for a doctoral level degree.

Each Language School has a Director and an Associate or Associate Director who are in charge of establishing the curricular needs for each summer session, for hiring appropriate faculty to teach the needed courses, and for evaluating the effectiveness of the program and the component courses. Thus there is a regular schedule of program and faculty evaluation in place. A limited amount of financial aid is available to highly qualified students.

In the team's estimation the Language School Masters and DML programs meet, indeed exceed, NEASC's stated standards of accreditation in all respects except one. Although overall oversight of these graduate programs rests with the Vice President for Language Schools, Schools Abroad, and Graduate Programs, who is a full time administrator and Middlebury faculty member, the faculty are all hired on term appointment for the duration of the seven-week summer session each summer. Both Directors and faculty are hired from among the regular faculty of other U.S. and foreign institutions, but given the numbers of them required, complete MLA searches to fill the instructional ranks each year are simply not feasible. All program Directors and faculty undergo a thorough pre-hire vetting, and subsequent performance is carefully evaluated. Successful Directors may serve for up to three three-year terms, and successful faculty teachers may teach in the program for many years. But the fact remains that there are no full-time faculty associated with these programs as stipulated in Standard 4.23.

However, the team was impressed with the overall quality of the programs' design and teaching staff, and believes that although Middlebury's practice differs significantly from the standard described in section 4.23, there is sufficient evidence that these programs are appropriate to higher education, are consistent with institutional mission and purpose, and are effective in meeting the intent of the Commission's Standards. In short, the spirit of the standard is being met. The team recommends that the MA and DML graduate programs being operated in the context of the Language Schools be included in the institution's accreditation with the stipulation that the institution's fifth- year report include a thorough evaluation, including an outside perspective, of the effectiveness and quality of these programs.

The Bread Loaf School of English. The Bread Loaf School of English provides summer, graduate-level education aimed at K-12 teachers of English and language arts, and offers MA and MLitt degrees as well as continuing education opportunities. Graduate-level courses are offered at the original Bread Loaf campus farm in Ripton, Vermont, and in Oxford, UK, Santa Fe, NM and Asheville, NC. Across all four sites about 500 students attend each summer. The program also supports an active and well-known teacher network, the Bread Loaf Teacher Network, which offers year-round professional development for K-12 teachers.

The faculty and course offerings of the Bread Loaf program are truly outstanding, very often putting students in a summer classroom with internationally known scholars and writers. The courses and overall structure of the curriculum are of high quality for a graduate program, and provide instruction appropriate for the clientele of educators, at which the program is aimed. Candidates for the MA degree must complete ten courses within ten successive summers in the Bread Loaf program. Course selections must be distributed over a number of defined specialty literary areas. Candidates for the MLitt degree must already have the MA, and must design a program of ten additional courses (to be taken within 10 successive summers) that focus on a particular area of concentration. A comprehensive written and oral exam must be completed during the final summer.

Like the Language School graduate programs, the Bread Loaf programs are administered year-round by a director and associate director who report to the Vice President for Language Schools, Schools Abroad, and Graduate Programs. However, the two Bread Loaf administrators are full-time faculty members at other U.S. institutions and provide only part-

time effort to Bread Loaf during the regular academic year. Faculty are chosen by the directors, and a careful system of teaching evaluation guides invitations to faculty to return to teach. Faculty are either tenured or near-tenured at other institutions; they are full-time at Bread Loaf only for the duration of the summer session.

As in the case of the Language School graduate programs, the visiting team believes that although Middlebury's practice differs significantly from the standard described in section 4.23, there is sufficient evidence that the Bread Loaf programs are appropriate to higher education, are consistent with institutional mission and purpose, and are effective in meeting the intent of the Commission's Standards. The team recommends that the MA and MLitt graduate programs being operated through Bread Loaf be included in the institution's accreditation with the stipulation that the institution's fifth- year report include a thorough evaluation, including an outside perspective, of the effectiveness and quality of these programs.

Institutional Effectiveness: Middlebury College has carefully preserved its foundation of high quality undergraduate education, while building upon its history of innovation and signature strengths. The undergraduate college shows academic excellence across its programs and is a recognized leader in the languages, international studies and environmental studies. Graduate programs are complementary to the institution's mission and are strong in their own right. Middlebury's ability to capitalize on the synergies of its outstanding academic programs will be key in its institutional advancement.

5. *Faculty*

Middlebury College has assembled a committed and highly qualified faculty to pursue its institutional mission. Among the undergraduate teaching faculty, 93.4 percent of faculty members hold terminal degrees in their fields. There are 230 FTE faculty numbers, and the student to faculty ratio is 9:1, an appropriately low ratio for an institution committed to intensive teaching and close interaction between faculty and students.

