

Report to the
Faculty, Administration, Trustees, Students

of

BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY
Waltham, Massachusetts

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
the campus November 12-15, 2006**

The members of the team:

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This report represents the views of the evaluation committee 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 College
Preface Page

Date form completed: November 8, 2006

Name of Institution Brandeis University

1. History Year chartered or authorized 1947 Year first degrees awarded 1952

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 ^b	# Degrees ^c
Associate						
Baccalaureate	3253	4	3254.5	96%	88%	776
Graduate	1448	561	1656.6			627

(a) full-time 1st to 2nd year (b) 3 or 6 year graduation rate (c) no. of degrees awarded most recent year

5. Number of current faculty: Full time 353 Part-time 134 FTE: 397

6. Current fund data for most recently completed fiscal year: (Specify year: 2006)
(Double click in any cell to enter spreadsheet. Enter dollars in millions; e.g., \$1,456,200 = \$1.456)

Tuition	\$85.001	Instruction	\$93.521
Gov't Appropriations		Research	\$43.358
Gifts/Grants/Endowment	\$124.979	General	\$66.503
Auxiliary Enterprises	\$23.274	Auxiliary Enterprises	\$29.064
Other	\$11.691	Other	\$7.842
Total	\$244.945	Total	\$240.288

7. Number of off-campus locations:

In-state _____ Other U.S. _____ International _____ Total N/A

8. Number of degrees and certificates offered electronically:

Programs offered entirely on-line 4 Programs offered 50-99% on-line _____

9. Is instruction offered through a contractual relationship?

No Yes; specify program(s): _____

10. Accreditation history:

Candidacy: N/A Initial accreditation: 1953 Last comprehensive evaluation: 1996

Last Commission action: Approval of on-line programs Date: 2004

11. Other characteristics:

Introduction

This report reflects the findings of the NEASC team which visited Brandeis University as part of its decennial re-accreditation. The team reviewed the institution's self-study and other related documents that were made available, and conducted a series of interviews with trustees, administrators, faculty, staff, and students. While responsible for looking at the extent to which and how the institution meets NEASC standards for accreditation, the team also sought to provide some guidance and thoughts for consideration with respect to issues which Brandeis leaders had identified in their self-study and in conversations as of importance to them.

The self-study was comprehensive. Together with other documents, it covered the NEASC standards and provided insight into the current state of Brandeis, its past accomplishments and aspirations for the future, and the concerns and issues it faces in striving to achieve them. It will serve Brandeis well as a guidepost for planning and for assessing institutional effectiveness and achievement.

Brandeis is a distinguished research institution, which has attained a level of recognition exemplified by its membership in the Association of American Universities (which it achieved less than forty years after its founding). It has a unique and clearly articulated mission, grounded in the philosophy and social commitment of the Jewish community and of the individual whose name it bears. This mission is explicitly stated in various publications and widely understood by the University community, and it plays a significant role in institutional planning and development.

The team was greatly impressed by the commitment of all segments of the community to the Brandeis mission and to striving for continued excellence. We found administration, faculty, students and staff to be enthusiastic and dedicated, as well as extremely helpful to and open with the team as it went about its task. There is a dynamic and capable administration, a faculty dedicated to research and teaching, students eager to learn, to partake of the Brandeis experience and to engage the world, and a hard-working and loyal staff.

As with all institutions of higher education, there are difficult choices ahead to be faced. But Brandeis has grappled successfully with hard issues in the past and there is every expectation that they will do so in the future. The concerns of the previous accreditation review in 1996 have for the most part been addressed; the current study chronicles the great strides made since then and recognizes where further steps need to be taken.

Although we refer to the most significant strengths and concerns which we found during our review, and offer our suggestions and advice at the conclusion of our report, other strengths, concerns, and suggestions may be found within the body of the report. We

hope that they will be helpful to Brandeis. We recognize that the institution needs to apply its own judgment; our recommendations are offered in the spirit of collegiality.

Standard One: Mission and Purposes

Brandeis University has a clearly articulated mission as “a community of scholars and students” dedicated to academic excellence and pedagogical rigor, community service, and social justice, and it has a strong commitment to diversity. As noted in its mission statement, it was founded “...as a nonsectarian university under the sponsorship of the Jewish community to embody its highest ethical and cultural values...[,]” and it reflects the social philosophy of its namesake, whose 150th birth anniversary is celebrated this year. Brandeis seeks to embody the strengths of both a research university and a liberal arts college, a challenging endeavor. It is evident from the documents received and our interviews that the mission informs Brandeis’ planning and priorities, and provides a guidepost for decision-making and self-assessment.

The mission statement was formally adopted by the Board of Trustees in 1984, and can be found in various University publications (the bulletin, viewbook, handbooks, etc.) and on its website. There is a clear and consistent understanding of the mission among the segments of the University community, as well as a commitment to its fulfillment. While faculty and students may not use the exact words of the mission statement, they are clearly aware of and attracted to Brandeis because of the institutional ethos, and it is reflected in their aspirations and activities.

The mission is also reflected in various policies, such as the 2006 Diversity Statement, and recent decisions on the investment of the University’s endowment and on staff salaries and benefits. It also informs decisions on academic planning and programs.

Institutional Effectiveness

The mission has not been officially reviewed since 1984. However, it was discussed during the development of the Diversity Statement and is clearly the source of that document. It also served as a framework for the recent integrated planning process, which provided an opportunity for self-examination and to re-evaluate the goals and priorities of the University.

Standard Two: Planning and Evaluation

Planning

The preface of the self-study states that “Brandeis has moved from a style of operation often subject to crisis management to one characterized by long-term planning and the careful evaluation and ordering of institutional priorities.” The self-study and our review substantiate this claim. While there is general criticism of planning efforts made prior to 2000, efforts since then, which culminated in the process that produced the Integrated Plan in 2005, have generated a renewed sense of purpose, confidence and hope within the University.

In 2004, President Reinharz charged the senior management team to “create a multi-year plan for the University that supports programmatic goals, protects physical, financial, and human assets, but does so in a way that develops priorities and allocates resources across all areas.” The mission-driven plan that was formulated set a number of priorities in the academic and research, student, and financial areas in the 2006-12 planning period.

The priorities identified in the plan are large buckets that could contain a wide range of initiatives. In the early stage of the planning process, these buckets were no doubt overflowing. In the next stage, using a new financial model, the University “clearly identified the resource framework within which it operates and the projected resources potentially available for the FY2006-FY2012 planning period to support University priorities.” Using reasonable six year assumptions for tuition increases, tuition discounts, endowment draws, etc., the model dropped a total of \$20M to the bottom line to support University priorities. This sum then became the controlling factor in a decision making process that established what should remain in each bucket and what must be emptied. That process was the work of a strong, collaborative management team willing and able to reach a consensus, elaborated in the Integrated Plan, which they were willing and able to support and implement.

Most importantly, the Integrated Plan is operating as the major guide to institutional decision-making including the allocation of resources. The need for such a Plan was essential at this time, when those resources are severely limited and choices have to be made among competing interests. The self-study is clear in its assessment that balancing all of the needs of the University, while simultaneously protecting the asset base, was an “underlying tension explored in the Integrated Plan.”

In higher education there is often a disconnect between an institution’s academic and student life planning efforts and its budgeting process. Brandeis’ use of tight fiscal control to prioritize initiatives across the University is a major strength of the Integrated Plan. Holding to this fiscal discipline will be essential for the plan to be implemented successfully.

In the Integrated Plan a high priority was given to capital projects which use \$11M of the \$20M for their operating costs. While it is understood that the plan remains a dynamic document and that there is some flexibility in the allocation of the \$9M left after funding the operating costs of the capital projects, the ability of the University to respond to needs beyond those identified in the plan will be severely limited until after 2012. This is made a more difficult problem by the fact that the implications of this are not well understood by the faculty. In addition, the limited sum of \$20M did not give the University the ability to fund much beyond what had already been committed to and set into motion prior to the plan being formulated. This is in conflict with the impression of some faculty that the University has fiscally recovered and is in a position to make immediate moves in areas other than science and faculty salaries. Managing the disappointment factor that will arise will be necessary. More important, however, will be not succumbing to the pressure to escape the box defined by the available fiscal resources.

