

CHAPTER FIVE

Criterion Three:

Student Learning and Effective Teaching



A. Introduction

Criterion Statement: The organization provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

Effective teaching that brings about authentic student learning is central to the mission of Michigan State University. Core Component 3A focuses on demonstrating MSU’s approach to assessment at the departmental, institutional, and national levels. Core Component **3B** examines the structures in place at MSU to develop teaching excellence in faculty and instructors while Core Components 3C and 3D focus on the programs and structures offered by the University to support student learning.

B. Core Component 3A – The organization’s goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated for each educational program and make effective assessment possible.

Institutional Context for Assessment

The primary responsibility for developing and assessing learning outcome goals rests with the faculty in each academic department or program. However, assessment at MSU is a shared responsibility, which occurs at different levels across many units. In 1993 The All University Assessment Policy and Practice Advisory Committee (AUAPPAC) drafted the statement: A University [Framework](#) for Developing Assessments of Student Educational Outcomes. The document notes the centrality to MSU’s mission of educating graduate and undergraduate students as well as the responsibility to assess student achievement of learning outcomes inherent in that mission. To implement and sustain assessment efforts across campus, the institution created the Director of Assessment position in 2000. The director has responsibility for

providing leadership and assistance to campus constituencies engaged in assessment at the departmental, institutional, and national levels.

Departmental Assessment

The expectation that academic departments would engage in assessment has been in place since 1995. To support that expectation, the University engaged in a series of workshops and provided information to departments; however, such approaches were not effective for all units and the institution realized a more consistent and structured approach was needed: 1) assessment plans were incorporated into the documentation required by the University Committee on Curriculum for all new programs and major program changes (for both undergraduate and graduate programs) and 2) in 2000 MSU hired the current Director of Assessment. Since that time the Director has worked with academic departments and colleges on an individual basis to help them articulate student learning outcomes, identify and develop the means to assess those outcomes, and assist in appropriately re-assessing any changes they have made as a result of their learning.

Assessment plans and processes are not proscribed for academic departments. The expectation is that they will engage in a process that is thoughtful, will examine outcomes and issues that are of value to them, and will result in meaningful programmatic change when appropriate. Given this structure it is not unusual that departments are in various stages in the assessment process; however, what they share in common is an engagement with assessment in a meaningful way that is relevant for them. The most recent progress reports from departments can be found at the self-study [webpage](#). The following is a representative example of assessment processes within academic departments at both the graduate and undergraduate levels.

Undergraduate Education Examples

Department of English

English developed a two-year assessment cycle to measure student learning and satisfaction with the major. In even-numbered years, the Department distributes exit surveys to graduating seniors and conducts focus groups with selected students. In odd-numbered years, the department compares student essays written for the introduction to the major (ENG 210) with essays written for 400-level courses. Evaluation of student writing revealed significant progress in essay-

writing skills over the course of the major (in 2003, the ENG 210 average score was 80.2 out of 100; the ENG 400 level average was 91). The focus groups and exit surveys identified strengths of the program (e.g. the ENG 310 courses), as well as areas that require scrutiny (e.g. the question of consistency across sections of ENG 210). As a result, the department planned a faculty workshop on ENG 210 for fall 2005.

James Madison College

James Madison College assesses, among other outcomes, students' ability to write and their ability to engage with research methodology. They use a variety of assessment methods including a writing portfolio, an annual senior survey, and a field experience placement supervisors' survey. In surveys from 1995-2000 students reported uneven preparation in research methods. In response, the College developed a research methods option within the College that resulted in improved research methods competencies, and increased use of research methods in students' upper-level courses.

Department of Animal Science

The Department of Animal Science currently assesses student learning through student participation in an Intercollegiate Competition. Students are judged on their abilities to make timely decisions, solve problems, and think critically. The MSU Dairy Cattle Judging Team placed 7th in 2003, 5th in 2004, and 15th in 2005. Students participating in the National Quarter Horse Congress finished in the top 10 for each of the past 5 years. The department also assesses student's abilities on such things as leadership, communications, analytical ability, work ethic and professionalism, through the Professional Internship Program. Aggregate student evaluations over the past nine years range from 4.31 to 4.63 (on a 5 point scale with 5 being Outstanding) on all areas of evaluation. In addition, the Department of Animal Science is undergoing a thorough review of their curriculum with student learning outcomes as their guiding principles for development. The Department's assessment plan includes a pilot project for writing begun in Fall, 2005 and continues with a series of phased implementation and analysis through January, 2008.

Mathematics

Mathematics assesses learning outcomes with a time series analysis, over a multi-year period using data on student performance on final examination items analyzed by topic. Initial data for two courses indicated students performing at expected and acceptable levels. Assessment in other courses resulted in changes in course content, particularly in writing proofs. This is in process and currently being monitored to determine what changes, if any, are warranted.

Biological Sciences

Biological Sciences instituted a “Peer Instruction” model including active learning exercises, graded online individualized homework exercises, and the development of examination questions specifically designed to assess Model Based Reasoning (MBR). Response data are gathered both pre- and post-instruction and analyzed both individually and in aggregate.

Examination analysis shows improvements in MBR. Classroom participation has increased, as has lecture attendance. They plan to expand the number of sections using Peer Instruction and MBR. For more information, see “Using Personal Response Systems in Large Classes” in the Resource Room.

Graduate Education Example

Anthropology

Most anthropology students conduct their field research internationally. Assessment processes determined students who had a pilot study or pre-dissertation fieldwork experience in their geographic area were more successful in obtaining dissertation funding than those students who did not have such experiences. A successful proposal to the National Science Foundation (NSF) resulted in five years of funding to support cultural anthropology graduate students in

MSU students have received 48 Fulbright and Fulbright-Hays awards in the last ten years. MSU students have the third highest success rate among the 12 CIC institutions in the Fulbright student program during this time period.

obtaining pre-dissertation ethnographic research field experience. This program increased the number of graduate students who were able to do pre-dissertation fieldwork, and students with this background have been highly successful in obtaining outside funding through Fulbright and

other agencies. For example, in 2003-2004, six Anthropology students in cultural anthropology received Fulbright fellowships for their international research.

Institutional Assessment Initiatives and Institutional Support

Student Assessment System

As part of Michigan State University's effort to improve its understanding of student learning outcomes, the University conducts ongoing assessments of current students, graduating students, and recent alumni at several early career milestones. The Student Assessment System (SAS) was developed to assist administrators and faculty to collect information through web-based surveys, manage data sets, and to extract data for specific uses. Originally conceived prior to 1990, the SAS began as an initiative in Career Planning and Placement as a way to systematically gather placement data across campus. As MSU sought ways in which to integrate student learning outcomes assessment into the life of academic colleges, the original survey instrument was expanded to collect both placement data and to allow Colleges to begin to gather some indirect assessment data specific to their own colleges and major departments. In addition to what became known as the Senior Exit Survey, a follow-up study was instituted, in which alumni were surveyed two years after they graduated.

The Student Assessment Survey is now a flexible online administrative site. It allows MSU to administer the college-specific Senior Exit Survey, the 2-Year Out Alumni Survey, as well as other surveys of interest and benefit to the University. For example, the Graduate School used the site in 2004 to administer a survey of doctoral students. Other assessment initiatives include:

- The Department of Residence Life initiated [assessment measures](#) that provide valuable information on students, especially freshmen and transfer students, and their adjustment to the University.
- The Office of Admissions and Scholarships regularly compiles data on entering freshmen. Average test scores and high school GPA's of entering freshmen are regularly shared with faculty, as is information gathered from the ACT on co-curricular activities.
- The Graduate School participates in the Ph.D. exit survey sponsored by the National Science Foundation through the National Organization for Research at the University of Chicago (NORC). In addition, the Graduate School surveys exiting Masters' students and periodically surveys all enrolled graduate students.

- The University administers the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), designed to compare and contrast freshmen and senior levels of campus engagement.
- The University participates in the College Student Survey, designed as both a follow-up to the CIRP Freshman Survey as well as a means of gathering satisfaction measures of seniors.
- All courses are evaluated by students using the Student Instructional Rating System and all faculty taught courses also use the Student Opinion of Courses and Teaching Survey. For more information, see [Core Component 3B](#).

General Education

General education requirements are discussed in [Chapter Six](#). Assessment of general education in the context of planning is discussed in [Chapter Four](#). This section focuses on outcome and programmatic assessment of Integrative Studies.

Hewlett Assessment Project

Assessment of student learning outcomes in Integrative Studies began in January 2002 when Michigan State University received a grant from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. The grant helped fund 24 MSU faculty to build capacity to assess student learning outcomes and to initiate systematic classroom-embedded assessment of student learning outcomes in general education courses. The first step was to build a consensus about key purposes and academic goals in general education to set a framework for assessing student-learning outcomes. This consensus was forged in conversations over 18 months in an institute that included faculty and administrators from the core colleges (Arts and Letters, Natural Science, Social Science).

By the end of the two-year project, participants had employed a wide range of assessment strategies and instruments to measure students' mastery of content, gauge students' performance at various cognitive levels, and learn how to more effectively involve teaching assistants to improve student learning. Since the Hewlett Project, each of the Centers has more closely defined assessment exercises suitable to their particular situations, implementing their own preferred assessment designs and running class-embedded assessments in their respective classes.

Center for Integrative Studies, Social Science

The Integrative Social Science assessment used one or several of the following tools: a portfolio of reflective essays, pre-course multiple-choice diagnostic tests followed by post-course evaluation of outcomes, field work observational assessments, and focus group discussions. Faculty used one or a combination of these depending on their preferred pedagogical practices. After pilot runs of the assessment instruments were completed, the social science panel assembled in bi-weekly meetings to hear reports of results from each of their colleagues. The Center schedules occasional forums for faculty teaching integrative studies courses to exchange ideas and experiences on assessment.

The Center for Integrative Studies, Arts and Humanities (CISAH)

CISAH gave major attention to assessment in IAH 201: The United States and the World, the largest single course taught in the Center. This multi-section course is taught by graduate teaching assistants with mentoring and supervision by a faculty of record. One of the assessment tools used in this course is an end-of-term multiple choice examination. Three years of using this examination made it possible to refine and improve the examination as an assessment of learning outcomes, to analyze results, and to alter instruction to address problems revealed by the analysis.

