



Brandeis University

NEASC Updates and Progress

October 20, 2005

Today's Agenda



- Review of timeline
- Comments on drafts
- Reflections from committees on questions
- News and next steps

Timeline and Key Milestones



- ✓ March 15: Kick-off meeting
- ✓ March – May: Chairs convene committees and review standards
- ✓ May 17: Working session of Chairs and Staff to review progress
- ✓ Summer: The committees gather data, prepare templates, work on drafts
- ✓ Mid-October: Initial templates due
- November: Visit by John Sexton
- December: Completed templates due; begin to draft self-study
- January '06: Feedback from Steering Committee
- February: Committees convene; revisions due from Committees; begin integration of self-study
- April: Release draft self-study for community review and forum
- Summer: Draft submitted to NEASC
- November: Accreditation Team visit to campus
- Winter '07: Receipt of NEASC Accreditation Team evaluation
- Spring '07: Re-accreditation by NEASC

Comments on the Drafts



- Most of the committees have submitted drafts.
- Many followed the template format:
 - Description
 - Appraisal
 - Projection
- NEASC expects the standards to be presented in this format.
- Some of the story lines are more developed than others.
 - The story is the committee's opportunity to give a thesis statement that provides a framework for the whole standard.

Committee on Assessment



- **Description**

- Brandeis has general learning outcomes for Arts and Sciences, GSAS, and the professional schools
- There is no one systematic approach for assessing student learning
 - Each school, department, and program develops its own learning **outcomes and methods of evaluation**

- **Appraisal**

- An assessment inventory was conducted in the summer of 2005 among chairs of 11 departments/programs
 - Biology, Business, Chemistry, Computer Science, Education, English, History, Psychology, Romance and Comp Lit, Theater Arts, USEM

Committee on Assessment - 2



- **Appraisal**

- Assessment of students and of programs assumes many forms
- There is wide variation in how strongly departments embrace the philosophy of assessment
- Most departments have learning objectives, although few are formalized
- “Culminating events” add value to the student experience and provide an assessment mechanism
- Personal contact is an important form of assessment
- There was considerable interest in pursuing more systematic forms of assessment

Committee on Assessment - 3



- **Projection**

- Brandeis can do more to strengthen its assessment activities
- The University will not impose a central directive on how assessment should be done
 - We will start pilots among departments where there is interest and will leverage “naturally occurring phenomena” as demonstration projects
- Departments should formalize learning objectives as a means of measuring the effectiveness of the major
- Assessment activities can be advanced through better sharing of data
- The University may hold seminars on “critical thinking” and other topics to develop a common framework and vocabulary

Stories and Discussion



- What is the overall story you want to tell NEASC?
 - What are you doing?
 - How well are you doing it?
 - Where are you going in the future?
- As you studied your standards and collected evidence, what surprised you the most?
- Are there any standards that pose a problem for Brandeis?
- Would adherence to any of these standards, as written, create any significant changes in Brandeis culture or behaviors?

NEASC Standards



1. *Mission and Purposes*
2. *Planning and Evaluation*
3. *Organization and Governance*
4. *The Academic Program*
 - *Undergraduate Degree Programs*
 - *General Education*
 - *The Major or Concentration*
 - *Graduate Degree Programs*
 - *Integrity in the Award of Academic Credit*
 - *Assessment of Student Learning*

5. *Faculty*
 - *Teaching and Advising*
 - *Scholarship and Research*
6. *Students*
 - *Admissions*
 - *Retention and Graduation*
 - *Student Services*
7. *Library and Other Information Resources*
8. *Physical and Technological Resources*
9. *Financial Resources*
10. *Public Disclosure*
11. *Integrity*

Mission: Overall Story



- The University's mission statement was articulated by the Board of Trustees in 1984.
- It provides direction for all educational purposes and planning activities.
- Published in the Bulletin and online, the mission statement is generally understood by and available to the community.
- The Four Pillars of the University, commonly known to the community, are derived from the mission statement.

Undergraduate: Overall Story



- Our goal is that every Brandeis undergraduate receive a broad and deep liberal arts education that cultivates their rational, critical and creative powers, causes them to confront and develop their values, and hones their analytical, quantitative and communications skills.

Graduate Degrees: Overall Story



- Brandeis University has grown and enhanced its graduate programming in the last ten years.
- Two new professional graduate schools – IBS and the Rabb School of Continuing Studies, Division of Graduate Professional Studies (Rabb/GPS) – have joined GSAS and the Heller School for Social Policy and Management.
- This increasingly dynamic selection of graduate degree programs (as documented in the University Bulletin) has evolved over time from primarily a doctoral focus to more applied programming at the Master’s level in response to student interest and evolving societal needs.
 - Some of the new programs are specifically designed to reach a part time, at-work student body as well as full-time international students, thereby expanding the number and kind of graduate students at Brandeis.

Faculty: - Overall Story



- Brandeis has a highly distinguished faculty of teachers, scholars, scientists, artists, and researchers.
- The mission of the University is well-served by the size of its faculty as well as their scholarly and professional credentials.
- We are mindful that we must regularly evaluate the faculty profile in relation to the University's curricular and research needs and to strive to provide faculty with adequate resources to meet them.
- We have taken care to assess and have begun to ameliorate the circumstances of our full- and part-time non-tenure-track or "contract" faculty, who also play crucial roles in teaching, research, service, and administration across the University.
- Our graduate and professional programs complement the undergraduate liberal arts programs in important ways. Even as faculty members actively pursue their scholarly and creative projects, as teachers and advisors they attend to graduate and undergraduate students with care and attention for their intellectual and professional growth and development.