Evaluation

Benchmarks were established so that an assessment of the institutional progress toward the implementation of the Plan could be made periodically. The first such assessment was for fiscal year 2006 and is presented in the document *Integrated Plan Progress Report – FY06 progress & accomplishments*. The administration is committed to a yearly evaluation of the Plan and the progress made in its implementation.

One last point concerning the Integrated Plan needs to be made. Its success is critically dependent upon raising over \$100M in unrestricted funds while continuing to raise restricted dollars that fully fund the initial cost and operating expenses of the new initiatives they are intended to fund. All constituencies, but most importantly Trustees, need to understand this. Missing the mark in philanthropy will greatly hinder the implementation of the Integrated Plan.

Complementing the Integrated Plan are individual strategic plans that have been formulated by the Heller School for Social Policy and Management, the Rabb School of Continuing Studies, and the International Business School. These three schools operate under a Responsibility Center Management budget model that provides the opportunity for planning beyond the Integrated Plan. In addition to these schools are centers, institutes and numerous programs for which planning, review and evaluation policies and procedures have been established.

The University compiles and to some extent analyzes pertinent data but it lacks systematic controls and procedures to perform accurate and easy internal and external multi-year comparative analysis. This may be due to the fact that the institutional research function resides in three divisions. Given the critical role data analysis plays in planning and more importantly in evaluation, it is not clear why this function would not be better served by being centralized.

Institutional Effectiveness

The Integrated Plan allows for benchmarks to be identified that can determine progress and whether the initiatives implemented are having the desired effect. For example, science research productivity, the number of science majors, retention and recruitment of science faculty and much more can be looked at to measure the effectiveness of the science center. Recruitment and retention of faculty, general faculty morale and faculty productivity can be looked at to measure the effectiveness of the salary initiative. The continued cooperation among the management team and its ability and willingness to remain within fiscal restraints will test the effectiveness of Brandeis in implementing the Plan.

Standard Three: Organization and Governance

The organization and governance of Brandeis are typical for an institution of this type and function as reflected in written policies and established practices that serve the institutional mission and purpose. Conversations with various constituencies and a review of supporting documents such as organizational charts, Board of Trustees by-laws, handbooks, minutes of faculty meetings and the like, confirmed that practice follows policy and that there is an appropriate level of information dissemination and consultation across organizational lines throughout the University. While the institutional decision-making process is inclusive, lines of authority are such that decisions are made in a timely manner. Concerns are resolved through discussion, and feedback can result in policy change. Examples include a recent issue about the manner in which school deans are appointed, which was addressed by the Provost and the Faculty Senate, and an instance where faculty succeeded in making a case for extending the tenure clock by one year.

The Board of Trustees (BOT) consists of 48 voting members including the President, and none of these except the President have financial ties to the institution. The BOT also includes non-voting members: ten emeriti trustees, four elected faculty representatives, and three students (two undergraduate, one graduate). Trustees may serve up to three consecutive terms of four years. Business is conducted through eleven standing committees: Academic Affairs; Audit; Budget and Finance; Development; Executive; Honorary Degrees; Investment; Nominating and Governance; Personnel Policy, Compensation and Ethics; Physical Facilities; and Students and Enrollment. Committees are advisory to the BOT, except that the Investment Committee and the Executive Committee can act on behalf of the Board in prescribed ways.

The Board and senior officers are clear about their respective roles and degrees of authority and responsibility for institutional effectiveness. The team was impressed with the cohesiveness and very evident trust among senior officers and their commitment to working together within the framework of the Integrated Plan. Interviews confirmed that overall the BOT takes its fiduciary responsibilities seriously for philanthropy and the monitoring of financial resources. Interviews also revealed an appropriate balance between BOT oversight on the one hand and, on the other, delegated authority for new initiatives and ongoing programs which are the responsibility of senior staff or faculty. The BOT committee structure allows for review of the President's performance and compensation, monitoring conflict of interest of BOT members, and evaluating performance of BOT committees and individual members. For example, a recent review of committee effectiveness led to recommendations that will allow some committees to meet concurrently and with some overlap, and for longer times to enhance the quality of discussion and cross-communication.

The self-study noted extensive use of external advisory boards and councils, including boards for each school, center, institute, and several representative constituencies. These boards require resources and substantial time from senior staff (especially the Provost who attends many meetings), but they generally serve useful functions in providing advice to the administration and in fund-raising.

The lines of responsibility that ensure academic integrity and quality are well-defined and typical for a private institution of this size and complexity. The President delegates to the Provost, and the Provost consults with and receives advice and recommendations from the faculty bodies and their representative committees and task forces in areas such as curriculum development, new academic programs, tenure and promotion. Resources are allocated within the framework of the Integrated Plan, but with some flexibility. The Dean of Arts and Sciences' decisions on departmental requests for faculty hires were reported by faculty to be fair. However, the team noted that the necessary sequencing of priorities has generated a sense among some faculty that support in certain areas, such as the humanities and arts, is falling behind (see Standard Five on faculty). Students are consulted on issues relevant to their interests through their elected representatives, membership on task forces, or directly through their own governing bodies.

The Faculty Senate is an elected body with elected officers that represents the entire University faculty. Issues of shared governance in faculty personnel decisions and related policies are a traditional focus, but the Senate may consider any matter deemed relevant to the educational and research missions of the University. The three professional schools also have separate councils that deal with their local faculty curriculum and self-governance issues.

A Faculty Senate executive group meets regularly with the Provost to plan agendas for University faculty meetings, which are held six times a year and are open to faculty emeriti and academic administrators. A separate University Advisory Council appointed by the Provost serves to advise her on the appointment of school officers, major program decisions, and other matters of concern to faculty life and effectiveness.

The Faculty Handbook is followed closely, with a special standing committee to interpret policy as needed. Faculty have responsibility for the Handbook, and from time to time recommend revisions for approval by the BOT. Faculty representatives to the BOT have both voice and vote on Board committees, and regularly report back to the faculty at large. Faculty members are engaged and appear satisfied with their role in shared governance, and have gained confidence from having worked through some difficult issues with the administration.

Elected student representatives serve on the BOT and its committees and can participate in faculty meetings. Students are also invited to attend a number of other standing committees and councils. The students interviewed take their representative roles seriously, taking issues back to students at large for information and for discussion. There are separate self-governing bodies for the undergraduate student body (Student Union Senate), and graduate students (Graduate Student Association Senate). Interviews with representatives confirmed the self-study report that both bodies are active and effective in advancing student life and engagement in decision-making processes at the University.

Institutional Effectiveness

The organizational structure and governance system is suited to Brandeis and serves its mission well. As is true for most academic institutions, there are quite a few committees and councils with some apparent overlaps in jurisdiction; however the systems and processes that serve shared governance at Brandeis seem to be well understood by participating constituencies and appreciated as very effective. Recent review of trustee committees has led to a more effective mode of organization and operation.

Standard Four: The Academic Program

Brandeis offers a wide variety of degree and certificate programs in recognized fields that are consistent with the institution's mission and purpose. While Brandeis is at heart focused on liberal education with traditional general education requirements, its mission and programs also emphasize the application of skills knowledge for the benefit of society. Accordingly, attention is paid to integrating the values of liberal education into pre-professional and professional studies, and experiential learning opportunities complement traditional coursework.

The University bulletin, information on graduate placements, and interviews with current students, faculty and administration confirmed for the team that these programs are designed at the appropriate level for each degree and of high quality. There is strong faculty control of the quality and integrity of each program. The learning goals for each degree program are published in print and on the web so that students should be able to understand the purpose of the preparation that each degree offers as well as what each student is expected to achieve. Information technology and literacy is taught as part of the undergraduate writing requirement, and reinforced through library intensive courses and the use of WebCT in major's courses. Brandeis is developing a culture and processes that support an institutional approach to regular review of programs and assessment of student learning outcomes.