Course faculty employed item analysis to examine the effectiveness of the questions. Students tended to do well on sets of questions related to text materials they have encountered during the semester. They do less well on questions asking them to apply their knowledge to new material or to go beyond a text to consider its implications. Students generally do well on questions that ask them to interpret visual materials or identify a common element or theme in a set of images, but they do less well on questions asking them to consider images in relation to course readings.

The assessment results helped to strengthen emphasis on the learning goals of IAH 201. Course faculty in collaboration with veteran teaching assistants prepared new teaching materials for each of the four units of the course to clarify unit learning goals, frame perspectives, identify key questions around which to organize discussion of course materials, and suggest instructional strategies to develop students' critical capacities.

The Center for Integrative Studies, General Science (CISGS)

CISGS has extended its assessment efforts in a variety of ways. For example, it integrated assessment into the faculty teaching award process, where one of the main criteria is evidence of student learning. CISGS developed and refined new instruments to assess student learning in two lab/recitation courses that enroll approximately 1,400 students per semester. ISB208L uses pre-post multiple choice and essay instruments to assess student learning, with an average of almost 20% improvement in scores. In ISP2031 mini-case studies were used that required students to evaluate arguments based on data presented. The cases used are unrelated to course content. An externally funded research project supported the development of assessment instruments that can measure students' understanding of cycles in introductory level geology and biology. Preliminary results of this work demonstrate that students successfully engage in scientific model-based reasoning to explain possible scenarios of movement and change of matter.

Toward Program-wide Assessment in Integrative Studies

Each of the three centers for Integrative Studies developed within the structure and culture of the college in which it resides. The Hewlett Assessment Project brought faculty from the three centers together to learn about assessment and develop course-based plans for assessment. The two-year project also brought clarification of the goals of the Integrative Studies program as a whole, as well as of the goals that are the specific focus of each center's work.

Since the Hewlett Project, there has been movement in two directions: The first is an effort to consolidate assessment within each center. That work is ongoing. The second direction involves cross-center initiatives just getting underway that will facilitate assessment of the Integrative Studies program overall.

Science will continue to increase the number of faculty who develop and/or refine assessment instruments through the faculty award processes. For CISGS, externally funded research projects and consortia of experts help develop validated assessment instruments.

CISAH will move toward assessment of the IAH program by engaging faculty teaching other courses (beyond IAH201) in course-based assessment.

Toward Integrative Studies Program Assessment

The second post-Hewlett direction involves movement toward cross-center initiatives and joint assessment of those initiatives. The three Centers are currently collaborating on developing thematic tracks. Students who register for the track will enroll concurrently in an ISB and an IAH course in fall semester and in an ISP and an ISS course in spring semester. The track will be offered on a pilot basis in 2006-2007, and from the outset, detailed planning for the pilot will include planning for assessment of the joint program.

National Assessment Initiatives

In addition to unit, departmental, and institutional assessment efforts, MSU is also involved in four national assessment initiatives:

Teachers for a New Era (TNE): MSU is one of four partners of the Carnegie Corporation of New York in the TNE initiative. The project focuses on teacher preparation and is committed to identifying or developing assessment tools and promoting their use in continual program improvement and in tracking student progress. For a more thorough discussion of the TNE initiative, see the Resource Room.

Campus Life in America Student Survey (CLASS): In partnership with five other institutions and under the leadership of Princeton University, MSU participated in an extensive study designed to assess the campus climate for diversity and engagement. Data was released to institutions in October, 2005 and is currently being analyzed.

Integrative Learning Project: Funded by the Carnegie Foundation and the American Association of Colleges and Universities, a team of MSU faculty explore ways in which integrative learning can be promoted and assessed across undergraduate education. MSU's project invites faculty to consider developing a study abroad experience that could meet 8 to 12 credits of the Integrative Studies requirement. The proposal request must include a means of assessing integrative learning.

Lessons Learned in Assessing International Learning Outcomes: In cooperation with the American Council on Education (ACE) and five other institutions, this project, begun in Spring 2005, will:

- Translate a set of agreed-upon international learning outcomes into measurable performance indicators and rubrics,

- Conduct a coordinated effort to assess student achievement of these outcomes,
- Develop plans to improve student international learning at the institutions and,
- Disseminate lessons learned to the larger higher education community through workshops and a web-based resource.

C. Core Component 3B – The organization values and supports effective teaching.

The value MSU places on teaching is evident in its guiding documents. The MSU Mission Statement states: “Michigan State University holds a unique position in the state’s educational system. As a respected research and teaching university, it is committed to intellectual leadership and to excellence in both developing new knowledge and conveying that knowledge to its students and to the public.” The Faculty Handbook adds, “this University conceives these responsibilities to be so important that performance by instructors in meeting the provisions of this Code shall be taken into consideration in determining salary increases, tenure, and promotion.”

A Qualified and Diverse Faculty

Faculty are responsible for both creating and approving curricula from course or program development at the department level, through college level curriculum review, and ultimately through the approval process by the University Committee on Curriculum (UCC) of Academic Council.

Qualified faculty determine the strategies for, and provide, classroom instruction. Ninety five percent of full time ranked faculty in 2004-05 held a terminal degree. In fall semester 2004, 88.6% of organized class sections were led by faculty. In addition, MSU requires a “Faculty of Record” for every lecture and recitation or laboratory section in which graduate teaching assistants (TAs) participate. This faculty member serves as the TA supervisor and the final authority for syllabus construction and course content. This policy is enforced via the [MSU-GEU](#) collective bargaining agreement. MSU provides an opportunity for some senior experienced teaching assistants to participate in courses as instructors (approximately 9% of

organized class sections in Fall 2004). All TAs are evaluated by the Faculty of Record each semester with a variety of data, including the written [Student Instructional Rating System](#).

MSU also seeks to hire faculty that contribute to excellence in diversity at the University. This commitment is noted in the 1993 report MSU IDEA II. MSU IDEA II initiatives related to faculty recruitment and retention include but are not limited to:

- Faculty Recruitment Incentives Program
- Commitment to retention of faculty from underrepresented groups
- An MSU Handbook for Searches with Special Attention to Affirmative Action and Diversity
- Recruitment of underrepresented MSU minority graduates for tenure stream positions in areas of low availability
- Resource database development for underrepresented groups
- Support for mentoring, sponsorship, and other collegial efforts to improve retention
- A consortium to bring historically Black college and university faculty to MSU

These efforts have paid dividends in the diversity of the faculty. In 1994, women represented 26.6% of total faculty. In 2003 they represented 34.6% (See Figure 5.1). Similarly, the percent of tenure system faculty that are minorities has increased from 11.9% in 1994-95 to 15.2% in 2004-05 (Expanded Planning Profile Summary Report). During the last five years, the percentage of women and people of color hired in tenure system positions has increased annually from 47% in 1999-2000 to 69% in 2003-04. Given the University's emphasis on internationalization, international diversity is important to the University as well. Approximately 17% of all ranked faculty in 2004 were not U.S. citizens or had received their terminal degree abroad.

Such a diverse faculty provides students with the opportunity to learn from a variety of experiences and perspectives that may differ from their own, enriching the curricular content and preparing students for the increasingly diverse and global world.

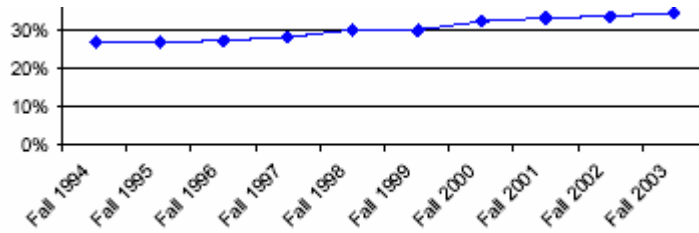


Figure 5.1 Women as % of Total Faculty

Professional Development

MSU provides extensive opportunities for faculty development in instruction and pedagogy and actively encourages faculty to pursue these and external opportunities that may arise.

Several venues for faculty professional development are listed below.

Office of Faculty and Organizational Development (F&OD)

The [Office of Faculty and Organizational Development](#) supports MSU faculty, academic staff and administrators in teaching, research, outreach, and leadership. To accomplish this goal, F&OD offers a broad range of seminars, programs, services, and resources in two programmatic strands: Faculty Development, and Organizational/Leadership Development. In 2002-2003, Academic Human Resources initiated an external program review of F&OD in anticipation of hiring a new director. The program review affirmed the value and high impact of most of the existing and long-standing faculty development programs, identified a few programs in need of revision, and suggested significant expansion and diversification of programs and services to meet the scale and range of needs for ongoing instructional development at MSU. Since 2003, all of the program review recommendations have been enacted. Assessments of each of the revisions and new initiatives affirm that the changes provide productive enhancements to MSU's ongoing efforts to support teaching and learning. Specifically, these initiatives include:

- Consultations on Teaching and Learning are now available for individuals and small groups, including midterm student feedback sessions (focus groups), and observations and/or videotaping of teaching and related consultations with professional development staff.
- Faculty Learning Communities (FLCs) now provide opportunities for small groups of faculty to engage in ongoing conversations on focused topics on teaching, learning, and

- assessment. Each FLC, led by faculty facilitators, is comprised of 6-15 faculty from across the disciplines who make a commitment to attend discussions on a regular basis.
- The Lilly Fellows Program, originally funded by a Lilly Foundation grant and now fully supported by MSU, provides a cohort of 6-9 pre-tenure faculty each year with an opportunity to participate in monthly seminars facilitated by the F&OD director to explore teaching and learning, to conduct a project about their teaching rooted in the scholarship of teaching and learning (SOTL) with the support of a faculty mentor, and to join the network of MSU Lilly Fellows who take leadership roles in supporting teaching and learning both at MSU and nationally through publication and presentations on their SOTL initiatives.
 - To provide ongoing feedback and input, F&OD established an Advisory Board of 6 faculty, 6 academic administrators and 1 doctoral student that meets four times a year. In addition, F&OD now conducts yearly needs assessments to determine training and development interests and needs of faculty, academic staff, and administrators.
 - F&OD is a participant in the Research University Consortium for the Advancement of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (RUCASTL), sponsored by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. This initiative not only promotes SOTL at MSU, but also connects MSU to the national and international network of SOTL scholars and raises MSU's visibility with regard to its commitment to excellence in teaching and learning.