In its hiring and evaluation processes, Middlebury College adheres to rigorous standards; they are presented in detail in the Faculty Handbook. Since its reaccreditation in 1999, and in response to recommendations made in that report, Middlebury has substantially revised its processes for renewal and promotion reviews. The revised procedures establish a new schedule in which formal reviews are done in the third year of an assistant professor's contract. A consultation with the department chair and another senior colleague occurs no later than the second year, to guarantee that assistant professors receive early performance feedback. These changes were designed both to maintain rigorous standards of faculty assessment and be sensitive to assistant professors' experience with the review process during the early years of their contracts.

Middlebury is committed to having a diverse faculty, but its efforts to hire faculty of color have been frustrated by many factors, including the institution's location in rural Vermont. This concern was noted in the previous reaccreditation, and although Middlebury has not been as successful as it had hoped to be, noteworthy efforts are being made. Middlebury hired a chief diversity officer who is actively engaged in recruitment and retention activities,

and the institution participates in a joint initiative involving the University of California, Berkeley and Columbia University, who mutually seek ways to increase faculty diversity. In conversation with students, the visiting team noted students' understanding of the difficulty around faculty recruitment even though they desire a more diverse faculty.

Middlebury also has created a dissertation fellows program for minority students. This initiative is intended to increase the pool of minority job candidates. The Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research will continue to monitor and refine the collection of data related to the race and gender of the faculty.

About 20 percent of Middlebury's undergraduate courses are taught by term faculty. Financial pressures of the past three years have resulted in some requests for tenure-track faculty appointments to be approved as term appointments. Middlebury recognizes that its decision to hire some faculty on short term contracts may bring immediate cost savings, but that this practice invites potential problems in the longer term. Thus, Middlebury is committed to monitor appointments carefully.

In order to encourage and support serious scholarly activity, Middlebury provides full time undergraduate faculty, annually, up to \$2000 in research support. This amount has remained level since 2004, and the visiting team commends that it was not reduced during the financial crisis of the past three years. Faculty are eligible to apply for year-long sabbaticals after five years of teaching. Beginning in 2012, the Provost will report annually on funds distributed for faculty development, and currently, Middlebury is considering mechanisms for tracking scholarly achievement.

Middlebury regularly evaluates the effectiveness of teaching through the use of student course response forms and classroom visits. Pedagogical development is encouraged through programs such as pedagogy roundtables and an annual writing retreat. The course evaluation system was extensively revised in 2005, and recently, a committee of faculty, led by the assistant provost, has investigated the possible benefits of an online course evaluation system.

Faculty participate in Middlebury governance through committees such as the Faculty Council, the Council on Reviews and the Educational Affairs Committee. Middlebury therefore has standing committees roughly equivalent to those at most colleges, i.e., committees that allow the faculty to effectively engage in the essential areas of educational policy and curriculum, finance and strategic planning, and hiring, promotion and tenure. However, the visiting team heard faculty comments during the open meeting and in other scheduled interviews that suggest that faculty committees may not be functioning well. Some professors spoke passionately about feelings of marginalization and disempowerment. Middlebury's merger with the Monterey Institute was invoked by some as the emblem of a new mission chosen by the administration without faculty consent. The merger with Monterey was portrayed as a rift between two divergent visions of Middlebury.

Whether the assertions are accurate or not, they signal a disaffection of some faculty members, and their dissent against major initiatives by the college. Better administrative communication or more active faculty attention – through its committees – to merger issues might have generated conversation and raised concerns earlier and more effectively.

Regardless of who could have handled the sensitive merger issue better, a tear in the fabric of Middlebury's community needs repair. The visiting team urges renewed conversation between senior administration and faculty about the merger's impact on Middlebury College – an impact the team views positively – and we hope that a model of conversation will emerge that may be helpful in future discussions of the institution's mission and activities. Indeed, the community may wish to start with the mechanism already outlined in the College Handbook:

The [Faculty] Council will advise the president and serve as a channel of communication between the faculty and the president. Three of its members will also serve as a Committee on Conference with the Trustees. The other three will also serve as a Committee on Finance and Planning. The council will: Meet with the president or the provost at least once a month. It may, through its secretary, request meetings with the president at other times; advise the president concerning allocations of space; advise the president on academic administrative appointments; consider items referred to it by the faculty and report to the faculty its recommendations; keep permanent records of all council proceedings. It will upon request of any member take a formal vote on any matter; report to the faculty its deliberations at the earliest faculty meeting and subsequent to each council meeting. [See College Handbook for further details.]

The visiting team noted a structural problem with regard to faculty governance. It appears that Middlebury has no single committee to oversee faculty committees. The team believes that the institution would benefit from a Faculty Steering Committee to plan and track committee work. Another issue noted by the visiting team is procedural. Faculty should exercise a central and consistent role in agenda-setting for faculty meetings, in conversation with the president. This, too, can be done on a routine basis by a Faculty Steering Committee or by a designated standing committee such as the Faculty Council. In both instances, the point would be to create and maintain a clear mechanism for faculty leadership.

