“Any Person ... Any Study”
within One University

Self-Study Design Plan

Presented to the
Middle States Commission on Higher Education

July 1, 2009
## Contents

**Cornell University: An Overview** .............................. 1  
- Mission ..................................................... 2  
- Vision ..................................................... 2  
- Key Facts .................................................. 2  

**Nature and Scope of the Self-Study** .......................... 3  

**Intended Outcomes of the Self-Study** .......................... 4  

**Organization of the Self-Study Process** ...................... 5  
- Self-Study Committees & Working Groups .................... 7  
- Charge for the Steering Committee ............................ 8  
- Charge for the Working Groups ............................... 8  
- Self-Study Time Line ....................................... 10  
- Working Group Reports: Style & Format ..................... 12  

**Self-Study Research Questions** ................................. 14  
- Institutional Stewardship .................................. 14  
- Integrity, Governance & Administration ..................... 16  
- Student Admissions & Supports .............................. 18  
- The Faculty ................................................. 20  
- Educational Offerings ...................................... 22  
- Assessment of Student Learning .............................. 25  

**Membership in the Working Groups** ......................... 26  
- Institutional Stewardship .................................. 26  
- Integrity, Governance & Administration ..................... 26  
- Student Admissions & Supports .............................. 27  
- The Faculty ................................................. 27  
- Educational Offerings ...................................... 28  
- Assessment of Student Learning .............................. 28  

**Documents Relevant for Working Groups** .................... 30  

**Outline for Final Self-Study Report** ......................... 35  

**Recommendations for Members of the Visiting Team** .... 36
Cornell University: An Overview

Founded in 1865 by Ezra Cornell and Andrew Dickson White, Cornell was conceived as a coeducational, non-sectarian institution that would teach in and contribute to all fields of knowledge—from the classics to the sciences and from the theoretical to the applied. Ezra Cornell captured these ideals in 1865 with a statement that has since become Cornell’s motto: “I would found an institution where any person can find instruction in any study.”

As the fruition of Cornell’s vision of “any person ... any study,” Cornell University today is comprised of eleven colleges or schools in Ithaca in addition to the medical college based in New York City. Cornell offers over one hundred courses of study: from Philosophy to Crop & Soil Sciences; from Applied & Engineering Physics to Hotel Administration; from Collective Bargaining, Labor Law, & Labor History to Ophthalmology.

By design, Cornell’s colleges exercise a great deal of independence from one another and from the central university administration. This autonomy is written into the Cornell University bylaws:

It shall be the duty of each separate college or school faculty to determine the entrance requirements for its own students; to prescribe and define courses of study for them; to determine the requirements for such degrees as are offered to students under its jurisdiction; to recommend to the President such candidates for degrees as may have fulfilled the requirements therefor; to enact and enforce rules for the guidance and supervision of its students in their academic work; and in general to exercise jurisdiction over the academic interests of students and all other educational matters in the particular college or school.

Cornell University is thus a complex entity. While the colleges have a great deal of autonomy, they are also a part of one university governed by one Board of Trustees, one president, one Faculty Senate, one undergraduate Student Assembly, and so on. Though our students apply to and are enrolled in one specific college, Cornell students are able—and often are required—to take classes outside of their home college, thereby benefitting from the diversity of academic offerings made available across the University. Similarly, most faculty are members of “Graduate Fields” that transcend departmental and college boundaries.

Cornell University is many colleges, but also a single institution that seeks to admit a selective but diverse study body and to offer a wide variety of courses of study.

* Cornell’s Graduate School is organized into ninety different Graduate Fields; each Field is comprised of faculty members with common research interests. While it is sometimes the case that a Field is coterminous with a single department, in most cases a field includes individuals from a number of departments, sections, and schools within the university. Individual faculty members may belong to more than one Graduate Field.
Mission

Cornell University is both a private Ivy League university and the land grant university for the State of New York. Cornell’s mission is to discover, preserve, and disseminate knowledge; produce creative work; and promote a culture of broad inquiry throughout and beyond the Cornell community. Cornell also aims, through public service, to enhance the lives and livelihoods of our students, the people of New York, and others around the world.