Teaching Assistant Program (TAP)

The mission of [TAP](#) is to improve graduate student professional development and undergraduate instruction. Resources provided by TAP include:

- Orientation for all new graduate teaching assistants to introduce them to MSU students and the academic environment, and provide pedagogical training and practice
- Year-long workshop series focused on teaching and learning
- Specific support to international teaching assistants (ITAs)
- Collaboration with the NSF-funded Center for Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning (at the University of Wisconsin)

- The Buddy Program that pairs international teaching assistants with undergraduates to provide for cultural exchange and increased understanding in both directions.
- English language courses designed to prepare international graduate students to teach courses where English is the language of instruction.
- English assistance via 18 undergraduate speech science students who serve as pronunciation tutors for international teaching assistants, and 50-60 undergraduates who volunteer as tutors for discussion and pronunciation practice with international teaching assistants.

ITA Comments on the Buddy Program:

"I feel more confident now that I'm getting more familiar with the students."

"I can understand better what's happening in my class. Students come from many departments, different academic backgrounds and interests and different preparations for the class."

Undergraduate Comments on the Buddy Program:

"The Buddy Program opens the minds of both the undergrad and the I TA. A strong relationship develops as you share personal experiences and discuss pertinent issues to the improvement of the I TA-student relationship."

"It was interesting and refreshing to hear about a different place from a person who could talk first hand about it rather than reading it from a book."

Certification in College Teaching

MSU's [Certification in College Teaching](#) is an initiative of The Graduate School, in partnership with colleges. It is designed to help graduate students organize and develop their teaching experience in a systematic and thoughtful way, with assistance from faculty, campus offices, and the Teaching Assistant program. Graduate students completing the Certification in College Teaching complete course work within their discipline, attend professional development seminars on topics such as assessment, technology, and adult students as learners, participate in a mentored teaching experience, and develop a teaching portfolio. With approval from the University Graduate Council, a notation appears on a student's transcript upon completion of their degree program.

Technology Training

The Technology Training unit established by the Vice Provost for Libraries, Computing, and Technology provides support for faculty in the use of technology, ranging from basic software skills through instructional design.

- The Libraries, Computing and Technology Training program Explorations in Instructional Technology seminar series ([LCTTP](#)) provides a forum for faculty to share and participate in discussions about technology on a weekly basis.
- The Libraries, Computing and Technology (LCT) [Faculty Seminar](#) is a two-day series of hands-on short courses for faculty to help them develop the techniques and skills they need to add technology to their courses. There are approximately twenty-five short courses offered each semester and the Faculty Seminars usually attract between 400 and 550 participants.
- The Virtual University Design and Technology (VUDAT) [Breakfast Seminar Series](#) is a collaboration of faculty using technology to advance teaching. Panelists discuss real life experiences using current technology and encourage collaborative forums to find the methods that work best.

In addition, the [Instructional Media Center](#) provides faculty training in the use of all of the equipment in technology classrooms. General computing help is also available at Consulting Services either in person or via a 24-hour computer help line.

Academic Computing and Network Services is supporting a trial in which classroom response systems, or “electronic clickers,” are used to collect and record student responses to questions in class. This trial is intended to determine if teaching is improved when all students can register a response to a question. An improvement in class participation should be consistent with improved instruction and learning. The technology may also be useful for recording responses on exams. The Coordinator of Instructional Technology Support provides support for all faculty who are using clickers or are considering adopting them in instruction. The group meets to share experiences and observe newer technologies as they appear on the market.

The centrally supported training and development programs are complemented by both a central support unit for faculty developing online and technology-mediated courseware (VUDAT), and by college-level tech support and training programs. Many of MSU’s colleges,

such as The College of Education, have formalized programs by which faculty teach other faculty how to incorporate more technology-mediated instruction into their courses; some departments, such as Horticulture, have initiated unit-wide efforts to repackaging their curricular content in new and innovative ways enabled by available technologies.

Rewards and Awards

Evaluation of teaching performance is the responsibility of the faculty member's home department or academic unit. While each is responsible for developing its own criteria for reappointment, promotion, and tenure in line with the department, college, and University missions, the Provost's guidelines state:

Assessment of faculty performance should recognize the importance of both teaching and research and their extension beyond the borders of the campus as part of the outreach dimension. Assessment should take into account the quality of outcomes as well as their quantity; it should also acknowledge the creativity of faculty effort and its impact on students, on others the University serves, and on the field(s) in which the faculty member works.

SIRS and SOCT

SIRS is the Student Instructional Rating System. This survey collects feedback from students in all courses to provide faculty with feedback on their instructional practices and to provide teaching units with information considered when making faculty retention, promotion, tenure, and salary decisions (see Resource Room for Tenure and Promotion documents). While the University provides departments a common student rating instrument, many departments have created customized SIRS forms in line with their learning outcomes.

SOCT is the Student Opinion of Courses and Teaching. This is a separate survey used to collect feedback on a small set of questions for all undergraduate courses (except those taught by Graduate Teaching Assistants). The SOCT questions were developed to gather information that may be helpful to students when selecting courses. The aggregate results of this survey are available to the MSU community [online](#).

The Center for the Scholarship of Teaching (College of Education) has as one of its primary missions the establishment of rigorous and alternative means for faculty review and promotion. One of their initiatives is the “Faculty Works in Progress” group. This group of faculty members works on the development of alternative formats for representing their teaching for the purposes of annual evaluation and promotion. Through that pilot work, the Center hopes the group will be able to inform University policies about materials that are used for assessing the quality and impact

Unit Example: Assessing Teaching Assessment in Lyman Briggs (College of Natural Science)

To improve the annual faculty evaluation procedure to more adequately assess and reward excellence in teaching, the Briggs Advisory Council formed an ad hoc committee that was charged with observing the faculty evaluation process and making recommendations for improvement. Among other findings, the *ad hoc* committee discovered that there was considerable inconsistency regarding what information about faculty teaching was gathered and how it was presented. The committee made recommendations about how the two-person evaluation committee could include a broader range of evidence regarding teaching, present more consistent and comparable information in their reports, and more systematically and consistently do peer-observations of teaching. Following a faculty discussion, a subset of the recommendations is being implemented in a pilot study this year and will be reviewed at the end of the evaluation cycle.

The University recognizes outstanding teaching through a variety of University Awards. One of the criteria for the prestigious University Distinguished Professor (UDP) award is “superior teaching skills of recognized breadth and depth in their discipline” (Faculty Handbook). The UDP is awarded to full professors who have achieved national distinction and demonstrated their teaching excellence throughout their careers. The Distinguished Faculty Award recognizes up to ten faculty per year who have excelled in all three areas of the University’s mission. Several awards focus exclusively on teaching excellence. Teacher-Scholar Awards are made “...to six members of the faculty who early in their careers have earned the respect of students and colleagues for their devotion to and skill in teaching. The essential purpose of the award is to provide recognition to the best teachers who have served at MSU for seven years or less” (Faculty Handbook). Similarly, the “MSU Excellence-in-Teaching

Citation” is given to six graduate students each year. Many colleges, departments and other college groups recognize excellence in teaching through annual awards. For example, the MSU Alumni Club of Mid-Michigan presents two Quality in Undergraduate Teaching Awards at the annual Awards Convocation.

The College of Education developed two practices to promote, assess, and reward effective teaching. To be considered for promotion and tenure, faculty members must write a narrative addressing key issues related to effective teaching as outlined by Lee Shulman and the Carnegie Foundation for Teaching and Learning. The College also instituted Excellence in Teaching Awards in the College for faculty and teaching assistants. To apply for these awards, there is a formal application that requires documentation of innovation and effectiveness. The individual must meet with a review committee to present evidence of innovative and effective teaching and student learning. From the College’s Award document: “While we all understand why educational philosophies and statements of teaching goals are important, this award rewards behavior, that is, the *practices* that faculty and doctoral student engage in. It is what teachers in the College DO to enhance student learning”.

D. Core Component 3C – The organization creates effective learning environments.

MSU seeks to increase the likelihood that effective teaching will lead to student learning by creating effective learning environments within which teaching and learning can occur. The learning environment encompasses many facets including both academic and supportive services: from the classroom and the innovative techniques therein, to service learning and international learning experiences that are essential to achieving learning outcomes even though they do not occur in the classroom. Further, the learning environment includes relationships between faculty and student, student and student, student and staff, as well as individual factors that contribute to a student’s ability to learn effectively in a given time and place.

The Physical Environment for Learning – The Residence Halls and Community

In Fall 2000 the Department of Residence Life implemented the Community Standards model to enhance students' growth and development. Community Standards are shared agreements between students that define mutual expectations for how a floor community will function on an interpersonal level. The department assesses their efforts using both qualitative (focus groups) and quantitative (survey) methodology. Since the inception of the Community Standards model retention rates in residence halls have remained stable and the academic achievement levels have improved for all undergraduate class levels with the exception of seniors. A full description of the assessment data on Community Standards as well as the entire Department of Residence Life [assessment](#) results are available online.

The capacity to be an engaged learner depends in part on the personal decisions students make, and their behavior on and off-campus. With this understanding, the University and the City of East Lansing completed several studies and subsequent campaigns to encourage responsible behavior, especially in the context of celebrations. Examples include:

- [The Social Norm Project](#)
- [Celebration Drinking Study](#)
- [The Review Commission](#)

In addition, the City of East Lansing and [Michigan State University](#) work in partnership to create a [supportive](#) environment for students, faculty and residents.

On-campus living contributes to learning outcomes as evidenced by the cumulative GPA of students living in MSU residence halls compared with those living off-campus.

Population	MSU Residence Halls	Off-campus
Freshmen	2.87	2.59
Sophomore	3.10	2.89
Junior	3.13	3.02
Senior	3.21	3.08

Academic Learning Environments

The range of academic learning environments at MSU is as large as the range of courses and co-curricular learning opportunities available both on and off campus. Every area of activity in support of the University’s mission contributes to the academic learning environment of the University. This section will focus on some of the more unique learning environments that distinguish the MSU experience.

Freshmen Seminars

Freshman seminars introduce students to the intellectual life of the University. Seminars focus on high-interest topics selected and taught by MSU faculty

members. These freshmen seminars focus on “discovery” – of new disciplines, research, and ideas – rather than on college preparatory skills. Limited to 20 students, the seminars allow each student to get to know a faculty member and a small group of other students.

Another way in which the University introduces first year students to the intellectual life of the University is through the [One Book, One Community](#) program. The One Book, One Community program encourages the East Lansing and MSU community to come together to discuss a book in a variety of settings. In 2005, all first-year students were expected to have read *The Kite Runner* before arriving on campus, and approximately 76% did so. 54% of freshmen reported the book’s content prompted them to have conversations with other people (2005 [SpotLightSeries](#)). Khaled Hosseini, the author of *The Kite Runner*, spoke to freshmen on their first full day at MSU. A range of activities including incorporation of the book into freshmen classes, and theme-related events on campus and in the community are part of the Program.