Institutional Effectiveness: In various conversations with faculty, the visiting team heard a mix of praise and criticism for administrative leadership, with most concerns centering around communication. The team believes that attention brought by this report will encourage better communication and collaboration between Middlebury faculty and its leadership. Faculty diversity remains a challenging institutional priority, and good faith efforts continue. Overall, faculty quality is high, faculty dedication to Middlebury is palpable, and opportunities for professional development and advancement are appropriate to this institution.

6. *Students*

Middlebury College's policies and practices in regard to the admission and retention of its students are clearly and coherently stated and are consistent with the institution's mission. Through the Office of the Dean of the College and the Commons system for the organization of residential life, Middlebury provides an array of services that are designed to help ensure the success of the full range of Middlebury's students.

Admissions: Middlebury has made great strides in the selectivity of its admission process in recent years. With an admit rate of 20 percent for the last three years, Middlebury now counts itself among the nation's most selective liberal arts colleges. The college's success in attracting a large and diverse population of international students – a population which comprises roughly 10 percent of the student body – is especially noteworthy and completely in keeping with the college's mission of “connect[ing] our community to other places, countries, and cultures.”

All measures indicate that Middlebury attracts a student body fully capable of making good use of the rich set of opportunities available to them both within and outside the curriculum. The Center for Teaching, Learning, and Research early on identifies students who may be in need of supplemental instruction in various disciplines and works to ensure that those students make good use of that instruction. The commitment to student success within both the admission and student services staffs is palpable.

While Middlebury has had admirable success in recruiting international students from a wide variety of countries and backgrounds, it has not yet reached a comparable level of success, despite its best efforts, in attracting students of color who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents. In particular, the size of its African-American population lags noticeably behind comparable figures for some of the colleges Middlebury most often compares itself to. The figure of 4 percent given for the percentage of African-American students on campus is, if anything, slightly inflated by the institutional practice of allowing students to identify themselves as members of more than one race to a single racial category. The difficulty Middlebury has had in attracting African-American and other domestic students of color is a product to a large extent of the institution's location. Middlebury has put serious effort into enhancing its recruitment efforts in recent years. The visiting team is especially encouraged by the success the students from the Posse Program have enjoyed, and by Middlebury's recent decision to double the number of students it recruits through that program. Additional connections to other organizations with a similar mission (Questbridge, for instance) can only enhance the effectiveness of Middlebury's efforts.

Retention and Graduation: Middlebury closely tracks its retention and graduation rates. With a six year rate above 90 percent for the undergraduate student body as a whole, as well as for most of the sub-groups within the student body, the institution has demonstrated real success in its efforts to promote student retention. Middlebury candidly identifies the one exception to that level of success in retention when it points out in its self-study the recent cohort of African-American students who entered in 2003, for whom the graduation rate was only 67 percent. Although more recent cohorts have graduated at a higher rate, there remains a disparity between the rate for African-American students and that for the overall student body. To its credit, the Dean of the College's Office recognizes the importance of this issue and plans to form a task force devoted to studying the causes and possible solutions to the problem. The visiting team suggests the obvious: that there is probably a connection between the small size of the original cohort and the increased difficulty in retaining those students, and that the success of enhanced efforts to recruit a larger number of African-American students will likely pay off in terms of increased retention for them as well.

Student Services: The Office of the Dean of the College pays close attention to the overall needs of the student population and makes thoughtful, systematic efforts to respond to those

needs. Faculty and administration are committed to the success of students within and outside the classroom; the students we spoke with recognize and appreciate that commitment. Health and psychological services – components essential to students’ well-being – are readily available and appear to work in concert with each other and with the Deans’ Office. Financial aid is provided to roughly 41 percent of the student body, and the students we spoke with seemed satisfied with the quality of their packages and the transparency of the awards process. An issue that students raised centered on the inability of students on financial aid to transfer their packages to study abroad programs not run by Middlebury; they view this prohibition as an unfair limitation on the educational opportunities available to them, in contrast to students who do not receive financial aid. Opportunities for student leadership in clubs and organizations abound, as do college-sponsored mechanisms for civic engagement and other forms of experiential learning.

Middlebury administers an impressive array of athletic and recreational opportunities, not least among them a set of outdoors and environmentally focused options that would be the envy of virtually any campus. In addition, Middlebury fields intercollegiate athletics teams in 31 sports and competes in NESCAC. About 28 percent of the student body participates on varsity teams. Athletics is organized in a manner that is compatible with the mission and philosophy of the institution, and student-athletes seem well integrated into the larger student body both socially and academically. However, the administration of athletics reports organizationally to the Vice President for Administration, while other student activities and organizations are managed through the Dean of the College. In the visiting team’s experience, this arrangement is somewhat unusual, and should require especially close coordination with both the Dean of the College and the Dean of Faculty to ensure that athletics is appropriately integrated into the academic and co-curricular aspects of student life.