Vision

Cornell aspires to be the exemplary comprehensive research university for the 21st century on the basis of our distinctive status as a private university with a formal public mission. Faculty, staff, and students will thrive at Cornell because of its unparalleled combination of quality and breadth; its high standards; its open, collaborative, and innovative culture; the opportunities provided by beautiful, vibrant rural and urban campuses; and programs that extend throughout the state of New York and across the globe.

Key Facts

On its Ithaca campus, Cornell enrolls over 13,000 undergraduates in seven undergraduate colleges, including three “contract colleges” that receive partial and continuing funding from the state of New York and four “endowed colleges”:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contract Colleges</th>
<th>Endowed Colleges</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Agriculture &amp; Life Sciences</td>
<td>• Architecture, Art &amp; Planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Human Ecology</td>
<td>• Arts &amp; Sciences</td>
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<td>• Industrial &amp; Labor Relations</td>
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In addition to the undergraduates, the Ithaca campus enrolls approximately 4,500 students in the Graduate School and a combined total of 1,800 professional students in the Johnson Graduate School of Management, the Law School, and the New York State College of Veterinary Medicine.

There are approximately 1,600 tenured and tenure-track faculty, 1,100 non-tenure track faculty and other academic staff, and 7,500 non-academic staff on the Ithaca campus.

Weill Cornell Medical College and Graduate School of Medical Sciences of Cornell University enrolls approximately 900 in New York City and more than 200 at an additional instructional location in Doha, Qatar.
Other international activities include instruction in Ethiopia, India and Singapore as part of joint agreements with institutions in those countries.

Cornell University operates several major research facilities in Ithaca and elsewhere. These include the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station located primarily in Geneva, New York. As part of its research mission, Cornell has affiliation agreements with several other bodies, including the Boyce Thompson Institute, the US Department of Agriculture, and the Methodist Hospital System in Houston, Texas.

On July 1, 2006, David J. Skorton took office as the 12th president of Cornell University. President Skorton came to Cornell from the University of Iowa where he served as president since 2003 and as a faculty member since 1981.

W. Kent Fuchs took office as the 15th provost of Cornell University on January 1, 2009. Before becoming the provost, he served as the Joseph Silbert Dean of Engineering at Cornell.

Nature and Scope of the Self-Study

With a new provost and a president in only his third year at this institution, the leadership of Cornell University welcomes the opportunity to engage in a comprehensive self study.

However, it is important to recognize that our comprehensive self study is unfolding during a time in which the institution must react to extraordinary financial circumstances. As President Skorton stated in his March 6, 2009 communication to the University:

"We are at a defining moment in Cornell’s history. It is time to reconfigure the university in ways that not only guard our excellence and breadth, preserve our accessibility and meet our responsibilities to the local community and the State of New York, but that also consolidate our academic and administrative functions in imaginative and cost-effective ways."

In short, the university’s pressing challenge is to find ways to reduce costs, consolidate functions, and eliminate redundancies within a university structure that is decentralized by design and in light of our calling to be “an institution where any person can find instruction in any study.”

In addressing the theme “Any Person ... Any Study” within One University, we expect our self study to engage the university community in a thoughtful consideration of the challenge to identify effective solutions that balance centralization with independence; efficiency with latitude; and control with creativity in ways that preserve and enhance Cornell’s fundamental strengths.
Intended Outcomes of the Self-Study

Our self study is taking place during a unique and challenging period. In response to keen budgetary challenges, the university is engaged in a period of focused strategic decision making that will address some of the same key questions as our self study, but within a compressed time frame. That process—dubbed “Reimagining Cornell” and led by Provost Fuchs—is charted to unfold in two phases: phase one involves identifying strategic opportunities to reduce expenses across the university, and phase two will develop a traditional, comprehensive university strategic plan dedicated to rebuilding a Cornell University that is a leaner and stronger institution.

Our comprehensive self study will inform, complement, and be informed by this necessary strategic planning. Through a sensitive reflection on our theme of “Any Person ... Any Study” within One University as it relates to the fourteen standards for accreditation, we expect to identify opportunities for Cornell to better achieve its mission within its resource constraints.

It has become clear already that the decennial self study will advance campus conversations regarding the process of assessing student learning outcomes and its importance to us as an institution. We expect that the self study process will contribute to our efforts to build a shared understanding of assessment across campus, and to promote best practices in assessment more generally.