Service Learning

As the pioneer land grant university Michigan State University has at the core of its mission the intent to connect the acquisition of knowledge to real world applications and dissemination of learning. The Center for Service-Learning and Civic Engagement (CSLCE) is committed to empowering students with service and civically-based educational opportunities that extend beyond the classroom. There has been a steady growth of student applications for service placements, academic, curricular and co-curricular, over the last five years:

2000-01: 4,492

2001-02: 6,778

2002-03: 7,073

2003-04: 8,474

2004-05: 10,039

In addition, in 2004-2005, the CSLCE:

- Worked with approximately 125 academic courses and their faculty
- Affiliated with all university colleges
- Directly supported the efforts of “Into the Streets,” VITA Program and Alternative Spring Break (ASB) registered student organizations, partnering with ASB to offer 18 national and international, credit and not-for-credit service trips
- Managed the MSU America Reads/America Counts, and Office of the State Attorney General work-study initiatives
- Administered the Michigan Campus Compact Michigan Service Scholars AmeriCorps project (awarded a Midwest Campus Compact Citizen-Scholar Fellowship program AmeriCorps grant for 2005-06)

CSCLE facilitates two main types of service-learning: academic service-learning and curricular service-learning. MSU adopted the Campus Compact definition of academic service-learning: “Service-learning is a teaching method which combines community service with academic instruction as it focuses on critical, reflective thinking and civic responsibility.” MSU offers both required and optional service-learning opportunities. From Summer Semester 2004 through Spring Semester 2005, the CSLCE supported 3,369 students in academic service-learning settings.

MSU defines curricular service-learning as service related to a particular academic major or field of study in which the service is attached to the discipline rather than a specific course. For example, the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program is a joint project whose membership is comprised primarily of Accounting and Finance majors. During spring 2005, 304 MSU students registered to serve with VITA, giving free tax preparation assistance to MSU international students and low-income community residents. Curricular service-learning is also embedded in the fields of pre-medical and pre-nursing studies, and in campus living-learning options such as James Madison College, the LA CASA Spanish-immersion program, Residential Option in Arts and Letters, Residential Initiative in Science and the Environment, and CONNECTIONS, a first-year experience for “no preference”/undecided students.

Assessment occurs both through individual classes and the CSLCE. Through the CSLCE, ongoing procedures are in place to monitor the success of the service experience. Approximately

once each academic year, the CSLCE surveys students serving in select program areas to obtain end-of-the-semester feedback regarding students' perceptions of the service-learning experience.

In 2003, to assess the impact of service on student perceptions beyond that of academic assessment of students in a particular course and student satisfaction with service experiences, faculty from the Department of Family and Child Ecology and the Department of Educational Administration partnered on a study, *Learning about Differences through Service Learning*. In this study, students in diversity-focused courses in which service-learning was an option were surveyed regarding changes in perceptions of differences (to include ethnicity and special populations). Students utilizing the alternative assignment option were compared with students exercising traditional options in the same courses. Increased perceptions and self-efficacy related to perceptions of differences were found among those students who had utilized the service-learning options. Data were analyzed by course, gender, class level and previous interactions with those perceived as "different."

Technological Learning Environments

The technology infrastructure required to support technological learning environments is covered in [3D](#), and technology training for instructional personnel is covered in [3B](#).

Play the [audioclip](#) of WKAR's "Future of MSU" series report on technology in the classroom.

Currently, over 200 of the 340 centrally scheduled classrooms on campus are technology classrooms, with more being added each year. There are 50 computer laboratories frequently used for classroom instruction (see [Chapter Two](#)). Add the use of web-based course management programs such as ANGEL and LON-CAPA, classroom/instructor webpages, e-mail, etc., and virtually every class now takes place in a technologically enabled learning environment.

MSU supports two online learning management systems, ANGEL and the national award winning LON-CAPA, developed by the College of Natural Science (see Figure 5.2). LON-CAPA (The Learning Online Network with CAPA) enables the seamless exchange and reuse of learning objects. The system's content library presently contains more than 60,000 learning objects, of which approximately 21,000 are content pages and approximately 19,000 are homework exercises. LON-CAPA serves more than 12,000 students with more than 16,000 course enrollments in over 400 course sections each semester. In 2004, the system received the

Sloan Award, recognizing LON-CAPA as one of the most outstanding effective practices in online teaching and learning.

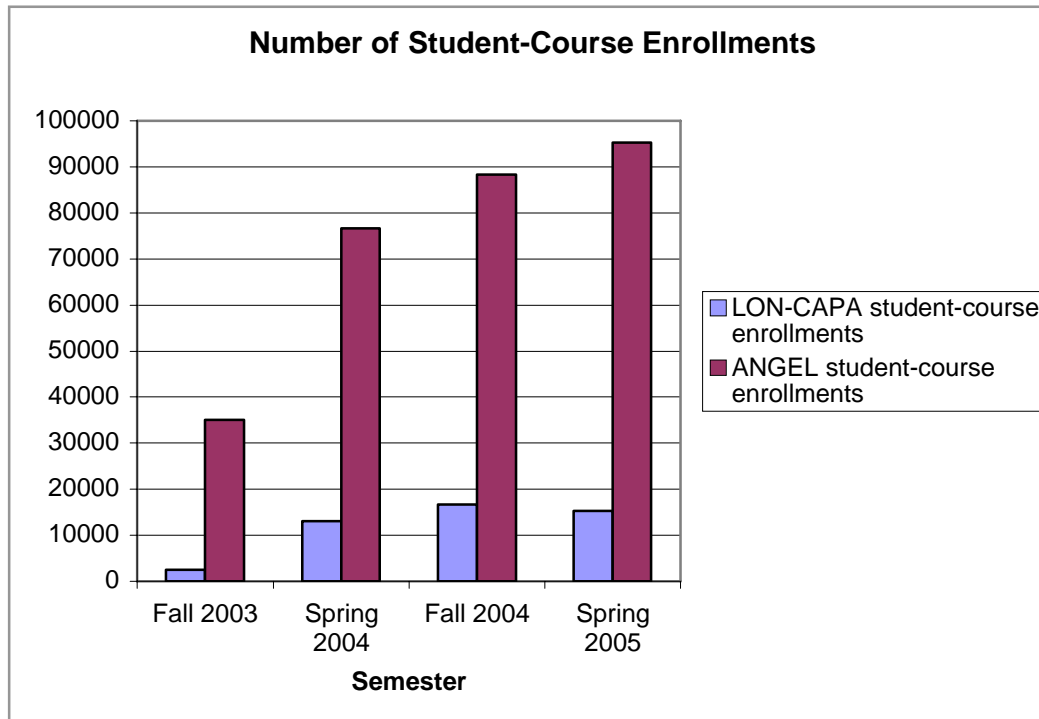


Figure 5.2

Currently, MSU offers over 2,000 courses over the internet (for a list of the courses, see [Online Learning & Continuing Education](#)) as well as several hybrid courses that combine online and classroom instruction. In Fall of 2004, there were 2,422 credit enrollments online, up from 636 in the Spring of 2000. Online course development is supported by MSU's Virtual University Design and Technology ([VUDAT](#)). VUDAT's mission is to provide professional and innovative technology enhanced teaching and learning solutions in support of the Michigan State University mission. Services provided include:

- Designing, creating, and developing and deploying online courses
- Assisting clients with effective, customized designs to meet their online instructional goals
- Developing customizable production tools and adaptive course delivery mechanisms for online learning

- Providing technology and digital arts for course development to the campus community and beyond.

In addition, VUDAT provides training to faculty on the use of instructional technology.

Honors College

The Honors College at Michigan State University serves academically talented, committed students who wish to pursue and achieve academic excellence. It emphasizes individualized program planning rather than a tightly prescribed set of courses. Founded in 1956, today the Honor's College encompasses four main administrative divisions:

- The Undergraduate program, which provides academic, research, and social opportunities for students in all academic majors of the University who are invited and accept membership.
- Academic Scholars Program, focusing on coordinating special academic opportunities during the first two years at MSU for a set of incoming freshman students whose academic records place them just short of eligibility for Honors College Membership.
- Gifted and Talented Education Programs (GATE), providing academic enrichment opportunities for high achieving pre-college students
- Debate Program, MSU's nationally competitive Debate Team.

Enrollment in Honors courses and sections increased substantially and continually since 1993-94.

- The number of Honors courses and sections (excluding sections for independent study, internships and Honors research) increased approximately 78% from 93 sections in 1995-96 to 166 in 2005-06.
- Enrollment in those sections grew from 1,799 to 3,988 over the same timeframe.

The College regularly monitors the academic progress of all Honors College students through the annual Academic Progress Plan (APP) process. In this way, the academic progress of all Honors College students is evaluated at least once a year.

In 2005, four MSU students were named Goldwater Scholars. The prestigious award is presented to outstanding math, science, and engineering students throughout the nation for academic merit. All four MSU recipients are members of the Honors College.

Residential Learning Communities

MSU has nine [residential learning communities](#) designed to give students with similar interests the experience and benefits of a smaller community within the MSU community.

MSU's Residential Learning Communities

- Academic Scholars
- ROIAL: Residential Option In Arts & Letters
- CONNECTIONS - a residential program based in Akers Hall for any first year student who has not yet decided on a major.
- Honors College
- James Madison College: politics, public policy, law, and social issues
- Lyman Briggs School: science-related fields
- MRULE: Multi-Racial Unity Living Experience
- RISE: Residential Initiative on the Study of the Environment
- ROSES: Residential Option for Science and Engineering Students

MSU's living and learning programs emphasize in and out-of classroom experiences, and involve faculty, academic staff, and student life professionals. The models of living and learning programs vary from highly formalized, degree granting programs (like James Madison College) to programs that emphasize support through the first year of college.

Study Abroad

The internationalization of learning for undergraduate and graduate students is covered in depth in [Chapter Eight](#). Infusing student learning with international experiences, content, and context creates a uniquely international learning environment at MSU. Epitomizing this environment is MSU's internationally renowned study abroad program.

MSU sends more students on study abroad than any other public university, and is second only to New York University overall (according to the [Institute of International Education](#)). The Office of Study Abroad ([OSA](#)) at Michigan State University is dedicated to providing all MSU students with high quality international academic opportunities that allow them to develop the knowledge and skills needed to become productive and successful members of the global community.