Institutional Effectiveness: The admission and student affairs staffs closely track retention data, and have studied the predictive power of the various criteria used by Admissions to assess students’ academic abilities upon entrance. Information on student retention provides the impetus for the upcoming formation of a task force to study the issue. Student surveys are routinely used to determine the effectiveness of the various student services, and plans are afoot to increase the number of such mechanisms to gather data and apply them to improve the quality of those services; there is a clear commitment on the part of both the admission and student affairs staffs to do so.

7. Library and Other Information Resources

Library and information technology resources and services for the Middlebury undergraduate college, the summer Language Schools, and the Bread Loaf School of English are supported by Library and Information Services (LIS), formed by the merger of the library and IT departments in 2001. The addition of the Monterey Institute as a graduate school of Middlebury College has not affected library services to the Middlebury, VT campus, although the designation of the Monterey Institute as a graduate school of Middlebury College has the very real possibility of changing the budgetary environment regarding LIS. Currently the Monterey Institute maintains its own library and IT budget, and licenses and subscriptions for information resources are largely separate from the undergraduate

collections. Some investigation is taking place to review overlap in library resources, as well as the cost of adding the Monterey population to existing Middlebury licenses. Middlebury's negotiation with vendors of information resources now includes discussion of the graduate school population, with decisions on acquisitions for both entities being made on a case-by-case basis. There is some concern among Middlebury-based staff that Monterey faculty have begun to view Middlebury information resources as assets that should now be available to them.

In 2004, the institution invested in a new library building on the Vermont campus. Since 2008, however, there has been a 5 percent decrease in budget allocation for library resources, and approximately a 20 percent decrease in LIS staffing. Staff positions vacated in library services represented the loss of significant institutional knowledge and experience, but also created opportunities for other staff to advance to new positions. Difficulties in retaining skilled technical staff have led to the outsourcing of support for administrative information systems (see also standard 8). At the same time that staffing levels have decreased, support for the Monterey Institute has been added in various technical systems, from the Banner system to the ILLIAD interlibrary loan system to the library e-reserves system.

Investment in digital information resources is the primary strategy for library information resources, with an acknowledged curtailment of growth in print monographs. Access to information resources is also offered via membership in the NExpress consortium and the Center for Research Libraries. Interlibrary loan services further expand access to information resources. Access to information resources is provided in support of the undergraduate curriculum, in support of faculty research, and in support of the Language Schools, Bread Loaf, and students studying abroad.

Support for the introduction, development, and assessment of technologies in the academic program is shared between LIS Liaisons and the Center for Teaching, Learning and Research, with staff referring faculty to the appropriate expert. Training activities offered by LIS for the use of information resources and instructional technologies in the classroom follow traditional lines (one-on-one consultations, classroom instruction, workshops). Training activities for staff were cited positively at the visiting team's open staff meeting.

The LIS strategic plan of 2009 focuses on five areas: emerging technologies, space planning, administrative efficiency, training and education, and carbon reduction. Currently, LIS teams investigate issues including tools for online curricular collaboration, core technology skills required by Middlebury's constituencies, and space utilization in the Davis Family Library. There is no clear sense, however, of the level and breadth of LIS-managed resources and services desired in support of Middlebury's overall strategic plan of 2006. Further, there is no clearly stated rationale for LIS's unusual reporting structure outside of the academic enterprise. These are issues that the institution may wish to consider in order to better link LIS planning to Middlebury's strategic priorities in both the academic and operational arenas.

A Faculty LIS Advisory Committee is working to define learning outcomes at each stage of a student's career. There is also current consultation with the Educational Affairs Committee to incorporate learning goals for information literacy across the curriculum. At present, information literacy goals are pursued through engagement with students and faculty during

first year seminars. Learning outcomes for the first year seminars have been articulated, and include information literacy skills. LIS has implemented pre- and post- tests for students in the seminars to measure the effectiveness of the instruction on information literacy. Opportunities for LIS to work with faculty and students on developing information literacy skills after the first year seminars are ad hoc. Academic departments have been asked to define learning goals for each major. LIS Liaisons seek to partner with faculty to articulate goals for information literacy in the majors. The new curriculum initiatives for a Senior Independent Project and Spring Student Symposium present additional opportunities to engage stakeholders in information literacy to help define activities and goals beyond the first year seminar.

Institutional Effectiveness: LIS provides valuable connections and information resources to Middlebury College's undergraduate, graduate and administrative programs and initiatives. Its scope of activity is beyond that of a traditional undergraduate library. LIS operates thoughtfully and seeks to be inclusive of students and faculty. The active 12-month year of programming, however, places stress on staff and resources, and limits opportunities for more visionary planning. Institution-wide planning and initiatives would benefit from including LIS earlier in discussions, and help to clarify the requirements for LIS-supported resources.

8. Physical and Technological Resources

On the edge of a quaint town with views of two mountain ranges from virtually any location on campus, Middlebury College, in Middlebury, Vermont offers attractive, well-maintained facilities that provide a welcoming and supportive environment for teaching and learning. Over the past two decades the institution has ramped up facilities planning, construction and modernization. Since 1990, more than \$180 million in capital projects have been completed. As a result, campus facilities have a "young" age and are well prepared to serve the institution's mission. The planning for this work, the funding, program changes, and disruption in the daily campus life were handled in a thoughtful way.