The faculty oversees curriculum, program creation and academic issues generally through a system of school faculty committees and councils. Departments ordinarily submit recommendations to their school council. The Deans and Provost may also initiate proposals for changes to academic programs in consultation with the appropriate faculties. The Board of Trustees approves new degree programs.

Undergraduate Degree Programs

Apparently more self-directed than most, the Brandeis student seems compelled, at the moment, to load up on majors rather than using electives to try out unexplored areas of the curriculum. Several new undergraduate majors and minors have been added since 2000, bringing the totals to 41 and 46, respectively. New majors include Biological Physics, Creative Writing, East Asian Studies, Health: Science, Society, and Policy, International and Global Studies, and Women's and Gender Studies. New minors include Education Studies, Internet Studies, and Social Justice and Social Policy. Collaboration across disciplines is one of Brandeis' strengths, and there has been a proliferation of distinctive interdisciplinary programs so that eleven majors and about half of the minors

are interdisciplinary. In addition to several of those mentioned above, interdisciplinary majors include European Cultural Studies and Neuroscience. Interdisciplinary minors include Environmental Studies, Film Studies, and Legal Studies. While showing admirable intellectual breadth, this has caused both faculty and administration to acknowledge that resources, especially faculty time, have been stretched thin in offering so many majors and minors.

Over 35% of juniors study abroad for at least a summer in more than 250 approved programs for credit. A new program funded by the Davis Foundation is designed to increase experiential learning opportunities. The team was satisfied that the criteria and processes used to validate academic credit for internships and other approved experiences were adequate.

General Education

General education requirements are overseen by committees responsible for each requirement, and the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee oversees the whole. Recently, these bodies put a plan in place to strengthen the writing requirement, and discussion is underway to revise the curriculum so as to include more study of diverse histories and cultures.

The undergraduate general education requirements for current students include:

- First-year seminar in Humanistic Inquiry with an option as writing-intensive. This option consists of two additional writing-intensive courses.
- First-year writing seminar and one more writing intensive course if Humanistic Inquiry is not writing-intensive.
- Quantitative reasoning course
- Non-Western and comparative studies course
- Foreign language to third semester equivalence
- One course each in Humanities, Creative Arts, Science, Social Science

For students matriculating in fall 2007 or after, the Humanities Inquiry seminar has been replaced with a first-year seminar focused on critical thinking, a first-year writing seminar, and either two courses designated writing-intensive, or one writing-intensive course and one oral-communications-intensive course. The new writing program promises to be more effective.

Graduate Degree Programs

There are four graduate divisions: the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, the Heller School for Social Policy and Management, the International Business School, and the Division of Graduate Professional Studies in the Rabb School of Continuing Studies.

Faculty feel extremely satisfied with the quality of the graduate students they recruit and the education those students receive. This is especially true of the Heller and International Business Schools. Graduate students are well satisfied with the training they receive at Brandeis. Although they would like more and varied graduate seminars than

relatively small Ph.D. programs can provide, they recognize that the Consortium (which includes Brandeis, Boston College, Boston University, and Tufts University) can give them what they may lack on the Brandeis campus. Virtually all those students with whom we met had taken advantage of courses offered through the Consortium.

Arts and Sciences

Admission to doctoral programs is highly selective and competitive. Admission to coursework master's programs is not as selective, because many students enroll in these programs for professional advancement rather than training as independent scholars. The programs offered are consistent with advanced graduate level instruction with one exception—that is, courses that are open to both graduate and undergraduate students. While this practice helps to ensure that there are enough courses for students to meet requirements, there was a consensus among graduate students interviewed that courses at the 100-level do not do all that well at serving both graduate and undergraduate students. There was concern that the courses were not taught at a level appropriate for graduate students. Some of these courses require graduate students to do more work but this does not necessarily mean the work is more advanced. 100-level courses should be reviewed and standardized across departments, wherever possible. At the least, course descriptions should be clear as to which have a rigorous option for graduate credit and what the expectations are for graduate course credit versus undergraduate credit.

The master's programs are of good design and function consistent with the school's mission. Expansion of the number of master's programs, including some in applied fields, are intended to generate revenue. A proposal to create a Dean of the Arts and Sciences Graduate School for stronger intellectual leadership is under consideration by the faculty.

Brandeis endeavors to provide support for graduate student development in areas such as conference travel and grant-writing workshops. Brandeis recently raised stipends to competitive levels for students in doctoral science programs. The overall stipend budget limits the University's ability to offer more competitive stipends in the other Arts and Sciences disciplines, leaving them challenged to enroll a critical mass of high quality students.

Heller School for Social Policy and Management

The manifestation of the Heller mission has changed over time beginning several years ago with its name change from the School for Advanced Studies in Social Welfare to the School for Social Policy and Management. There has been a shift in emphasis from doctoral to master's programs and, with the advent of the International Business School, some of the Heller School master's level management programs, in particular the MBA, and its special niche for the enrollment of international graduate students, might seem to overlap with recent development of the IBS. Interviews with representatives of both schools demonstrated that the separate MBA's are quite different and justified. The Heller School also is home to a wide variety of research and policy centers which enhance the school's overall impact. The school is currently developing a new master's program in public policy in an effort to boost enrollments and finances.

International Business School (IBS)

IBS was established in 1994. It has a timely mission and is thriving. Admission is highly selective for both the master's and doctoral programs even as enrollments are increasing in a disciplined way, with the addition of faculty to match needs. The school plans to develop "fields of excellence" depending upon specialization clusters among the faculty. The IBS has developed rapidly with distinctive programs and is on track for AACSB accreditation this year.

Rabb School of Continuing Studies

The Rabb School has three divisions: Graduate Professional Studies, Summer School, and the Osher Institute for Lifelong Learning. Four master's degree programs are offered: Bioinformatics, Management of Projects and Programs, Information Technology Management, and Software Engineering. The last two are offered on campus and on-line. All require 10 courses except Bioinformatics which requires 12. All four program curricula serve certificate programs as well.

The Rabb School has a strong hiring and faculty mentoring process which helps to ensure quality instruction. More could be done to communicate internally the value of the role that the Rabb School plays in the University's mission. Student services for the Rabb School are self-contained, with an associate director for student services providing most services.

The University recently outfitted new facilities for the Rabb School, providing attractive offices, two conference rooms that can double as classrooms, and a local area cluster network for use in the school's lab-based programs. Classrooms in regular University buildings are used for Rabb School on-site courses. There is some concern that changes in the undergraduate program may cause competition for classrooms after 5:30 p.m. but the school reports no problems to date with room availability.

Student learning and graduate outcomes are tracked well; courses are evaluated twice during a ten-week term to provide formative feedback while the course is still in progress. Overall, the Rabb School is ahead of other units in systematic assessment of program effectiveness and student outcomes.

Integrity in the Award of Academic Credit

A review of degree and certificate offerings suggests they are appropriately named and that the duration and requirements are consistent with those offered at other NEASC accredited institutions.

Students, faculty and administrators including the Registrar were asked about availability of course offerings. There does not appear to be any problem in this area. Administrators expressed a willingness to accommodate the few rare instances where this might come up, either by permitting an under-enrolled course or by directed study. The University has a series of mechanisms for the oversight of the undergraduate academic program, beginning with the department, moving through a school based council, through

a University-wide Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, up through administrative channels to the Board of Trustees. Graduate education is overseen by two graduate education councils, one for the GSAS and the other for the Heller, Rabb, and International Business Schools as well as the University administration and Board of Trustees. It is clear that the University takes its responsibility for the quality of the academic program very seriously. As noted previously, one area of concern identified was the use of 100 level courses for undergraduate, master's and doctoral level students. There is no written standard for additional work to be done by graduate students to justify the award of graduate credit for an undergraduate level course, and the team heard from students as well as some faculty that these courses do not always meet the normal criteria for graduate level credit.