Over the past decade, study abroad has become a normal, integrated, and expected part of the MSU undergraduate experience. Annual MSU student participation increased from 776 students in 1994-95 to 2,641 students in 2004-05. The number of programs offered grew from 60 in 1993-94 to 200, with program types ranging from academic internships and direct enrollment

programs to freshman seminars. Today, MSU study abroad programs are offered in 60 countries and on all seven continents. MSU student participation in semester- and academic year length programs has increased from 12% to 28% over the past ten years.

MSU has expanded African study abroad programs from one program in 1985 to 15 active programs in 2005, making MSU the largest university provider of programs in Africa (more than 10% of all programs offered by U.S. universities). Programs are offered in Senegal, Egypt, South Africa, Ghana, and Kenya, including semester-long programs in the first three countries.

Research conducted by the MSU Office of Admissions and the Office of Study Abroad shows that approximately 27% of first-year students indicate that the many study abroad options at MSU influenced their decision to attend MSU. Close collaboration with the Financial Aid Office, a liberal financial aid policy as well as numerous study abroad scholarships and grants address students' financial concerns. Cooperation with the MSU [Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities](#) opens study abroad opportunities to students facing physical, emotional, and mental challenges.

56.5% of students studying abroad received financial aid to fund their study abroad experience.

To reach its full potential, study abroad will need to be integrated across the University's mission and into students' lives on and off campus. There is national consensus that the majority of U.S. study abroad participants are under-prepared for their experience in terms of general geopolitical awareness as well as in terms of their region- or culture-specific knowledge. MSU is well-positioned to address this need by increasing the involvement of its various area studies and thematic centers in the pre-departure preparation and return debriefing of students. MSU has addressed these concerns in several ways:

- The College of Arts and Letters offers a seminar open to all majors interested in exploring and preparing for study abroad.
- The offices of Study Abroad and Career Services and Placement offer joint workshops to help returning students integrate their study abroad experience into their career plans and preparation.

- The [Curriculum Integration Project](#), begun in October 2003, is a collaborative project of the Office of Study Abroad and colleges and departments working with faculty and advisors to develop major-specific curriculum descriptions containing explicit and detailed information on how students in that major can accommodate a study abroad experience within their baccalaureate program. Success measures include the number of majors in the targeted colleges for which study abroad advising materials are completed; changes in the number of students who participate in study abroad from a target college, who study abroad for longer periods, and who take coursework in their major while abroad; and the number of departments that complete written advising materials about incorporating study abroad in their major. The online study abroad application developed recently includes a brief survey querying students about the extent to which “curricular fit” was a factor in their program selection. From 2003-04 to 2004-05, study abroad participation in the target colleges (with the exception of Social Science) increased at a significantly higher rate than the university-wide rate of growth.
- Freshman Seminar Abroad allows first-year students to have a short-term international experience designed to introduce them to faculty scholarship and university student level expectations.

For more information on assessment of study abroad, see [Chapter Six](#).

Assessment Results for Freshmen Seminars Abroad

The number of freshman students participating in study abroad has increased significantly since the FSA program was instituted, from 15 students in 2002-03, to 72 students in 2003-04, to 139 students in 2004-05. Twenty-three percent of freshmen who participated in an FSA program in 2003-04 and 2004-05 already have participated, or are about to participate, in one or more additional study abroad programs (31 of 137 students, including three who have participated in semester-long programs). Across the four program sessions through fall 2004, between 95 and 100 percent of participants indicated that they thought they might study abroad again, and between 86 and 100 percent of participants said that, overall, they were satisfied with their freshman seminar. The inaugural FSA in Quebec City succeeded in helping in-coming students establish an early peer group, get to know faculty members, learn about themselves, and understand academic expectations. Data from the MSU Study Abroad Impact Study show an increase in participants' self-reported understanding of their host country's history, government, social institutions, and culture, as well as of international issues. Program debriefing sessions typically identify areas of improvement in the administrative and logistical realms of the programs. Improvements were suggested for the programs' pre-departure orientation sessions.

MSU's study abroad health, safety, and security standards and protocols are nationally recognized and copied. In 2000, the University was recognized by the American Council on Education for its high quality, cost-effective programs.

Study Abroad in Academic Units (Selected Examples)

College of Communication Arts and Sciences

conducted a survey to assess behaviors, interests and barriers regarding study abroad. The barriers identified included cost, time away from employment, fitting study abroad into their academic program, and safety. In response the College instituted a scholarship program, and has expanded its international internship program so students can acquire work experience while abroad. As a result of these actions, the College has increased its study abroad offerings by 35% over the past 5 years and all academic majors have at least one study abroad program affiliated with their area of study.

The German Department conducted an analysis of student work before and after a study abroad experience. They noticed that the students who had study abroad experience in German-speaking countries were not only more proficient and culturally aware but also more enthusiastic and committed to their major or additional major in German. Based on both the positive formal and informal feedback in classes and the formal feedback of the study abroad evaluations, the Department decided to integrate the study abroad experience more fully into the German program and make it a requirement for all majors.

Advanced Business German and Electrical and Mechanical Engineering seek to prepare students to successfully apply their knowledge of German language and culture in the international business context through a combination of on-campus course work and Study Abroad/Internship opportunities. Ongoing assessment of these activities found that students were unprepared to deal with cultural differences, Business German students lacked proper advising at the University of Applied Sciences in Constance, internship opportunities for German students were insufficient to meet the demand, and German language instruction in Aachen and Kaiserslautern was insufficiently rigorous. To address these problems, the department instituted a two-week cultural orientation course for Mechanical and Electrical Engineering students preparing to go to Germany, improved coordination of advisement of students between MSU and Constance, developed websites for MSU students to access information about the study abroad and internship programs, expanded internship opportunities,

and monitored German language courses in Aachen and Kaiserslautern through regular contact between MSU and overseas institutions. As a result, student evaluations of the study abroad/internship experiences have improved, more students are participating in the program in Constance, and more students are majoring in German.

The College of Education sponsors the Pre-internship Teaching Program. Initially offered in South Africa, it provides students between their fourth and fifth year of the MSU teacher preparation program an opportunity to gain experience teaching overseas. The College conducted a self-study of the program's impact. Results indicated that participants in the South African pre-internship program felt a great increase in confidence in their own classroom teaching when they returned to Michigan; an increase in understanding of multicultural issues in education; an increase in their teaching about South Africa and Africa in their Michigan classrooms; and an increase in their personal and professional growth as a result of this program. The College developed a second site for this program in New South Wales, Australia, which began in summer 2004.

The College's international efforts were featured in an *Education Week* article on the "handful of cutting-edge education schools [that] have begun expanding or crafting international-training programs for future educators."
- Julie Blair, "Colleges Sending Teacher-Candidates to See the World." *Education Week* (12/11/02) 22.15, p8.

The College of Nursing assessed its London and Mexico study abroad programs in light of workload, attitude change, knowledge acquisition and academic performance, career impact, course changes, scholarly productivity, and international partnerships. The full report can be found under [College of Nursing Study Abroad Impact Assessment](#), 2002. Students reported that they returned with a greater appreciation for the nursing profession in terms of role, responsibilities and professionalism; they developed a greater cultural sensitivity that they would use in their nursing practice, and increased independence and confidence. Students who returned from Mexico had a more "global view," and the experience reinforced their desire to work with Spanish speaking populations. Students perceived the workload in Mexico to be similar to that on-campus, and the mean grades of the Mexico students were higher than the mean course grades of on-campus students.

Supportive Services

Academic support services are an important component of any university environment, and are integral to achieving MSU's mission of teaching and learning.

Advising

Most undergraduates are admitted to MSU as a part of the Undergraduate University Division (UUD) (exceptions are students enrolled in James Madison College, the College of Nursing, and Lyman Briggs School). Although students are able to seek advising from advisors within specific colleges, UUD provides academic advising for all UUD admitted students until they declare a major at 56 credits. In UUD, advisors are a part of [Student Academic Affairs](#)

University wide advising surveys were conducted by the Institute for Public Policy & Social Research. 77% of respondents judged the overall quality of advising to be either excellent or good. In an e-mail survey of students conducted by UUD, 87% of the students seen by UUD felt they were treated in a courteous manner; 83% felt their advisor was helpful; 86% stated they would return and/or recommend UUD's services.

(SAA). SAA specialists provide services related to career major and selection; advising, course planning and enrollment; and study skills.

In the 2005 Academic Advising Survey, roughly 20-25% of students reported that their advisor had discussed the purposes of general education courses. This year's survey found a continued but slight increase in the number of contacts students had with their advisors. The 2005 survey indicates that "advisor expertise, relationship to the student, and ability to help the student see the connections between the curriculum and their personal goals" are powerful predictors of how students judge the quality of their academic advising.

Career Services

To connect students to career opportunities consistent with their goals and the values of a Michigan State University education, Career Services and Placement, in support of the Career Services Network, provides services, resources and programs that help students:

- Develop an understanding of their skills, interests and values
- Explore career pathways and options
- Learn strategies and techniques for navigating a search

- Acquire experience that builds abilities and tests options
- Gain direct access to opportunities of choice

In 1999-2000, Career Services conducted a post-graduation survey and discovered that many students delay career development and leave college uncertain about their career path. In addition, it was clear that use of career services had been dominated by business and technical majors. To address these issues, Career Services:

- Integrated career development into the academic experience to engage a broader range of students, enhance skill development and catalyze transition readiness.
- Introduced a stage development model emphasizing linkages to the curriculum.
- Reorganized career services from a centralized to a distributed system, the Career Services Network.

The Career Services Network refers to the interconnected system of career services units on campus, including college-based offices (“Field Career Consultants”), including one in the Graduate School, and all campus centers (“Hubs”). The network model is unique to Michigan State University. Field Career Consultants (FCCs), with offices in the colleges, develop expertise in designated majors and interest fields. They form relationships with faculty, academic advisors, leaders of student organizations, and alumni relations and development officers. They also build contacts with employers targeted by departments. Hubs serve as connection sites and resource centers for the Field Career Consultants. This interconnected web of FCCs and Hubs forms the

Career Services Network. Unlike purely centralized or decentralized systems, the network is responsive, flexible, and comprehensive. In its ideal expression, it is also seamless; students may access different points in the network according to their specific interests or developmental stage.