In the past two decades, the Vice President for Finance and Treasurer's Office projected capital needs and secured bond financing when timely; the Advancement Office secured gifts where appropriate and relevant members of the Middlebury College community were participants in various processes to support major improvements. In the last year, the institution reviewed capital financial planning as part of its overall multi-year financial model, took measures to contain any variability in future debt expense and assessed future facilities improvement needs. At \$277 million of outstanding debt, Middlebury College's future borrowing capacity for facilities improvement may be limited at the current Aa2 Moody's rating level. In the near future, substantial gifts to support renovation/construction of the field house will enable Middlebury to complete the most urgently needed improvements.

Perhaps the most far-reaching facilities planning work culminated in 2007 with the completion of a comprehensive campus master plan. The plan tilts toward internal building renovation and development and restructuring of the landscape, not outward expansion of the existing campus. The Middlebury, Vermont campus is extensive: 328 acres of land, and

150-plus buildings totaling more than 2.4 million square feet. In keeping with Middlebury's leadership in environmental sustainability, the campus plan calls for design and use of open spaces on campus and enhancement of the campus's contribution to regional ecosystems. Rather than a blueprint, the comprehensive master plan provides a set of guiding principles for the institution to rely on and inform decision-making going forward. Despite recent personnel reductions due to the economic downturn, Middlebury College is well staffed in the Facilities area to maintain and improve the main campus facilities.

Following a visit to the California campus of the Monterey Institute of International Studies, team members reported that the Institute's maintenance backlog had largely been eliminated due to the initial capital investment by Middlebury College. However, on the Bread Loaf School of English campus in Ripton, Vermont, the institution recognizes that there is a substantial maintenance backlog estimated at more than \$30 million. Senior administrators are sorting out how best to plan for and make the needed improvements. In addition to the Bread Loaf School's funding need, the visiting team learned that the difficult climate in that remote mountainous location, the age of the historic buildings, and the summer long use by the program present challenges for implementing necessary improvements.

For many years, Middlebury College has embraced issues of sustainability and led the nation in environmental studies. Recycling initiatives, energy conservation, the construction of a biomass plant, reduction in carbon footprint, thoughtful use of agricultural land that surrounds the College are impressive initiatives that reflect the interests of many across campus, especially those of faculty, staff and students associated with the environmental studies major.

With regard to technological resources, Library and Information Services (LIS), formed by the merger of the library and IT departments in 2001, provides support for the technology infrastructure and administrative information system (Banner) of Middlebury College. LIS also supports classroom technologies, including "smart classrooms" at the Middlebury campus, and provides networking services at the Bread Loaf campus.

With the acquisition of the Monterey Institute, LIS took on support of the administrative information systems for Monterey by incorporating the Institute in the Banner administrative system. The LIS Banner Team expressed concern about additional work in support of Monterey offices, which in some instances maintain separate workflows from Middlebury offices. Data reporting requests from the Institute also add to the work of the LIS Team.

Staffing difficulties in information technology led to the decision to host the Banner administrative system off campus. The hosting situation offers benefits to Middlebury College in terms of disaster recovery and business continuity, but also highlights a difficulty in attracting the skilled staff needed to support the technology resources of the institution. Recent staff changes and reductions in departments outside of LIS have affected the LIS Banner Team through the loss of skilled Banner functional managers.

An outstanding project remains from the migration 10 years ago to the Banner system. Data from the 1950's to the 1970's (primarily alumni data) still reside in the legacy data system, and continue to be used by approximately 15 people. LIS formulated a plan to move the data to an Oracle database, which will require a reporting structure in order to use the legacy data.

The project has been given a relatively low priority, especially in consideration of the current project to move the Middlebury Banner environment to an off-campus hosted solution.

Classroom needs are largely driven by Middlebury's undergraduate faculty, although Language School faculty have presented needs for additional smart classrooms. Prioritization and funding of the Language School's needs will be a challenge as those programs move forward.

Computer resources are refreshed on a four-year cycle, funded from Capital Funds allocated to LIS. A project to upgrade the Middlebury campus network is underway; work on the upgrade is scheduled for Sunday morning maintenance windows and is estimated to take a year to complete.

Institutional Effectiveness: Middlebury College has an excellent record of engagement of constituencies across the campus in the discussion of priorities in these areas. An institution with significant resources always has many choices among a variety of facilities and technological projects that support the academic program. The physical technology resources of Middlebury College appear to receive adequate funding, although differing needs among programs (e.g. the Language Schools and the undergraduate college) will challenge both funding and prioritization in the near future. Retaining skilled staff in support of those resources, both in LIS and in other offices, presents challenges to the effective use of those systems. LIS planning is appropriate and well considered. The 12-month active calendar presents challenges to the implementation of projects, such as network upgrades and smart classroom upgrades.