Academic Integrity: Overall Story



- Brandeis has many processes and practices in place to assure the integrity in the award of credit. The University and its faculty have full control over the content, standards, and delivery of courses, and in the definition and enforcement of degree requirements.
- While administrative committees review and approve courses when first created, there is a need to develop a systematic review process for currently active courses.
- Students are able to complete programs within the published length of the programs and all degree requirement and course information is widely and publicly available.
- Changes to existing degree programs and creation of new programs require evaluation and approval by faculty committees.
- While undergraduate interdepartmental programs are reviewed on a regular basis, we need to establish a review process for all degree programs.
- All transfer credit is evaluated for appropriateness. Transfer of credit for graduate degrees is strictly limited, and the undergraduate degree requires a minimum of one-half of the course work be completed at Brandeis.

Assessment: Overall Story



- Brandeis has stated learning outcomes for the general university requirements for undergraduates in Arts and Sciences and for graduate students in GSAS and the professional schools. The University recognizes that a more systematic approach to assessing student learning is worth developing within the Brandeis context of a liberal arts/research tradition.
- Like most universities, Brandeis has relied on each school, department and program to develop its own learning outcomes and to conduct its own evaluation of student progress. A recent inventory with a sample of Arts and Sciences department and program chairs revealed that there is wide variation in departmental practices related to assessment. Almost all of the departments, however, have some mechanism for evaluating both student learning and their own practices/processes related to student learning (e.g., advising, curriculum development, placement in courses).
- Moving forward, the University will continue to rely on the existing academic units to establish their own curricula and to maintain their own academic objectives.

Library and Technology: Overall Story



- LTS has been doing a great job and the administration has a very good track record of supporting LTS initiatives, some of which have been transformational and expensive (e.g. new broadband).
- But there are some potential problem areas:
 - Future funding -- Technology and Information needs change rapidly and can be expensive,
 - Adequate staff size -- we're a little smaller than our peers,
 - Illegal uses of technology -- this is a problem for all Universities (viruses, botnets, illegal file sharing, ...)
 - Sufficient information resources -- journal prices are continuing to skyrocket for us and all Universities,
 - Some of our physical library environments are not ideal
 - Distance education raises some possible challenges
- Finally, assessment of student learning is hard to measure (do students learn to use LTS resources effectively? can we quantify that?)

Resources: Overall Story



Brandeis 2005 is not Brandeis 1995

- Balanced operating and capital budgets
- Growth of reserves
- Improvement of financial ratios relative to other Moody's "A" rated institutions
- Growth of endowment to over \$525 million
- Completion of 97% of \$470 million capital campaign
- Addition of 160,000 square feet to physical plant (Campus Center, Residence Hall, Academic Buildings)
- Increase in deferred maintenance expenditures from \$1 million to \$11 million
- Progress on addressing faculty and staff compensation
- New systems, policies and procedures
- Information technology infrastructure improvements including progress on equipping classrooms

Resources: Overall Story



Brandeis 2012 will not be Brandeis 2005

Integrated Plan is projected to achieve operating and capital goals

- In each of the next seven years (FY 2006 through FY 2012), additional funds are projected to be available for priorities in the operating budget reaching \$20M by FY12. Priorities include:
 - Arts and Sciences Plan and Academic Facilities
 - Library and Technology Plan
 - Undergraduate Quality Initiative
 - Student Facilities
 - Staff Salary Plan
- There can also be significant resources for capital projects (\$300M +)
 - Science Project and Other Academic Facilities
 - Student Facilities
 - Infrastructure and Deferred Maintenance
- University will set annual benchmarks, and articulate a process of annual reassessment, annual adjustments and annual accountability through the annual budget process and ongoing peer assessments and review by outside organizations , e.g., NACUBO, Moody's.

Integrity: Overall Story



- The University is deeply committed to upholding the highest ethical principles in conducting its business and administrative activities.
- The University's Business Conduct Policy, a compendium of fifteen university-wide policies, reflects these ethical principles. The policies relate to confidential complaints, confidentiality, conflicts of interest, copyright infringement, non-discrimination, misuse of University assets, misconduct in research, and other areas.
- Student and faculty policies further address principles of academic freedom and academic integrity.
- Brandeis frequently informs and updates its campus community and the wider Brandeis family on its academic and business activities. Numerous informational community meetings, newsletters and bulletins, and other efforts demonstrate the University's commitment to transparency in all of its affairs.

Public Disclosure: Overall Story



- The University discloses information about itself to a range of audiences, including prospective students, current students, alumni, donors, prospective donors, foundations, prospective employers of our graduates, Trustees, parents of current students, faculty, staff, and members of the interested general public.
- The University makes every effort to ensure the accuracy, timeliness, comprehensiveness, and availability of such information through media that include print; Web; video; radio; and live presentations and events such as high school visits, open houses, tours, and information sessions.
- The combined efforts of the Offices of Communications; Students and Enrollment; Development and Alumni Relations; the Provost; the Dean of Arts and Sciences; the Registrar; the graduate schools; and others provide information sufficient to allow our diverse and several audiences to make informed decisions about the University.

Next Steps for Subcommittees



October/November

- Meet with Michael, Jim, and Harvey to review templates, identify gaps and needs, discuss next steps

November

- Fill in gaps in templates, collect additional data,
- Templates reviewed by NEASC Executive Committee and an initial editing process will occur

December:

- Completed templates due December 16th