Systems for admissions, transfer credit, records and registration appear to be well functioning with evidence of both faculty and administrative involvement. Faculty positions at all of the institution's schools are coveted and the selection process is very competitive, with much energy put into selecting the very best candidates. The Committee on Academic Standing oversees student progress, meeting regularly and recommending policy to the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee as needed. The standard credit awarded for undergraduate courses is 4.0 per semester, with a general rule of thumb that this means three hours of classroom time and 3-6 hours of outside work. This rule is not written but is generally used as a guide by the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and the Graduate Education Councils. These committees determine if the course content is sufficient for 4 credits or needs to be revised. There are also 2.0 credit courses and a similar approval process is used for those. The committees are broadly representative of the faculty, administration, and student body and assure that the credit awarded is consistent with course content, appropriate to the field of study, and reflective of the amount of learning.

Requirements for continuation in, termination from, and readmission to all programs are described in the Bulletin and are available on websites. Graduation requirements are clearly stated. The self-study noted that it is difficult to ensure consistency and currency of the many web pages that contain information on majors, various requirements and regulations. The team agreed that this is an important issue worthy of attention. The Committee on Academic Standing and the Registrar work together to assure that students have successfully completed all degree requirements. There is a formal process for dealing with academic integrity problems and information on this is readily available to students in the Bulletin.

Summer program courses are developed by the regular academic departments and are equivalent to courses offered during the regular academic year. Off-site courses are offered by regular faculty using the same standards as on-site courses. Certificate programs are offered at the Rabb School and rely on the same courses used for degree credit. Transfer credit policies are published in the Bulletin and appear to be similar to other NEASC accredited schools, reasonable, and without unnecessary barriers. Brandeis has no articulation agreements with other institutions. The Registrar evaluates and approves transfer credit requests, which must involve work completed at accredited

institutions with a grade of C- or better for undergraduates and B- or better for graduate programs. In every case, the amount of transfer credit allowed does not exceed NEASC standards. Departments determine which major requirements may be satisfied with transfer credits and assure that credit accepted is equivalent to degree requirements.

The Undergraduate Curriculum Committee assures that there is demonstrable academic content for undergraduate study abroad programs by reviewing and approving each program. The process in place for graduate programs in some cases might benefit from a review process for the initial approval of sites and for periodic review. There are written guidelines for independent study, service learning and internships, with individual faculty members having considerable discretion in determining requirements for individual experiences.

The self-study identified the need for increased attention to assuring that there are clearly stated learning objectives for all majors and a process for reviewing this has begun.

Overall, the institution is highly effective in assuring integrity in the award of degree credit. It has identified a need for more work in the area of assessment and have begun a process to address this.

Assessment of Student Learning

Brandeis does not have a systematic, broad-based and integrated approach to assessment of student learning. Current best indicators of student learning cited in the self-study include traditional course grades, mastering prerequisites to higher level courses, and qualitative assessment of students' academic achievement through faculty-student interactions both in and out of the classroom. Assistance such as tutoring and workshops are available to students. The need for more rigorous assessment of learning that can be measured against course and program objectives is being addressed. A recently hired Assistant Provost has been charged with responsibility for academic assessment activities, and this person has begun working with faculty on the issue. A pilot inventory of assessment strategy in eleven Arts and Sciences departments and programs revealed a few footholds but mostly wide variation in the degree of commitment to the assessment of undergraduate learning. A working group will carry on continued planning and development in this important area and the Provost has initiated a review to determine how these data could be used more effectively in assessing learning outcomes.

The graduate programs are further ahead in monitoring student progress, partly because graduate education is more personalized with on-on-one mentorship and has accepted milestones of progress. The Rabb School is the furthest along with learning objectives and assessment for their programs. Heller is developing core competencies for the master's program in Sustainable International Development.

Although the University falls short on systematic assessment of student outcomes, the team was pleased to find a strong commitment from the Provost's Office to create a culture that values and supports assessment, and to provide the resources and leadership to achieve results. It is difficult to establish a culture in Arts and Sciences that values and

practices regular assessment of program effectiveness in relation to student outcomes, and improvement will depend on both administration direction and support as well as a self-generated push from the faculty.

Distance Learning

Distance learning is under the auspices of the Rabb School of Continuing Studies in the Division of Graduate Professional Studies, and planning for distance education courses is part of the general Rabb School planning process. Its courses and degree programs are under the oversight of both the Rabb School Council and the University Council of Graduate Professional Schools, which also oversees programs at the Heller School and the International Business School. New programs and significant program changes must be approved by these Councils and may require Trustee approval under the same conditions as other University programs. The institution is committed to assuring that the programs maintain standards of rigor and quality appropriate to a Brandeis education. In 2004, NEASC approved new distance learning master's programs and praised Brandeis for the care taken to ensure compliance with standards for on-line programming.

Most of the distance learning students are local and can use resources on campus. Approximately 50 are in distant locations and must rely upon on-line resources. Program staff follow these students closely to assure that their needs are met. Students have access to on-line offerings at the library, IT resources, labs and equipment as appropriate. Faculty access is available to all students, through email, telephone, and virtual and regular office hours. Academic advising is provided by the faculty, program director and staff. While no financial aid in the form of grants is available to students, they may apply for loans.

Because the program relies primarily on adjunct faculty, there are a number of mechanisms in place for faculty orientation, development, and evaluation. Faculty who teach on-line courses are required to complete a training and orientation module. Oversight in this area is perhaps greater than exists for courses taught by full-time faculty in other units. The Rabb School, perhaps because of its size, age of its programs, and use of adjunct faculty, has made greater progress on developing learning outcomes and assessment measures than many other areas of the University. Program directors report no difficulty with availability of required course offerings on-line and noted a willingness to accommodate students who need a particular course to complete degree requirements, either by permitting an under-enrolled course to be offered or by directed study. Policies related to admission, readmission, transfer credit, and other student expectations are published on the School's website and in the Bulletin.

Institutional Effectiveness

Brandeis is forcefully committed to the quality, effectiveness, and integrity of its academic programs as its highest priority. Both the programs and the activities directly and indirectly related to them are consistent with the published mission statement. The new Integrated Plan for Brandeis' future is designed to support this principal commitment in creative ways that have the potential to balance expansion with adequate human and financial resources. The commitment to more systematic and rigorous assessment of

programs and student outcomes that was articulated in the self-study and in the team's on-site interviews should result in an even stronger academic agenda.

Standard Five: Faculty

According to the recent self-study, Brandeis has a faculty of 343, of which 247 are tenured or tenure-track and 96 are contract faculty. The preponderance of contract faculty are strategically placed in the Heller and International Business Schools, sciences, fine arts, and foreign languages. The administration has gone to some lengths to clarify and enhance the titles attached to these various roles and spell out career ladders for each, as well as procedures for renewal and promotion. In addition to these specifications, the report of the Committee on Contract Faculty (March 2005) recommended that the University not increase the number of contract faculty, and that it might, on a case-by-case basis, consider converting some contract faculty to tenure-track positions.

Because Brandeis has a relatively small faculty, full-time tenure-track lines are in short supply. In discussions with administrators and faculty, the team was told that a slow-down in hiring was a trade-off for incremental improvement in salaries. It will continue to be necessary for the upper administration to consider many factors in allocating those lines and for departments to exercise great care in selecting the best candidates for the few lines available. On the plus side, the intellectual environment at Brandeis and its location in the greater Boston area make it possible to recruit some of the best candidates in the country. Moreover, the recent initiative of the Dean of Arts and Sciences to raise faculty salaries has made Brandeis competitive with its sister schools in this respect. Recent salary increases have also gone a long way toward improving faculty morale. But while the present faculty are extremely well qualified for their positions, the number of faculty, when supplemented by contract faculty, is barely sufficient to cover departmental curricula and staff the variety of interdisciplinary programs initiated in recent years.

The problem of faculty being over-stretched is exacerbated by several factors in addition to the actual number. On the positive side is a campus culture of faculty willingness to participate in a wide range of community activities and responsibilities. But Arts and Sciences has a large number of small units and this adds an extra burden to faculty. This is an organizational issue which bears looking into.