Through long conversations at the institution across constituencies, the intended outcome is to have everyone on board about program needs and then funding requirements. Middlebury College has been successful in using this model to evaluate its physical and technological needs in support of its academic mission.

9. Financial Resources

Middlebury College's financial resources are sufficient to sustain the achievement of its educational objectives and to further institutional improvement now and in the foreseeable future. The institution demonstrates through verifiable internal and external factors its financial capacity to graduate the entering undergraduate class and students enrolled in its post baccalaureate programs around the world. The institution administers its financial resources with integrity.

The financial resources to support the mission of Middlebury College are remarkably strong and noteworthy. With an endowment of \$952 million, investment prowess, highly selective admissions from a growing applicant pool, enthusiastic donor participation, and careful management of the institution's assets and debt, Middlebury is positioned to remain a leader in higher education. Through continuous long range financial planning, the institution has strengthened its financial flexibility to respond to externally imposed challenges and to internally driven desires for program improvement and expansion.

In the past 10 years, Middlebury College's endowment has grown from \$627 million in 2001 to \$908 million at June 30, 2011. During this period, which includes the significant global economic downturn, the average investment return was 8.2 percent. The endowment growth resulted from close attention to asset allocation, manager selection and monitoring, and approval of spending by the senior leadership of the institution and by the full Board of Trustees. Spending from the endowment provides significant support (more than one-fifth) for Middlebury's operating budget.

A strong applicant pool and, recently, the planned expansion of the size of the student body from 2,350 to 2,450 students will enhance revenue from tuition, room and board. About 60 percent of operating revenue comes from student revenue net of financial aid. Need-blind admissions and a highly competitive financial aid program that includes meeting full need for domestic students ensure the highest quality student body from the U.S. and abroad. Middlebury is to be commended for its long term financial planning managed by the Finance Office. The recent economic downturn left the institution with a projected \$30 million budget deficit in future years, a large amount of variable rate debt, and endowment spending greater than five percent. However, financial models, thoughtful guidance from two key multi-constituent committees, and plans by the senior leadership team and the Board of Trustees led Middlebury to achieve annual balanced budgets based on assumptions about tuition revenue increases (to be set at CPI + 1 percent), the need for additional financial aid, investment returns, gifts, and ongoing expenses. Funds for needed capital maintenance of facilities are included in these projections.

In the last two decades, Middlebury College made extensive use of the bond market to fund large capital projects. The related debt expense on some \$100 million was vulnerable to fluctuation due to variable rate terms and the related interest rate swap. With thoughtful analysis and planning, the institution refinanced all of its variable rate debt with fixed rate debt, and in the process achieved attractive all-in costs for the refunding of outstanding bonds, elimination of financial risk in the restructured debt portfolio, and elimination of debt-related costs such as swap payments and bank re-marketing fees.

With a history of alumni giving that is among the highest in the U.S., Middlebury's senior leadership and development staff are ready to meet challenges of the economic downturn of the past three years. Middlebury College has every chance to be successful in raising new resources to support new programmatic goals. In the current campaign that is focused on the undergraduate program, more than three-quarters of the \$500 million goal already has been achieved.

By some comparisons and measures, Middlebury has been overly generous in its endowment spending rate. The 5- to 7-percent spending rate has enabled the institution to support operations and to meet the debt service costs of borrowing to finance facilities renovations and construction. Middlebury leadership recognizes that its historical spending rate may have been at some cost to endowment growth as compared to other similar sized endowments. The senior leadership team and the Board of Trustees are committed to reducing the spending rate in the coming years and beginning in FY 2015, a 5 percent spending rate will be the target going forward.

Over 30 percent of Middlebury's consolidated revenues are attributed to its programs beyond the undergraduate college. The financial results of operating the Middlebury Language Schools, the C.V. Starr-Middlebury Schools Abroad, the Bread Loaf School of English, and more recently The Monterey Institute of International Studies in California are fully integrated. Upon acquisition of the Monterey school, Middlebury made a significant capital investment to upgrade Monterey's facilities, IT, and other systems with the vast majority of funding coming from gifts restricted for that purpose. This resulted in noteworthy operating systems efficiencies in IT, HR, finance and other administrative systems. Monterey faculty and staff told visiting team members about substantial improvements that stemmed from Middlebury College's investment and management. Middlebury's administration reports that the Monterey Institute appears to have achieved financial equilibrium, and that the operation at Monterey has generated a surplus for the institution. The Monterey Institute remains dependent on tuition for the bulk of its revenues.

Institutional Effectiveness: Over many years, Middlebury has developed a consultative, transparent process to secure the resources for the institution's academic program. Annual audits provided by Price Waterhouse Coopers LLP offer external assurance of the integrity of Middlebury's financial condition. Appropriate internal assessment and evaluation by senior leadership in partnership with the Board of Trustees and its committees, by various constituencies and their committees across the campus, and by a recently created, well-functioning office of institutional planning and assessment, provide the necessary data for constant improvement.