Academic Services

While faculty, instructors, and advisors all provide assistance with student learning and academic skill development, sometimes students need more focused or longer-term assistance than can be provided through a class or advising session. MSU supports the learning resource needs of all students through its academic support services. A few examples are given below.

- The [Learning Resources Center](#) (LRC) is a self-paced individualized learning center that offers assistance to MSU students who want to improve their academic performance.

- The Writing Center provides support to undergraduate and graduate students, as well as faculty, through a variety of consultation services and workshops. Nearly 9,000 such consultations were conducted in 2004. The demand continues to be dispersed across racial and disciplinary lines. Longitudinal studies of Writing Center services are represented at <http://writing.msu.edu/servicegraphs>.
- The [Office of Supportive Services](#) (OSS) is designed for students who have not had sufficient opportunities to prepare for the rigorous demands of higher education. Services provided by OSS include academic advising, tutorial assistance, skill enrichment workshops, social-counseling, career exploration, peer counseling, graduate study planning, and orientation programs. OSS administers the SUPER Program (Summer University Program Excellence Required) to assist underrepresented, low-income, or first generation college students with the transition from high school to college. In partnership with the Graduate School, OSS also administers MSU's McNair/SROP program to encourage minority, low-income, and first-generation college students to expand their educational opportunities and pursue graduate studies.
- The Student-Athlete Support Services (SASS) offers a wide range of services to student athletes including academic counseling, computer labs with instruction, tutoring in all subject areas, career planning, community service opportunities, and personal development workshops. SASS assists in monitoring athletic eligibility, provides priority registration, and makes sure that athletes are advised about current NCAA, Big Ten and University rules and regulations.
- The College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) has as its mission to assist migrant and/or seasonal farm worker students in their transition to University life. CAMP services at Michigan State University provide supportive and retention services. CAMP has a first year retention rate of nearly 80% for its program participants.

Supporting Diversity

MSU is committed to providing a learning environment that supports diversity and respects all learners. This commitment has manifested itself in a number of support services throughout the institution.

- The College Achievement Admission Program (CAAP) is a multifaceted holistic retention initiative designed to address the needs of first generation and low-income students, and students who meet other participant criteria.
- The Office for Affirmative Action Compliance and Monitoring monitors the University's progress toward equality of opportunity for federally protected classes, as well as those covered by state law and University Policy.
- The Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Vice President for Finance and Operations, and the Vice President for Student Affairs and Services share responsibility for providing pluralism, diversity, and multi-cultural programs. The University's holistic approach includes such themes as gender, racial-ethnic minority, handicapper, and sexual orientation.
- The Coordinator for Multicultural Development in the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs and Services gives special attention to the development of multicultural competencies for both students and staff. The coordinator plans and conducts training programs and works with a variety of multicultural issues and projects.
- The Office of Minority Student Affairs (OMSA), a department within the Office of the Provost, initiates, coordinates, and implements a range of services and programs that attempt to positively impact the quality of life for racial/ethnic minority students.
- Adult Services, a unit of the Office of the Vice Provost for University Outreach, facilitates a variety of services for re-entry adults.
- The North American Indian Student Organization (NAISO) sponsors cultural and social programs and promotes campus-wide awareness of current issues affecting American Indian students. NAISO also provides a social support system for students through linkage with the extended Indian community in the Lansing area. The Annual Pow Wow is open to the public and attracts participants from several states.
- Asian Pacific American Students are represented in student government by the Asian Pacific American Student Organization (APASO). APASO provides opportunities for students to meet socially and culturally, and serves as a support system for students to discuss issues and concerns relevant to Asian Pacific American Students.
- The Black Student Alliance (BSA) and Black Graduate Student Alliance (BGSA) serve as the communication linkages for the Black student community and address the

academic, political, and social needs of Black students. Programs include: the Black Student Welcome Reception, Co-Sponsor of the Annual Black Student Retention Conference, and coordination of Black History Month events.

- Culturas de las Razas Unidas (CRU) and the Latino Graduate Student Alliance (LGSA) provide cultural and social programs and workshops on academic skills. The group also monitors and responds to University programs and issues on behalf of Hispanic students.
- The Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD) provides a variety of accessibility and consulting services to persons with disabilities at Michigan State. Students, faculty, staff and visitors may coordinate any accessibility needs through the RCPD.
- The Office of Lesbian, Bi, Gay and Transgender Concerns provides assistance and support to individual students, consults with student groups and organizations, and works with other staff to enhance the environment for lesbian/bi/gay and transgender students. The Alliance of Lesbian-Bi-Gay Students (ALBGS) provides representation in student government and seeks to educate the public on lesbian, bi-sexual, gay and transgender issues.
- The Child and Family Care Resources Program (CFCR) coordinates information, resources and University initiatives to assist student-parents and students managing the care of dependent elders.
- A Women's Resource Center (WRC) serves the interests of women students, faculty, and staff with information, consultation, programs, and a monthly newsletter. The ASMSU Women's Council represents women students within student government and sponsors programs throughout the year. Women students also comprise the Women's Advisory Committee to the Vice President for Student Affairs and Services, and serve on the Women's Advisory Committee to the Provost.

Annual awards honor campus diversity efforts

By Tom Oswald

Individuals, teams, and units and organizations at MSU will be honored for their innovation and outstanding efforts to promote and achieve diversity. Awards will be presented during MSU's annual Excellence in Diversity Recognition and Awards convocation at 4 p.m.... Individual and team recipients of "Excellence in Diversity" awards receive a \$2,500 cash award.

-Excerpt from *MSU News Bulletin* March 31, 2005. For the full article, click [here](#).

Graduate Students

Each graduate program is highly specialized and, as a result, creates its own learning environment. There are, however, certain experiences that are common to all graduate students, and The Graduate School (TGS) developed support services to assist all graduate students accordingly. TGS programs designed to develop graduate students as instructors are described in [3B](#), and TGS programs designed to assist graduate student research are described in [4A](#). Other support services offered by the Graduate School include:

- The [Career Selection and Professional Skill Development Workshop Series](#) is designed to help students develop a better understanding of the skills and decision-making needed to help them meet their career and professional objectives. Each workshop is evaluated.
- [Conflict Resolution Workshops](#): A program for graduate students and faculty to develop skills in conflict resolution using interest-based strategies. An additional program for graduate students teaches skills for effective communication. Three years of outcomes assessment data were gathered as part of the FIPSE grant that funded development of this project. Assessment of the program as it relates to skill acquisition is underway.
- Graduate Student Orientation & Resource Fair: Offered every fall, the orientation features workshops on making it through graduate school, securing funding, human subject research, and resources available to graduate students.

The most important support for graduate students is the funding that allows them to pursue their degree programs. MSU assists graduate students through the following:

- More than 3,000 assistantships are available to qualified graduate students at MSU and assistantships exist in all facets of the University, from teaching to research to service. Funding is based on experience (and, for Teaching Assistants, the collective bargaining [agreement](#) with the Graduate Employees Union) and education. In 2003-04, MSU stipends for graduate assistants ranked fourth out of eight Big Ten schools reporting for research assistants and second for teaching assistants (Data Digest). Assistantships also provide a tuition and fee waiver for full time enrollment costs as well as health insurance. Most departments and colleges also provide competitive fellowships for graduate students.
- The [Graduate School](#) fellowship programs provide financial support for outstanding students who plan to enroll in a doctoral or master of fine arts program.

- The Graduate School also makes funding available for student travel to present at conferences, Dissertation Completion Fellowships, Research Enhancement funding, emergency funding, and need-based funding.

Internationalization

Internationalizing campus life is a component of the special emphasis chapter on [internationalization](#), but a few words should be said here about the international learning environment on campus. Launched in 1990, Internationalizing Student Life (ISL) was created to provide co-curricular activities for U.S. students at MSU to learn about other cultures and develop skills specific to successful cross-cultural exchange. The goal was to create international experiences on campus by structuring cross-cultural and educational contact between U.S. and international students. Many of the ISL programs were designed to spark American students' interest in continuing to learn about other cultures. Over the years, thousands of students participated in ISL programs. A committee was tasked with studying the ISL function in a campus-wide context, with the ultimate goal to propose a more effective implementation, delivery, and integration mechanism. The data collected during thirty-five meetings are currently being analyzed and recommendations are being formulated with regard to the future of ISL, which include but are not limited to: effective structural and programmatic integration with campus wide curricular and co-curricular initiatives, administrative leadership, and extending programming beyond the campus to include internationally-focused community groups and resources. The study created heightened awareness for the need of more attention and more coordination across the undergraduate student experience. In the months since the study, an Assistant Vice President for Internationalization and Assessment was hired to begin fall, 2005, and a position was created and filled in International Students and Scholars that will better link the community to campus-wide internationalization efforts. Provost Wilcox asked the Dean of Undergraduate Studies to coordinate these efforts.

International Students

Annually, MSU welcomes a large contingent of international students and scholars from around the world. In fact, in 2004-05, MSU ranked 20th in the U.S., with 3,315 international students. The [Office for International Students and Scholars](#) (OISS) provides programming,

services and activities that are focused on assuring that MSU is a welcoming and comfortable place for international students to pursue their academic goals. Services include:

- Advising and interpreting U.S. government regulations pertaining to immigration and visas.
- Conducting orientations and other special programming that help international students and scholars integrate into and adjust to the academic, cultural, and social life of MSU.
- Serving as a liaison with foreign embassies, sponsoring agencies, and educational foundations that support international students.
- Contributing to the internationalization of MSU by coordinating programs that bring students from diverse backgrounds into contact with each other and making use of cultural differences as an educational resource.

The total international student enrollment at MSU in Fall 2004 was 3,315, which consisted of 1,145 undergraduate and 2,170 graduate students. These statistics reflect an increase of 1.1% in undergraduate enrollment and a decrease of 2.7% in graduate enrollment over Fall 2003. From 126 countries, international students represent 7.4% of all MSU students. More than 50% of MSU's international students come from five countries: Korea (759), China (543), India (371), Japan (167), and Taiwan (155). The Colleges of Business (616), Natural Science (594), Engineering (550), and Arts and Letters (378) enroll the largest number of international students. In addition, MSU hosted 1,435 visiting international scholars from 98 countries.

Some of the efforts coordinated by OISS include:

- The International Coffee Hour: an informal weekly gathering of those interested in being part of the international community at MSU. Attracting between 100-150 visitors each week, it includes a small number of U.S. students and faculty.
- International Student Association: in the spirit of community fostered by the International Coffee Hour in 2003, a group of international students formed an association that would represent and involve all international students on campus.