The faculty obviously feel that Brandeis is very much their University, and they engage passionately in issues, problems and planning that affect its future. Such engagement can be cultivated only in an atmosphere of academic freedom and respect for both colleagues and members of the administration. Such an atmosphere clearly prevails. The Faculty Handbook, authored by faculty representatives in consultation with the administration, spells out the rights and obligations of Brandeis faculty.

Untenured tenure-track faculty deserve special mention. Even though they feel all the insecurity experienced by faculty during the probationary period, junior faculty also feel fortunate to be starting their careers in the intellectual environment at Brandeis. They appreciate the availability of the Norman Fund research grants and a one-semester research

leave during their fourth year. For the most part, recent changes in the tenure clock, mentoring system, and review process have enhanced their sense of security. Through careful hiring and monitoring, almost all junior faculty achieve renewal and most earn tenure.

Teaching and Advising

A significant number of faculty have worked overtime and collaboratively to create interdisciplinary courses that contribute to Brandeis' ample number of interdisciplinary programs. Students understand and appreciate the effort that faculty invest in new courses and innovative teaching methods, including teaching technology. The Writing Program deserves special mention for its innovative methods of training teaching assistants and ensuring that the same standards prevail for the teaching of writing-intensive courses across the curriculum. Brandeis does well in assessing the quality of teaching and advising. There is an annual orientation for faculty advisors. The Committee for the Support of Teaching conducts special workshops and has a website providing pedagogical resources. Assessment feedback is also obtained from course evaluations, internal departmental reviews, and as part of the mentoring of tenure-track faculty. In addition, there are regular visitations to observe teachers of writing courses and untenured tenure-track faculty.

Scholarship, Research, and Creative Activity

As for scholarship, research, and creative activity, there is no question that as a group Brandeis faculty are on the cutting edge of their respective disciplines. The faculty include five Howard Hughes Medical Investigators, three MacArthur Fellows, and over 40 Fellows of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, American Association for the Advancement of Science, or the National Academy of Sciences. The University's commitment to the life of the mind and to contributing to the welfare of humankind is reflected in its faculty's dedication to research, teaching, and service. The administration in turn clearly understands that the faculty is Brandeis' greatest resource.

Institutional Effectiveness

Departments in the College of Arts and Sciences would benefit from systematic external reviews of the type recently conducted for the Creative Arts departments and foreign language programs.

Standard Six: Students

Admissions

Brandeis has given the recruitment and retention of undergraduate students a prominent place over the past several years. The formation of the Division of Students and Enrollment in 2000 introduced a comprehensive enrollment management approach to the campus. The Integrated Plan established several critical goals to achieve by 2012: lowering the acceptance rate to 35%, achieving an average SAT of 1380, a five year graduation rate of 90%, providing competitive facilities, lowering the discount rate as far as possible while achieving enrollment stability, and improving the quality and diversity of

the student body. Brandeis has made commendable progress in meeting virtually all of these goals.

Over the past seven years the applicant pool has increased from 6103 to 7637, and the overall quality of the pool has been maintained. Over the same period acceptance rate was reduced from 48% to 34%, the discount rate was reduced to 36%, and average SAT scores increased from 1312 to 1367. The size of the applicant pool was increased through more targeted marketing, a massive increase in the number names purchased, adding younger students to the pool of purchased names in order to create a pipeline, a conscious use of direct marketing, and special initiatives directed at “fencesitters” (segments of the applicant pool that had been in the pool but seldom matriculated), and the strategic use of financial aid. Progress on attracting minority students has been slow, and will require continued attention.

The last accreditation review recommended “developing a financial aid policy that takes into account institutional resources”. Thoughtful attention has been paid to this matter and the discount rate has been reduced substantially, but the University remains dependent on a significant amount of unfunded aid. The proportion of the class with need has grown in the last five years from 38.5% to 48.3%, average need has increased by 15%, the average grant has increased by 38%, and the percent of need met by grant has increased. The University is monitoring this area closely and appropriately.

Retention and Graduation

The leadership at Brandeis has taken the view that the most important element in retention is recruiting a class that considers Brandeis their first choice, and then coupling that with a comprehensive approach to providing programs and services. This approach has yielded impressive results, moving first to second year retention from 90% to 96%, and the five year graduation rate to 88%.

This change in approach was coupled with the addition of amenities attractive to students, including the Shapiro Campus Center, the Village residence halls, a fitness center in the Village, plans to begin construction on a new residential complex in June, ongoing renovations in existing halls, and a new track and synthetic playing field. All of these steps are responsive to the recommendation in the last accreditation review that Brandeis needed to address “issues related to deferred maintenance, especially undergraduate and graduate housing.” While progress has been made, the extent of the needed attention remains significant. In addition, the need for graduate housing remains largely unaddressed, and deferred maintenance in athletics facilities needs attention, particularly the swimming pool and the track and floor in the Gosman Center.

Student Services

The student culture at Brandeis seems vital and positive. Students we interviewed expressed appreciation for the willingness of the University to trust them to take responsibility for their own education. They work hard in an environment of inquiry and activism, and one student said, “I am too blessed to be stressed.”

Student Affairs staff described the move to the students and enrollment structure as helping them to be “much more integrated and intentional,” feeling that they now receive more attention and support, as a result of being more valued in the academy. Staff appear to organize their work around stated core values, and provide a full range of services staffed by well trained and engaged professionals. Student services emphasizes support of Brandeis’ academic mission and the promotion of student leadership. This is accomplished through various offices, such as the Department of Orientation and First-Year Programs, established in 2004, which is in regular contact with new students, beginning prior to their arrival on campus; the Department of Student Activities (Brandeis students are often active in several clubs at the same time); the Community service Department, which provides extensive opportunities for participating in volunteer community outreach programs; the Office of Student Enrichment Services, which offers tutoring and academic skills workshops, as well as special support for first-generation college students; as well as traditional offices for athletics and recreation, health and counseling services, academic advising, and the like.

Two areas needing attention did emerge in our interviews, and both had been identified in the self-study. Students and staff both expressed concerns about the inadequacies of the Hiatt Career Center, and steps have been taken to address those inadequacies. Some students felt that the Center catered to certain types of students (namely pre-law, pre-med, business) and was not as helpful to liberal arts majors, and that outreach to the latter may come too late in their college career. A new director, hired in 2004, has re-organized the Center and increased resources (such as a new website) and contacts with alumni and employers. There is also need for more attention to services for graduate students, including housing and improvements to what is described as inadequate health insurance. The Committee on Graduate Student issues was formed in 2002 to address concerns, and students report that they believe their concerns have been heard. There are plans to add a position in the counseling center focused on graduate students.

Institutional Effectiveness

The Division of Students and Enrollment is data-driven in many of its functions, and uses three sets of principles and practices: support the academic mission, promote student leadership, and use assessment to ensure continuous improvement. A number of assessment mechanisms are used to help inform and evaluate this work. These include the Admitted Student Questionnaire, the Cooperative Institutional Research Project, Senior Survey, Student Satisfaction Inventory, and the Institutional Priorities Survey.

Standard Seven: Library and Other Information Resources

The Brandeis University Library and Information Technology Services merged in 2005 to form Library and Technology Services (LTS). The new department provides appropriate information resources and services, and instructional and information technology, to support the fulfillment of Brandeis’ mission.

Faculty and students reported satisfaction in finding the information they need for classroom use, student assignments, and research, either through LTS, collaborative

arrangements with other institutions (e.g. the Boston Library Consortium), or direct access to the libraries of other institutions. Some faculty feel that the University Library should offer the deep and broad collections of a comprehensive research library, but this may be unrealistic given the library's current size and resources. Research collections (whether print, digital or "other") should be sustained in areas where Brandeis has stated its intention to excel. LTS input into academic planning appears to be spotty, and it is not clear whether information resources have been fully considered as new graduate and interdepartmental programs have been created. The University may wish to consider a formal all-university process by which information resources are considered in relation to the creation of new academic programs.