Finally, we note that over the last decade, the university has made significant investments in new buildings and programs to support both students and faculty and in pursuance of our mission. We see the self study as an opportunity to document and reflect upon recent achievements related to these initiatives at a time of some turnover in institutional leadership and changes in the institution more generally. Taking stock of those investments now will help all of Cornell’s constituencies better understand the nature, scope, and trajectory of this institution’s evolution over our recent history and may help future administrations better evaluate courses of action related to these and similar investments.
Organization of the Self-Study Process

In November 2008, incoming Cornell University Provost W. Kent Fuchs appointed Michele Moody-Adams, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, Professor of Philosophy, and Director of the Ethics and Public Life Program; and Alan Mathios, Rebecca Q. and James C. Morgan Dean of the College of Human Ecology and Professor of Policy Analysis & Management, as co-chairs for Cornell’s Accreditation Steering Committee.

The co-chairs agreed that it was prudent to initiate the self-study process at Cornell with a Planning Committee. Because the Planning Committee would be smaller in size than a Steering Committee that would more fully represent Cornell’s substantial size and complexity, the Planning Committee could be more readily appointed and scheduled for several meetings before the beginning of the Spring 2009 semester.

In addition to the co-chairs above, the following individuals served on the Self-Study Planning Committee:

- Marin Clarkberg, Associate Director, Institutional Research & Planning
- William Fry, Dean of the University Faculty and Professor of Plant Pathology and Plant-Microbe Biology, College of Agriculture & Life Sciences
- Kent Hubbell, Robert W. and Elizabeth C. Staley Dean of Students and Professor of Architecture, College of Architecture, Art & Planning
- Barbara Knuth, Senior Associate Dean and Professor of Natural Resources, College of Agriculture & Life Sciences
- Susan Murphy, Vice President for Student & Academic Services
- Paul Streeter, Interim Vice President for Planning & Budget
- Kristin Walker, Manager of Academic Support, Institutional Research & Planning

The Planning Committee initiated the self-study design process by: agreeing on a comprehensive approach to the self-study; conceptualizing the formation of six working groups (illustrated on page 7) to address the fourteen standards required for accreditation; conceiving of a full Steering Committee comprised of the Planning Committee, working group chairs, student representation and an academic leader from Cornell Weill Medical College. The Planning Committee provided recommendations to Provost Fuchs regarding the appointment of other Steering Committee members, including the working group chairs.
The full Steering Committee convened for the first time in early March, 2009. In addition to the members of the Planning Committee, the Steering Committee includes:

- Kraig Adler, Professor and Chair of Neurobiology & Behavior, College of Agriculture & Life Sciences
- Laura Brown, Vice Provost of Undergraduate Education (as of July 1, 2009) and John Wendell Anderson Professor of English, College of Arts & Sciences
- David Gries, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs and the William L. Lewis Professor of Computer Science, College of Engineering
- David Hajjar, Senior Executive Vice Dean and Executive Vice Provost, Weill Cornell Medical College
- Nikhil Kumar, Undergraduate Student, School of Industrial & Labor Relations
- Kathleen Rasmussen, Professor of Nutritional Sciences, College of Human Ecology
- Gina Ryan, Graduate Student, Microbiology, Graduate School
- Amy Villarejo, Chair and Associate Professor of Theatre Film & Dance, College of Arts & Sciences
- Charlie Walcott, Professor Emeritus of Neurobiology & Behavior, College of Agriculture & Life Sciences

The Steering Committee worked together to refine the self-study research questions, identify members for the working groups, and finalize the self-study design plan.

On February 27, 2009, it was announced that Vice Provost Michele Moody-Adams would be named dean at Columbia College and vice president for undergraduate education at Columbia University as of July 1, 2009.

In recognition of the impending departure, Provost Kent Fuchs appointed Dean of Students Kent Hubbell, already a member of the Planning Committee, to replace Vice Provost Adams as a co-chair of the Accreditation Steering Committee.

A draft of this design was submitted to Debra Klinman, Vice President, Middle States Commission on Higher Education, on April 6, 2009. In light of the comments she provided during her April 23 visit to Cornell’s Ithaca campus and additional feedback from Working Groups, the Steering Committee revised the design.