10. Public Disclosure

Through its web presence and print publications, Middlebury presents a clear and comprehensive picture of itself to students, parents, alumni and other interested members of the public. Content and tone are consistent with the college's mission statement and appear to portray accurately the opportunities that are available to prospective and current students. All requisite information on topics such as admission policies, transfer of credits, tuition and fees, regulations for student conduct, and the academic programs of the college is readily available on the web, in print, or both. Academic departments have made notable progress in defining and disclosing the educational goals for their majors. In all, Middlebury's public presentation of itself through a variety of media seems accurate and impressive.

One ongoing issue within the realm of public disclosure is the need for integration of the communication strategies practiced by Middlebury's several programs into one comprehensive strategy managed institutionally. Communications staff have suggested the possibility of engaging a consultant to help design a comprehensive strategy – a suggestion which makes sense to the visiting team given the complexity of the issue.

Institutional Effectiveness: Middlebury College systematically reviews its online and print publications, and does its best to ensure accuracy and effectiveness. In particular, the institution has paid careful attention to the nature and quality of its web presence, and plans to continue to do so in the near and long term.

11. Integrity

Middlebury College operates under a charter from the State of Vermont and has obtained the requisite legal certifications to operate in each of the many locations inside the U.S. and in foreign countries where it offers academic programs. (There are two exceptions but certification is in process.) The institution has procedures in place to insure that it remains in compliance with all federal, state, and foreign laws applicable to its operations. Likewise, it exhibits a culture of honesty and fairness in its activities, and has well established, and well disseminated policies and procedures covering matters of integrity for its students, faculty, staff, administration and board members. Faculty members have the freedom to teach and do research as they see fit within the framework of sound scholarly and pedagogical practices.

Because of the multi-faceted and multi-location nature of Middlebury's academic programs, not all individuals who hold similar positions in different locations/programs operate under the same set of policies. For example, some policies pertain to all programs and employees, such as grievance procedures, employee and student codes of conduct, and the anti-harassment policy. General faculty policies apply to both the undergraduate college in Vermont and the Monterey Institute of International Studies, but there are separate student and faculty handbooks for the Monterey Institute, C.V. Starr-Middlebury Schools Abroad (41 program locations in 15 countries), the Language Schools, and the Bread Loaf School, each relevant to the unique characteristics of these different programs. Ensuring consistency and universal understanding of institutional policies will require considerable effort, and the College is engaged in a comprehensive review of policies and practices, with the aim of achieving consistency by July 2012. Middlebury would do well to ensure representation from all of its major faculty and staff groups when conducting this review.

Although the full range of policies and procedures are in place at Middlebury, not all of them have been reviewed on a regular basis. For example, the current Code of Conduct for Employees was last reviewed/updated in 2006, the non-discrimination policy in 2002, and the oldest policy, the Conflict of Interest Policy of the Grants Office, is dated 1995. The institution needs to ensure that it has mechanisms in place to trigger regular periodic review of all such policies and procedures.

Middlebury College is committed to recruiting and supporting individuals from diverse racial, cultural, and gender groups to its faculty, staff, and student bodies. It has made good progress on this front in student recruiting, and several faculty searches during the past year provided opportunities to recruit diverse candidates through proactive vetting of the candidate pools by the Dean of the College and Chief Diversity Officer. Recruiting a diverse staff in the context of an isolated, rural Vermont setting has proved to be much more challenging, but the entire community appears to be in support of doing the best job it can given the constraints. Leadership and management training offered for staff and faculty seeks to infuse diversity training throughout the program, rather than treat such training as a stand-alone effort. The Affirmative Action Plan for the Vermont campus is "in progress" and will be available soon; the Affirmative Action Plan for the Monterey Institute is in place and includes a commitment to serving veterans as well as under-represented groups.

Institutional Effectiveness: Middlebury is undertaking a full review of all policies, employment and other, pertaining to the Language Schools, the Schools Abroad, the Bread

Loaf School of English, and the Monterey Institute in order to reconcile differences. The comprehensive review is to be completed by July 2012. Training on policies such as anti-harassment and Title IX compliance is provided annually on the Middlebury campus. The visiting team finds Middlebury College is in substantial compliance with Standard 11.

Institutional Effectiveness Summary

Middlebury College has made significant progress in recent years to increase the availability and use of institutional data and information in order to guide planning and decision-making. The commitment to continuous evaluation and refinement of program excellence is strengthened by Middlebury's clear mission and the community's collective pride and desire to be the best that the institution can be. Since its last NEASC evaluation in 1999, Middlebury has engaged in strategic planning, departmental planning and assessment, and a wide variety of data-gathering exercises to inform and evaluate its activities. Middlebury, for example, has made significant strides in recent years to articulate learning goals and gather direct/indirect evidence of student learning. The institution acknowledges that these efforts represent a beginning, and that more work will be done in order to sustain momentum and document meaningful evidence of learning outcomes across programs. Middlebury also has shown a willingness to use assessment to learn from challenging experiences, such as the survey that followed the institution's actions in response to the severe economic downturn. The commitment to provide additional resources to planning and assessment, and the visibility given to this endeavor, again signal a strong institutional desire to invite, embrace, and utilize data in Middlebury College's continued development.