The integration of library and technology staff and resources, as well as the University's commitment of resources over the last decade, has led to perceived improvements in desktop and classroom support. Faculty commented enthusiastically on how greatly things have improved since the last accreditation, with classrooms well-equipped for technology use, prompt and knowledgeable desktop support available, a cycle replacement program for computers, etc. Several faculty members in specialized areas – language teaching and the arts – indicated that they now have the tools they need to teach and work with students, and commented on the value of having both a librarian and a technologist assigned to assist them. The computer help desk was recently moved to the Library, where it is within a few feet of the reference and circulation desks, and faculty and students appreciate this step toward "one stop shopping." When asked about technology support for sponsored research, the faculty we talked to said that they understood themselves to be "on their own" to find support via their grants. LTS support for sponsored research may be an area that the University should strengthen as it moves to advance its research programs.

Staff members in LTS are enthusiastic about the integration and appear to have made the transition from service provider mentality (Technology Services) and client (Library) to a full partnership in delivering library and information services to the Brandeis community. Each group of specialists feels that they are learning from the other. One individual described the environment as an "atmosphere of sharing." While there are always some rapids to be negotiated in integrating two complex organizations with somewhat different cultures, the two units in LTS share a common commitment to service that has facilitated their partnership. LTS is devoting resources to training and staff development, necessary in an organization where technology is constantly evolving and where cross-training is critical to success. Staff development and training may be an area in which the University will be called upon to invest additional resources if it wishes to see LTS remain current or even ahead of community needs and expectations.

Faculty felt that LTS was under-resourced in regard to peer institutions and while they greatly appreciated all that the department was able to achieve with what it had, both faculty and staff expressed concern about the ability of the department to continue to excel as it kept taking on more and more without growth in staff and other resources. The University has committed \$1 million to the Library over the course of the next several years, but this comes after a prior cut and in a world where information resources

substantially inflate in cost annually. The current level of funding will make it difficult for the Library to maintain and develop collections (print or digital), especially in areas where Brandeis wishes to add new programs or strengthen research/graduate programs. It appears that LTS was not included in the last development campaign and is not included in the campaign currently being planned. Developing a realistic “case statement” for information needs, including a possible renovation of the facilities, would be a way of addressing some of these resource issues.

Although several individuals we talked with, especially on the technology side, expressed a need for additional staff, there was also a belief that “we have no place to put them.” The Library buildings we saw were crowded with people and collections, and while some effort has been made to modernize the facilities for the use of technology, the buildings are overall dated, with infrastructure that is on its last legs, and a lack of the amenities that 21st century users have come to expect in library/information centers. When we were touring the building, we saw no indication of light use – computer clusters were full and students were using other parts of the building – but the environment is not such as to encourage users to linger for study and contemplation or to facilitate group study, so important in today’s pedagogy. The Library is well past “working capacity” when it comes to the storage of print collections, a situation which makes it difficult for faculty and students to find books and for staff to maintain the stacks. The situation has been exacerbated by the placing of other, non-information-related entities in the buildings. We learned that Shepley Bulfinch Richardson & Abbot Architects have been retained to undertake a library space study and to recommend ways in which these spaces can be improved and modernized. While Brandeis may not have the resources to embrace the full SBRA vision, we suggest that the University consider some renovation of the Library to improve service and staff spaces, replace aging infrastructure, and address the severe collection crowding.

Institutional Effectiveness

LTS has evaluated its success in fulfilling its mission with tools such as LibQUAL+, a survey of students and information technology administered through EDUCAUSE, and MISO, a survey specifically addressed to the use and effectiveness of the merged services. LTS intends to continue such assessment activities and to use the information collected to enhance its services and operations. Despite the concerns noted above LTS is doing an excellent job of meeting the information needs connected with the University’s mission.

Standard Eight: Physical and Technological Resources

Brandeis’ technological infrastructure has by all accounts undergone a tremendous improvement since the last report. In the 1996 accreditation report it was noted that faculty felt underserved by the information technology department. The faculty members we met with were unanimous in their praise for the level, reliability and performance of the LTS resources. Arts faculty remarked, for example, that the availability of new and reliable technology in and outside the classroom allowed them to innovatively change the way they teach.

Brandeis has a well utilized course management system which links seamlessly into various on-line databases provided by the library. There is a ubiquitous wireless network protected by appropriate security and identity management systems. The merger of the library and information technology facilitates the provision of not only text databases but streaming video converted from library holdings and various other media sources.

Eighty-five percent of Brandeis' classrooms now have permanently mounted projectors, computer and audio-visual consoles that let faculty and students interact with the course management systems which itself is linked to a plethora of on-line resources such as the library on-line reserves. A similar number of classrooms have undergone maintenance renovations (furniture, carpets, paint, etc.) as part of the campus master plan. The University switched to a modern Voice over Internet Protocol telephone system a few years ago which it plans to 'uplift' as part of an \$8 million technology infrastructure overhaul and expansion.

While the LTS management and staff are widely respected for the services they provide, concerns about sustainability of their high level of responsiveness have been raised. The concern is that as more services are requested (and no 'old' services are removed) the staff will be unable to provide reliable service without additional staff being added.

LTS is spending considerable resources on identity management and system security. However, an earlier staff member dedicated to this function has not been replaced when he left Brandeis. The University should consider filling this staff position once again to maintain and preserve system integrity.

In the 1996 report, deferred maintenance was cited as one of the main concerns. A lot has been done since that time to understand and manage this issue. Indeed, the University has developed a capital renewal prioritization plan, and is funding major maintenance to the tune of \$6-7 million annually right now, with a goal of \$12 million, which represents 2 to 2.5% of the replacement value of the physical plant. This, combined with competent management, represents a significant step in the right direction.

However, the list of deferred maintenance is large. Even though some of the older residence halls are being renovated at a cost of approximately \$1M every year, and even though new residence halls have been added and are planned for the near future, a large portion of the residence halls are still not up to modern standards. We already noted the library as being in need of substantial renovation which will directly affect the academic mission of the University. We were told of less critical but emotionally important buildings, such as the chapel complexes, which are in dire need of renovation. The Usdan Student Center, which is being improved now in the spaces used for student service offices, needs substantially more renovations in the student dining area. We also felt that outside spaces need great improvement and applaud the beginnings of coordinated walkways, open spaces and other landscaping befitting the status of a university such as

Brandeis. Attention is being paid to ADA compliance throughout the campus in new buildings but there is recognition that more needs to be done for existing older buildings.

The University is doing an outstanding job in promoting fire safety. Approximately 90% of the residence halls are sprinkled as are a group of smaller wood frame houses occupied by students. The plan is to have 100% coverage but this would be exorbitantly expensive in one older structure (“the castle”). Meanwhile, all these facilities are linked by alarm to the fire department. The fire safety program, originally projected to take seven years, has been accelerated.

The University has an ambitious capital project plan which will culminate in a new science building to be started in January of 2007. Many other projects have recently been completed: a new student center, large residence hall, additions to the Heller school and other creative adaptive use of older space. All these projects appear to have been completed on time and on budget through competent planning and project management. However, like deferred maintenance, a long list of other projects (over \$400 million) is waiting after the science center and expectations may need to be managed, especially since many projects were recently completed and others may feel it is “their turn.”

While no buildings are being designed for LEED* certification because of the high additional costs for certification, the University is very conscious of sustainability issues and incorporates LEED principles in the design. A final concern is that the University does not have, nor is it building, a detailed business continuity and disaster recovery plan. We urge that such a plan be created.

Institutional Effectiveness

Brandeis clearly continues to evaluate its physical and technological needs and resources. Much progress has been made since the last accreditation especially in previous areas of concern such as the adequacy of technological resources and deferred maintenance.

Standard Nine: Financial Resources

Brandeis is extremely well managed. It has made huge progress in the management of financial assets since the last accreditation. The three critical elements in this transformation have been the recruitment of strong financial leadership, the development of an Integrated Plan, and the confidence earned from the Board of Trustees, senior administrative leadership and the faculty.