Other services for international students include:

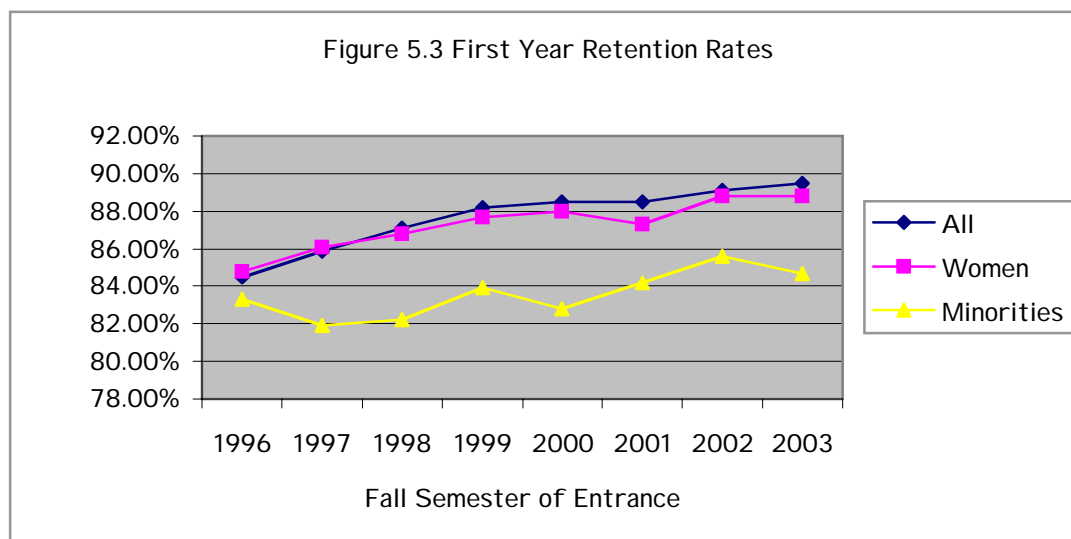
- The Volunteer English Tutoring Program (VETP), which was created in 1983 and supported by International Studies and Programs (ISP) as an informal and highly

personalized program to help Michigan State University's newly arrived international students, scholars, friends, and family adapt to life in an unfamiliar country.

- Community Volunteers for International Programs (CVIP), which has been coordinating volunteer programs to assist international students for nearly fifty years. While its core mission is to assist international students and their families, several of its programs are also designed to make use of cultural differences as an educational resource. See [Chapter Eight](#) for more information.

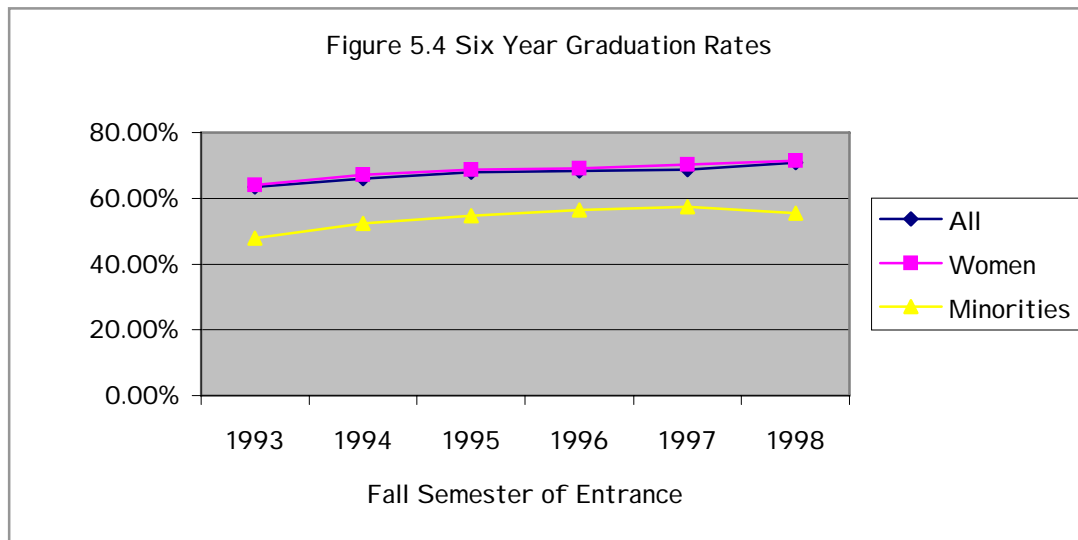
Graduation and Retention

In the period covered by this self-study, MSU demonstrated small but steady progress in undergraduate student retention rates. The entering cohort in 1996 had a one-year retention rate of 84.5% compared with a one-year retention rate of 89.1% for the entering cohort in 2002 (see Figure 5.3). Similar gains were evident over the same time period for women (a 4% increase in retention) and for minorities (a 2.3% increase in retention) (see Figure 5.3). MSU's first year retention rate is in the middle of Big Ten schools, behind Northwestern, Michigan, Illinois, Penn State, and Wisconsin.



Undergraduate graduation rates also indicate a successful learning environment, as 68.7% of the entering cohort in 1997, 70.3% of women, and 57.5% of minorities had graduated by 2003

(See Figure 5.4). All three also demonstrated increases in graduation rates in recent years. While the graduation gap is cause for concern, MSU minority students graduate at a rate that is better than the national average. See [above](#) for programs targeting academic success for minority students. In addition, based on the entering class of 1998, the “predicted graduation rate,” as determined by U.S. News and World Report, was 58%. The actual graduation rate was 71%. MSU exceeded expectations in this measure by 13%. MSU and Penn State University currently have the highest value added graduation rate measure in the Big Ten.



E. Core Component 3D – The organization’s learning resources support student learning and effective teaching.

Effective assessment, effective teaching, and effective learning environments are all essential to effective student learning. In 2003-04 total combined expenditures in instruction and academic support were 37% of the total expenditures for the University, more than twice as high as any other category of expenditures (see Figure 5.5). Furthermore, despite declining revenues, combined expenditures in instruction and academic support have increased in every year between 1994-95 and 2004-05.

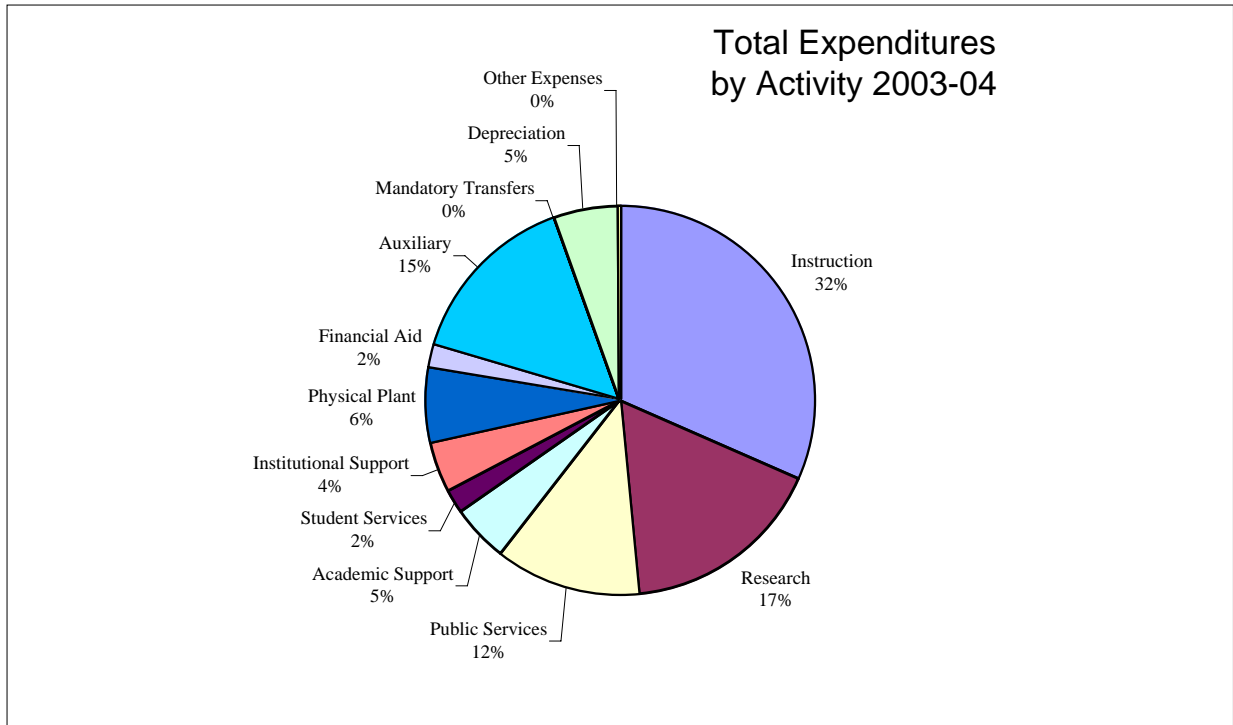


Figure 5.5

Further evidence of the University’s support for student learning can be found in the quality of its learning resources, which provide the foundation upon which effective teaching and learning are built.

The following table reflects the level of student satisfaction with various experiences on campus. Percentages reflect students indicating “satisfied” or “very satisfied” on the 2003 College Student Survey.

Computing, libraries, and technology

Activity, service, or experience	Percentage
Laboratory facilities and equipment	69.7
Library facilities	90.2
Computer facilities	82.7
Quality of computer assistance/training	59.8
Availability of internet access	93.4

Facilities

Classrooms

There are 340 centrally scheduled classrooms and over 150 classrooms scheduled by colleges and departments. Over the past five years, \$2.5 million was expended for classroom renovation. Between 1994-95 and 2004-05, square footage devoted to classrooms across the University increased 11.1%. As of spring 2005, 200 of MSU's 340 centrally scheduled classrooms are technology equipped (i.e., with technology carts or laptop podiums). Each classroom allows the use of video, audio, and a networked computer connected to a permanently installed, high-quality projection system. While this represents a substantial investment in technology classrooms in support of instructional technology, demand for technology classrooms currently outpaces the availability of the classrooms.