Affirmation of Compliance

To document the institution's compliance with Federal regulations relating to Title IV, the team reviewed Middlebury College's Affirmation of Compliance form signed by President Liebowitz. Middlebury's credit hour policies are consistent with the federal regulation and are described on the institution's website. Middlebury's credit transfer policies are described both online and in printed handbooks; these sources explain the policy and the process for seeking transfer credit. Notice of the reaccreditation evaluation visit and the opportunity for public comment were posted online and in a variety of publications to members of the greater Middlebury community at several points between the spring and fall of 2011. Policies regarding student rights and responsibilities, including grievance procedures, are clearly stated in the Middlebury College Handbook, the Language Schools Student Handbook, the Bread Loaf School of English Handbook, and the Monterey Institute Academic Policy and Standards Manual, which are readily available online and in printed form. Middlebury College does not offer distance or correspondence courses, so efforts to verify student identity in such cases are not applicable.

Summary

The visiting team commends the Middlebury College community on the outstanding preparation and cooperation that contributed to the success of this evaluation. It is the view of the visiting team that Middlebury College is achieving its mission and is offering academic programs and services that are consistent with the institution's impressive history of academic excellence, innovation, and leadership. Further, the team believes that a remarkable spirit of institutional pride and loyalty exists within the Middlebury community, and that this creates a strong bond among the many people, programs and locations that make up Middlebury College.

Upon doing its homework about Middlebury, and visiting sites in Middlebury and Ripton, Vermont, Monterey, California, and Madrid, Spain, members of the visiting team gained an exciting appreciation for the complexity of Middlebury College. The institution continues to evolve programmatically in ways that honor its founding mission. For example, the acquisition of the Monterey Institute of International Studies brings to Middlebury College a strong graduate program that offers opportunities to undergraduate students and faculty. Language remains a core component of the institution and is central to programs worldwide. And Middlebury remains a recognized leader in environmental studies, showing that higher education has important contributions to make in both theory and practice to environmental stewardship.

The institution, like many others, faced serious financial challenges the past few years in the wake of worldwide economic turmoil. To Middlebury's credit, this crisis was handled with transparency, compassion, broad communication, and strong leadership. Because the mission of Middlebury College is so clear – partly a result of sound strategic planning, and partly a result of extraordinary community commitment – the institution weathered the economic storm better than most, and still found ways to expand, improve and strengthen its programs.

Middlebury College's future is bright. As always, there are challenges on the horizon, a combination of opportunities and potential obstacles. For Middlebury, thoughtful planning to move ahead is key, as are staying true to its strong mission and building upon its tradition of excellence.

Strengths

- Middlebury College maintains a firm commitment to the liberal arts and to undergraduate education, and the community embraces this historic foundation. Middlebury's respect for its heritage and ongoing commitment to excellence in education are exhibited in the tremendous sense of institutional pride that students, faculty, staff and trustees demonstrate.
- Middlebury continues to embrace its long tradition of innovation in education that includes the formation of the Language Schools, the Bread Loaf School of English, the C.V. Starr-Middlebury Schools Abroad, and the acquisition of the Monterey Institute of International Studies.

- Middlebury College's mission remains focused on excellence across its undergraduate and graduate programs and seeks opportunities to capitalize on strengths in language, international studies and environmental affairs.
- Middlebury boasts beautiful and well maintained campuses in Middlebury, Vermont and Monterey, California.
- Middlebury benefits from strong financial management and controls. It has a strong balance sheet that is supported by a diversified revenue stream.
- Finally, even among its critics, the strong and capable leadership of Middlebury College is acknowledged and admired.

Concerns

- Middlebury's organizational structure has yet to catch up to the rapid rate of change within the institution (a product of program expansions, staffing changes and financial constraints imposed by the financial crisis of 2008). Staff and faculty are working at capacity, and the absence of a true chief academic officer who has oversight of all academic programs (and responsibility for focusing on synergies among them) puts pressure on the institution.
- Faculty concerns about governance in some ways reflect anxiety about the rapid rate of change at the institution and should be examined.
- Substantial unfunded deferred maintenance at the Bread Loaf campus in Ripton, Vermont is a significant burden on the institution, and as of this time, there is no specific plan to address the problem.
- Middlebury is at its limit for debt capacity at its current Aa2 Moody's rating level. New capital expenditures must be funded by philanthropy.

Finally, the chair of this evaluation team acknowledges his team members who traveled to Middlebury, Vermont the afternoon following an historic October snowstorm in New England. The team made an extraordinary effort to ensure that the reaccreditation evaluation would move forward. They did so in good spirit, despite difficult conditions, and proved to be superb professionals and colleagues.