Senior leadership of the University implemented a seven-year Integrated Plan that utilizes a carefully constructed revenue model to provide a framework for the development of academic, facility and financial priorities. Development of the plan took place at a time

* *Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System is the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction, and operation of high performance green buildings.*

of financial crisis for the institution. Therefore, the financial priorities were acknowledged and accepted as critical for the success and growth of the institution.

Essential characteristics of the effective implementation of the plan include:

- Faculty and senior staff are aware of the presence and content of the document.
- The plan is constructed with full participation and leadership from the senior financial team and within a framework of limited resources.
- Brandeis leadership has demonstrated discipline to manage the University in strict adherence to the plan with the full support of the faculty.

Support for the planning structure, acceptance of the priorities and monitoring financial benchmarks have made Brandeis a much stronger organization financially. Particular credit should be given for fully funding depreciation, reducing distribution from endowment, strengthening fund raising, and balancing the budget.

The University continues to face a number of significant financial challenges. This is further complicated by an apparent perception on campus that the financial goals of the plan have been largely achieved and that academic priorities and faculty growth along with physical plant expansion will take precedence in the coming years.

The University is completing planning and design for new life sciences, arts and student housing projects with the life sciences building at the top of the priority list. While Brandeis has raised \$35 million for life sciences and has a verbal understanding for another \$10 million gift, the goal for fund raising is \$74 million and it plans to issue \$80 million in new debt, for which it has already consummated a swap agreement to fix its interest rate. The goal of constructing the building in a sustainable manner so that operations and maintenance costs do not exceed the cost of buildings being taken down is very optimistic. Construction of the life sciences building, while carefully planned, will significantly tax institutional resources.

As Brandeis attempts to identify academic priorities, it must not neglect institutional infrastructure. As noted above, particular attention should be paid to deferred maintenance and the improvement of facilities requiring major renovation and adaptation. In addition, the leadership should act to strengthen research support and compliance, development of well documented policies and procedures, and the professional development and opportunities for advancement of the staff.

Brandeis faces a significant challenge to manage the expectations of faculty and academic leaders regarding the academic opportunities which will be achievable and able to be integrated into the financial plan in the future. In order for Brandeis to succeed financially in the future it must continue to manage resources in a very strategic manner. Further reliance on the Integrated Plan will be essential.

Brandeis is constrained by its revenue sources, which include tuition, endowment distribution, grants and current use gifts. Undergraduate tuition will not grow substantially as a revenue source beyond the annual tuition rate increase without a reduction in the current discount rate of 34%. This may be problematic if Brandeis aspires to continue to improve the quality of its student body. The mix of merit and need-based scholarships currently supports an extremely strong student body. Increasing competition, in terms of financial aid from other excellent universities and liberal arts colleges will put additional pressure on the admissions process and the financial aid budget.

Tuition from expanded master's programs has proved to be a stable and growing source of revenue for the University that has helped some of the professional and graduate schools stabilize their financial base, helped to support central services, and provided new support for University leadership to allocate to other programs. While the growth of these programs and the development of new programs has gone through careful institutional review and approval, Brandeis should be sure to understand the impact on teaching at the undergraduate and PhD level, the strain on its most valuable asset, the faculty, and the impact on the perception of the profile of the University as a liberal arts college and a research university.

Brandeis has decreased endowment distribution from unsustainable levels (8.8% of a \$195 million endowment in 1995) down to an acceptable level of 4.9% (based on a current endowment of approximately \$625 million.) There continue to be selected restricted endowments that are distributed at a higher rate. While this can be a creative strategy, the University must be certain that this practice is sustainable over time.

The fund raising operation at Brandeis is highly effective. The President is an extremely able fund raiser who has successfully presented an attractive value proposition to the Jewish community that has been such a principal part of Brandeis' heritage. He is well supported by the Development and Alumni Relations office. The University has young alumni who have not reached their most philanthropic years, although alumni giving has increased nearly 500 percent in the last decade. Continuing to build participation and to cultivate the alumni will be an important part of future fundraising. However, for the foreseeable future the long time Jewish philanthropic supporters of Brandeis will be essential to financial success of the University. Careful additions to the Trustees have helped to enhance that base of friends. However, Brandeis cannot place an over-reliance on philanthropy to solve its financial challenges in the future.

Brandeis will have to be particularly imaginative to identify new sources of revenue in order to move as rapidly as it hopes to move to enhance academic initiatives and expand the faculty. Property that surrounds campus may offer some limited opportunity for commercial development.

Institutional Effectiveness

The Integrated Plan serves as the foundation for sound financial management through broad engagement in priority setting, program planning, annual monitoring and community understanding of the institution's financial status. The realistic resource

constraints of the Integrated Plan attempts to protect the financial integrity of the University well into the future, but they impose a significant challenge to maintain the competitive position and academic excellence of the University that is predicated on the continued recruitment, retention and support of top faculty and the promotion of the intellectual culture on campus.

Standard Ten: Public Disclosure

With regard to public disclosure, all required information is available either through print or on the web, and there are measures in place to ensure consistency and accuracy. The University's website has been improved in recent years to focus more on current information than on style, and the University has just acquired a new content management system that will make it easier to keep information consistent across multiple web pages. This new system will also allow members of the Brandeis community to maintain web pages without an in-depth knowledge of HTML.

The Communications Office shares a common vision of the Brandeis "look," style, colors, etc., and has done an excellent job of integrating these into a series of sophisticated and informative publications. The staff is encouraged to be engaged with the many things going on at Brandeis and to communicate them to the outside world, which they are doing vigorously.

At present, there is no staff member in Communications with dedicated responsibility for the Web. Content and design of Brandeis' web presence is handled in Communications, while technical support is in Library and Technological Services. Although there are no firm guidelines for who has responsibility in the gray areas, there is good communication between the two departments and both feel that the current assignment of responsibilities makes sense. However, the creation of a position with dedicated responsibility may be something that the University should consider due to the importance of the website, and its complexity. It is increasingly the University's first point of contact with the outside world.

Brandeis produces a number of handsome "serial" publications, including an alumni/ae magazine, a campus bulletin, and several glossy magazines focused on academic work in the arts, humanities, social sciences, and sciences. All are of high quality and provide an accurate and comprehensive overview of the many facets of life at Brandeis, including the academic. Several of the publications also have websites, where readers can gather information between print issues.

Members of the Communications office staff have taken steps to make the website useful within the University as well as to the outside world. A web page has just been created for the planning process, and there is a new portal for University employees (BUSS – Brandeis University Self-Service) through which they may view data from their own personal records.

The Development Office has just created a Director of Communications position. Because the incumbent came from the Communications Office, there is good cooperation between the two departments and frequent collaboration on publications.

Attracting and retaining good employees is a concern for Communications given the degree to which these skills are sought today, and the number of competing institutions in the region. There is some concern within the office that Brandeis salaries are not as competitive as they should be. Another concern is the pending move of the Communications offices. Staff members see the move as an opportunity to obtain certain features now lacking in their offices (e.g., a projector for a website on a large screen, and a conference room), but they are also worried about location and the possibility of being further separated from one another and from their Senior Vice President.

Institutional Effectiveness

In a further step to encourage consistency and to make sure that there is wide input into the communications process, Brandeis has recently formed a Communications Committee, made up of individuals who have communications responsibility for programs, centers, and departments. This committee will facilitate training and information-sharing and ensure that University communicators remain “on message.”

Standard 11: Integrity

Brandeis is a vigorous intellectual community that values curiosity, free and open inquiry, and thoughtful advocacy for a wide range of views. The clear and distinctive mission statement is evident in the thinking and actions of students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Students made it clear that they chose Brandeis, in part, because of this intellectually open tradition.

By all accounts, Brandeis operates with high ethical standards in the management of its affairs. Policies and procedures are widely available in printed form, as well as through web-links. The impressive array of material made available to the review team reinforced this observation.