Laboratories

In 2003-04, MSU had 2,400 research laboratories with 1,056,978 square feet of space and 664 classroom laboratories

Laboratory space does not always come with a Bunsen burner. MSU's new Training Center for Dairy Professionals, for example, comes with 9,000 cattle and 3,200 dairy cows.

with 431,009 square feet of space. In addition, MSU has 2,500 acres of experimental research farms. Between 1994-95 and 2004-05, square footage devoted to research laboratories and laboratory support has increased 18.8%. For more information on research facilities and infrastructure, virtually all of which is accessible to students in support of undergraduate and graduate learning, see [Chapter Six](#). For more information on general infrastructure, including deferred maintenance, see [Chapter Two](#).

MSU has approximately 50 public computer laboratories that are frequently used for classroom instruction, including computer laboratories and collaborative workstations in all residence hall complexes and the MSU Union. However, the design of these laboratories does not facilitate the collaborative student work valued by active learning principles. The design of these laboratory spaces needs to more closely match the pedagogical needs of technology-mediated instruction.

The Learning and Assessment Center in the Health Professions Colleges

The new [Learning and Assessment Center](#) at Michigan State University (MSU) is a result of the collaborative vision of the Colleges of Human Medicine, Nursing, Osteopathic Medicine and Veterinary Medicine. This unique multi-college organization allows for better efficiency, new cross-college collaborations, and the opportunity to model aspects of team care so important to achieving optimal patient outcomes and improving the healthcare system. The Learning and Assessment Center (LAC) helps prepare health professions students to develop and demonstrate competence in basic tasks and skills through in-depth, hands-on training. It is an important extension of their classroom training, allowing them to expand and fine-tune their abilities before going into a real-life setting. It is expected that the resources of the LAC will support curriculum change, creating curricula that are much more competency-oriented, indeed competency-driven, than before. Aggregation of students' performance data will provide the necessary programmatic assessment and accountability. The process for creating a vision for the LAC began in the fall of 2004 and is in the early-implementation stage. A new facility, an 8,000 square foot space in Fee Hall, is under construction and is expected to open in January, 2006.

Performance Space and Museums

Different disciplines require different learning resources. The Department of Theater has access to five performance spaces in two different buildings: The Auditorium and the Wharton Center for Performing Arts. The spaces range in size from 50 seats to 2,500 seats, with 4,020 seats available in all. In addition, the department has a scene shop, a costume shop, an electric shop, a make-up studio, a rehearsal studio, a dance studio, and a computer design studio.

Additional learning resources that are available to the entire campus but are particularly relevant to Art and Art History include:

- [Kresge Art Museum](#) - founded in 1959, houses Michigan State University's collection of over 7,000 works of art. Objects on view span 5,000 years of human history and include representative examples of works of art from ancient Cycladic figures to contemporary mixed media installations.
- [MSU Museum](#) - The museum, founded in 1857, is one of the oldest museums in the Midwest and is accredited by the American Association of Museums. The museum is a public steward for nearly a million objects and specimens of cultural and natural history

from around the world. It is Michigan's largest public natural and cultural history museum.

The School of Music consists of two neighboring buildings that include numerous classrooms, studios, laboratories, a music therapy clinic, recording facilities, rehearsal spaces, private teaching studios, and 81 practice rooms. The School of Music is also located adjacent to the main library, which houses the music collections, and near the University Auditorium, home of an early childhood music classroom and research facility. For information on efforts to fund a state of the art facility for the School of Music, see [Chapter Two](#).

Libraries

Michigan State University has 9 libraries on campus, including: the Main Library and branch libraries such as the Business Library and the Engineering Library. Within the Main Library there are a number of special libraries and collections for particular subjects, such as the Fine Arts Library and the Map Library. The library collection includes: 4,500,000 volumes, 33,000 magazine and journal subscriptions, 200,000 maps, 40,000 sound recordings, plus access to hundreds of electronic resources. In the last ten years, the Libraries has moved dramatically in the direction of networked information resources, including infrastructure, services, and digital collections (described in [Chapter Two](#)). While most library users have access to these networked resources at home or office, the Main Library has increased its technology infrastructure to support the use of networked information resources as well. The Main Library is the campus showplace for the new wireless network initiative on campus. In addition, there are more than 400 public computer workstations in the Main Library, all of which operate on the gigabit network. The Library also supports an [800 line](#) that assists people with access to the campus network and to electronic resources. What can be accessed via this infrastructure is described in [Chapter Two](#) in detail. A few additional examples are included here.

Digital Information Resources

- The Libraries' online catalog was upgraded to a new state-of-the-art system in 1998.
- The Libraries' electronic resources (including 28,714 electronic journals) are accessible remotely from all over the campus, from overseas study sites, and by MSU researchers globally.

- The Libraries created the [Digital and Multimedia Center](#) to preserve scholarly resources and make them more widely available.

Library Resources and Maintenance

Since the last review, the University has demonstrated its willingness to commit significant resources to the library to support collections to meet the research needs of the faculty. During this period the Library greatly enhanced interlibrary loan services and significantly improved maintenance of the stacks and re-shelving of books as well. Further, the Libraries made investments in its physical facilities, to make the libraries more welcoming and usable spaces. For more information, see [Chapter Two](#).

The Libraries international strengths include one of the top five Africana collections, growing collections in Latin America studies, strong foreign language collections including European and Asian languages, and a strong Slavic collection. For more information on the Africana collections, see their [unit example](#). Approximately 9% of the 2004-05 materials collection budget was allocated for area/international studies and 10% of the library's staffing is dedicated to international work.

Physical Facilities

- Continual physical upgrades have been made to the libraries, including the installation of energy efficient lighting in the main library.
- Consolidation of Reference Services into a highly visible area on the first floor.
- Addition of a Writing Center outpost.
- Complete renovation of the Engineering Library.
- Installation of a Cyber Café in the Main Library.
- The Main Library is open 24/7 during Fall and Spring Semesters.

Technology Resources

Given the complete integration of technology on campus, information on technology is woven into many of the sections throughout this report. Support for effective use of technology in instruction is in Core Component [3B](#), while information on technological learning environments is in Core Component [3C](#). Technology classrooms and computer laboratories are described [above](#). Technology training and technology support staff were described in [Chapter](#)

Two while Chapter Four discusses technology infrastructure and planning. This section, then, will briefly describe some of the technology infrastructure and learning resources not covered in other sections.

Academic Computing & Network Services

Academic Computing & Network Services (ACNS) provides both centralized and distributed academic computing support for the University community. ACNS maintains the campus-wide network, including MSUnet, Ethernet over broadband, and the MSU optical fiber (FDDI and gigabit) network. ACNS is staffed by approximately 100 employees, assisted by 100 part-time student employees, who support a wide array of computing services, which include the operation of more than sixty public microcomputer laboratories; preparing and distributing user documentation; consulting; training; custom programming; scoring services; computer design and repair; hardware and software sales; microcomputer support; system operations and management; network operations and management; and faculty support.

Network Resources

- DHCP (Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol): MSU's system for assigning computer addresses for laptops and desktops across campus. By registering a computer with DHCP one can bring a laptop to any of the hundreds of Ethernet connections on campus (Union, Library, classrooms, etc.) and get instant access to the Internet.
- AFS space: AFS (Andrew File System) storage space is 52 Mb of centrally maintained file storage space for all students, faculty, and staff. AFS is a web server which can serve as a host to a personal website as well as a back up site for important files.
- MSU Mail: MSU's centrally supported mail system for all students, faculty, and staff. Available online at <http://mail.msu.edu>, it works with all mail clients such as Outlook, Eudora, etc.
- Off-campus Computer Network Access: Academic Computing and Network Services provides dial up network access throughout the State of Michigan, and a few cities outside Michigan.

- On-campus Network Access: Offices and most classrooms have high speed Ethernet connections, and can be accessed with a DHCP-registered computer. Wireless service is available in some public buildings, as well as in selected classroom locations.
- Processes used to evaluate these learning resources include:
- [CCSAC](#) (Communications and Computer Systems Advisory Committees). CCSAC committees occasionally survey the faculty and students to specifically assess the effectiveness of selected academic computing services or related needs of the campus. These committees are advisory to the Vice Provost for LCT.
- Helpdesks. ACNS and the Library both operate helpdesks. Helpdesks characterize user problems and feed them back to the system developers and operators to improve systems and services.
- LCT services also measure their reliability and availability using the same uptime/downtime approach used by Administrative Information Services. End-user services strive for “3-9s” of uptime (99.9%) and key fundamental services (on which all other services rely, such as the network) strive for better than “4-9s” of uptime (99.99%, or less than 52.6 minutes of cumulative downtime annually).

F. Summary: Strengths and Priorities for Improvement

We are in a time of change when the tools for teaching, including technology, are essential aspects of an environment for learning; the places we live are the places we best learn; the most effective teachers are those who are concerned about learning outcomes; and the boundaries of campus extend beyond state and country. The essential challenge is to create optimal conditions for effective teaching and learning, wherever and however they occur. At MSU, instructional programs and academic support units have clear statements of learning outcomes, and depend upon the assessment of their programs for continuous improvement of their curricula and delivery. The campus is in the midst of a cultural shift, where assessment outcomes are beginning to be pursued with the same curiosity as the research findings we value. In the spirit of “advancing knowledge, and transforming lives,” we continue to work toward the alignment of our many University resources to support effective teaching and active learning models and a

stimulating academic climate for our students. Exploring how best to fulfill our mission to educate another generation of students in this climate of change provides both opportunity and challenge.

Recommendations

MSU will continue efforts to intentionally connect and to assist students in connecting the dimensions of the undergraduate experience:

- working with governance to create a cross-university mechanism to connect the strands of general education (integrative studies, writing and quantitative literacy)
- implementing the [recommendations](#) of the Working Group to Improve Undergraduate Education related to assessment and faculty development in general education
- examining the connections among general education, disciplinary and professional majors, and study abroad experiences.

MSU should enhance Integrative Studies opportunities by piloting new strategies to meet integrative studies requirements (including thematic sequences, active learning models, and study abroad options), and new delivery and pedagogical models (with appropriate assessment).

MSU should provide and coordinate expanded opportunities for undergraduate research and global engagement by increasing visibility and access to opportunities, matching students and faculty in research and creative endeavor projects, and providing support to faculty and students.

MSU should provide leadership and support for Living and Learning Programs by expanding opportunities for engaged learning through additional living and learning programs; exploring new models of engagement across support units; and continuing development of appropriate assessment metrics of the “value-added” of residential learning.

To improve graduate education, MSU should continue to expand regular external graduate program reviews to encourage program reform in support of changing research demands and societal needs. MSU should continue to expand opportunities for graduate students to engage in international experiences.

MSU should pursue multidimensional approaches to the evaluation of teaching.