Non-discrimination is not only a policy at Brandeis, it is part of the ethos, and is apparent. Students, faculty, and staff all described ways in which the University is inclusive. For example, four major faith traditions are represented by chaplains, and the chaplain’s work together to foster and celebrate an inclusive environment. Many students, of course, are not affiliated and appear to be comfortable at the University.

The importance of academic integrity is reflected in new student orientation, staff training methods, literature, and an active website. Students are provided with a handbook, *Rights and Responsibilities*, that outlines community values and processes.

Material provided to the review team was clear and consistent, and extensive interviews conducted during the visit supported the contents of the self-study. It was apparent that the process had been open to members of the campus community, and most

of those participating in the interviews and the open sessions arrived with an awareness of the process.

Institutional Effectiveness

The clearest example of periodic assessment for institutional integrity is found in the development of the Diversity Statement earlier in 2006, and in the recent reviews of policies dealing with business conduct, confidential complaints, conflict of interest, and similar areas. A University Policy Review Committee meets eight to ten times during the academic year

Institutional Effectiveness Summary

Brandeis has a strong commitment to the assessment of the quality, effectiveness, and integrity of the institution and its academic programs and services. The University has developed an Integrated Plan which also serves as a mechanism for assessing the institutional effectiveness of planning initiatives throughout the institution in both academic and non-academic areas. It provides a direct means of self-assessment for financial and physical resources. The Division of Students and Enrollment uses a number of assessment mechanisms to evaluate their work, as does the Library and Technology Services to enhance their services and operations. A Communications Committee facilitates self-assessment to ensure that the University's communications remain on-message. Several of the schools, as well as centers, institutes, and numerous programs, have established evaluation process and procedures. Some departments in the Arts and Sciences would clearly benefit from the inclusion of more systematic external reviews. Progress needs to be made in the assessment of student learning outcomes.

Summary List of Strengths and Concerns: Suggestions and Advice

Significant Strengths

- An integrated plan was formulated with strong presidential leadership and support complemented by a skilled, collaborative management team. In the Plan, tight fiscal control, dictated by a sound financial model, was used to set institutional priorities. Adequate benchmarks were identified to assess the progress of the Plan's implementation.
- The senior administrative team is very strong and works collaboratively with discipline, shared values, and established goals. There is a high level of trust between and among trustees, senior administration, and faculty. There is a strong financial team that is universally respected and well integrated into programmatic planning and decision making.
- The faculty is distinguished by a dedication to teaching that often expresses itself in collaborative interdisciplinary courses. All tenured and tenure-track faculty teach undergraduates.
- The quality of the faculty and their deep appreciation for one another make for an atmosphere of admirable intellectual intensity.

- Faculty cherish their graduate students and wish they had more, and graduate students in turn express great respect for their faculty and for the education they receive.
- Graduate students with master's and doctoral degrees from Brandeis have had remarkable success in finding postdoctoral positions and jobs. This is true not only of graduate students in the professional schools but also of students in the graduate programs of Arts and Sciences.
- There are strong programs in the three professional schools in distinctive niche areas, and distinctive interdisciplinary programs in the undergraduate offerings.
- There have been tangible gains realized from integration of enrollment management and student services.
- There is a skilled, dedicated and service-oriented staff which is breaking new ground in the integration of library and technology services, and providing excellent support for both desktop technology and the use of technology in the classroom.
- In the area of University communications, there is a knowledgeable and committed staff that has an active, lively interest in the University's mission and a desire to share that mission with the world. They produce high quality publications with a common Brandeis style and appearance, and there is an excellent integration of print and web publications.
- Brandeis has a strong and well supported fund raising operation led by the President who has articulated an appealing sense of the University to a loyal set of largely Jewish supporters.

Significant Concerns

- While articulate and nimble in decision making, the financial integrity of the University remains extremely fragile. Not only is there a difficult balance between competing needs, many of the critical elements of the University also face delicate balances. Since the Integrated Plan is a compromise based on tight fiscal control, significant "disappointment management" will be necessary in its implementation. This will require faculty to take a broad view of the needs and goals of the University as a whole, and for the administration to ensure that the faculty is consulted and its views integrated strategically into the difficult choices that will need to be made about institutional priorities.
- There is still large deferred maintenance in spite of big steps in the right direction. The application of resources and the choice of priorities in the integrated plan have been strategically considered, but there is risk that the infrastructure underlying those resources will be neglected. Particular attention needs to be paid to deferred maintenance, research support and compliance, and the development of well documented policies and procedures.
- A lack of a centralized institutional research office makes historical data analysis as well as the sharing of data for analysis across divisional lines difficult.
- The current structure that includes some very small departments is exacerbating the problem of faculty being stretched thin. Brandeis might benefit from a structure better suited to its particular model of a small liberal arts college within a research university rather than simply duplicating that of larger peer institutions.

- Students expressed a need for better infrastructure to serve graduate student needs, including housing, space on campus, and health insurance. Services for international graduate students who are key to IBS and Heller success are inadequate
- Library resources are imbalanced in terms of University expectations, especially when it comes to putting more emphasis on research and graduate programs. The Brandeis Library is not large enough or resourced enough to operate on the model of a comprehensive research library. The condition of LTS facilities, including insufficient space for staff, dated and uncomfortable public spaces, severe collection crowding, and aging infrastructure, needs improvement.
- There is no overall business continuity plan in place.

Suggestions and Advice

- 100-level courses should be reviewed and standardized, wherever possible, across departments. At the very least, graduate students should know when to take such courses and what to expect in the way of graduate work. Consortial arrangements were cited as supplements to Brandeis' own graduate program offerings. However, Brandeis should be careful not to rely too much on courses at other institutions in structuring graduate programs. The availability of Brandeis courses that are adequate in content and level should be a particular concern in planning for any proposed expansion of master's programs.
- The short supply of new tenure-track lines has created substantial anxiety. Some faculty expressed a willingness to slow down salary increases in order to fund new lines so that the intellectual community at Brandeis can be preserved and enhanced. The administration might ask the faculty to consider formally if they favor slowing increases in salaries in order to allocate a few more tenure-track faculty lines sooner than currently planned, keeping in mind that some ground gained by recent increases in faculty salaries might be lost.
- Representatives of the humanities faculty expressed a concern that they had been left out of planning and, in some cases, fear extinction. Incentives such as a humanities research center might alleviate that fear and encourage humanities departments to move beyond a traditional humanities paradigm.
- Untenured tenure-track faculty feel that the process leading up to tenure lacks transparency and varies from department to department. They are also unsure as to whether the extension of the probationary period from six to seven years brings with it a higher standard for tenure. A few meetings or workshops at the Dean's level could easily make the process leading up to tenure more transparent and equivalent across departments.
- Healthy growth is of course desirable, but it must be recalled that for a variety of reasons not every new idea turns out to be a good idea. Indeed, a possible aggravating feature of any academic institution that is stretched thin is the proliferation of departments and programs. There is, for example, no culture of review in the liberal arts. Accordingly, it would be desirable for the University to create or deepen inclusive and transparent institutional processes to assure quality control in the creation, and especially in the appraisal, of existing programs. It should be recognized that it is ordinarily far more difficult to curtail or end an

initiative than to start one. We do not presume to propose specific procedures, but recommend that these be carefully crafted to achieve the desired end.

Conclusion

We find Brandeis University to be a healthy, dynamic institution. It has developed a coherent Integrated Plan for managing its resources and setting priorities. It has a capable and collegial management team and a University community which shares core values and an atmosphere of trust. These include preserving its achievements and sustaining programs as it deals with both internal pressures and exogenous forces.

Brandeis faces challenges ahead: managing disappointment as choices are made, continuing improvements in infrastructure, balancing the pressures on faculty quality so it can sustain its dual mission of being a liberal arts college and a research university. Solutions will require discipline, reflective choices, support from benefactors and faculty, and hard work on the part of the entire Brandeis community. The effort will be well worth it, for, as one person interviewed remarked, “There is so much at stake here. Those who Brandeis educates become leaders and what we do will reverberate through time.”