On June 11, 2009, Provost Kent Fuchs announced that Laura Brown, John Wendell Anderson Professor of English and chair of the Educational Offerings Working Group, would become the new Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education as of July 1, 2009.
Self-Study Committees & Working Groups

**Planning Committee:**
Alan Mathios, co-chair, Dean, Human Ecology
Michele Moody-Adams, co-chair through March 2009, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education
Kent Hubbell co-chair after March 2009, Dean of Students
Marin Clarkberg, Associate Director, Institutional Research & Planning
William Fry, Dean of Faculty
Barbara Knuth, Sr. Associate Dean, Agriculture & Life Sciences
Susan Murphy, Vice President, Student & Academic Services
Paul Streeter, Interim Vice President, Planning & Budget
Kristin Walker, Manager of Support, Institutional Research & Planning

**Steering Committee:**
Planning Committee
Chairs of working groups
David Hajjar, Executive Vice Provost, Weill Cornell Medical College
Nikhil Kumar, undergraduate, Industrial & Labor Relations
Gina Ryan, graduate student, Microbiology

**Working Groups:**

**Institutional Stewardship**
Chair: Kathleen Rasmussen, Nutritional Sciences
Standards:
1. Mission and Goals
2. Planning, Resource Allocation & Institutional Renewal
3. Institutional Resources
7. Institutional Assessment

**Integrity, Governance & Administration**
Chair: Charles Walcott, Neurobiology & Behavior
Standards:
4. Leadership & Governance
5. Administration
6. Integrity

**Student Admissions & Supports**
Chair: Kraig Adler, Neurobiology & Behavior
Standards:
8. Student Admissions & Retention
9. Student Support Services

**The Faculty**
Chair: Amy Villarejo, Theater, Film & Dance
Standard:
10. The Faculty

**Educational Offerings**
Chair: Laura Brown, English
Standards:
11. Educational Offerings
12. General Education
13. Related Educational Activities

**Assessment of Student Learning**
Chair: David Gries, Computer Science
Standard:
14. Assessment of Student Learning
Charge for the Steering Committee

- Develop a comprehensive understanding of the entire accreditation process
- Choose the self-study model
- Determine key issues for the self study
- Decide on the number and structure of working groups
- Craft self-study design plan
- Coordinate and provide leadership for the working groups
- Communicate about the accreditation process to various campus constituencies
- Read draft Working Group reports and provide timely feedback
- Help the Working Groups obtain access to information when necessary
- Integrate the working group reports into an effective self-study document
- Assume ownership and editorial responsibility for the final self study document

Charge for the Working Groups

- Become familiar with all fourteen standards for accreditation as described in Characteristics of Excellence
- Develop a firm understanding of the “fundamental elements” of each standard related to the working group
- Explore “optional analysis and evidence” that pertains to each standard related to the working group
- Understand relevant findings and outcomes from Cornell’s 2006 Periodic Review Report
- Evaluate how existing documentation addresses the Self-Study Research Questions assigned to the working group
- Consider if there are limited additional pieces of information that may allow for more thorough responses to the Self-Study Research Questions
• Assess Cornell’s strengths and weakness with respect to each relevant standard

• Assess the extent to which Cornell is structured and operating effectively and efficiently by weighing the merits of centralization and decentralization as it pertains to each relevant standard

• Consider if and how Cornell is prepared to meet the challenges of the next five to seven years with respect to each relevant standard

• Develop specific, realistic recommendations for institutional improvement where warranted

• Document and distill the findings into a single, narrative report to the Steering Committee observing the instructions described in “Working Group Reports: Style & Format,” below, and meeting the following milestones in the process:
  
  • Proposed outline: October 14, 2009
  • Initial draft: January 6, 2010
  • Second draft: March 1, 2010
  • Final draft: May 3, 2010

• Make documentation of the working group’s process (including meeting minutes and reference materials) available to the Steering Committee
Proposed Schedule of Tasks for Self-Study

**November 2008**
- Moody-Adams and Clarkberg attend the Self-Study Institute in Philadelphia

**December 2008**
- Provost appoints Steering Committee chairs (Moody-Adams and Mathios)

**December 2008 - January 2009**
- Planning Committee chooses “comprehensive” approach to self study
- Planning Committee apportions 14 standards to six working groups

**January - February 2009**
- Planning Committee drafts questions for working groups
- Planning Committee & Provost nominate chairs of working groups

**March - April 2009**
- Entire Steering Committee convenes
- Steering Committee refines Design Plan
- Steering Committee appoints Working Group members
- Co-chair Moody-Adams steps down; Provost appoints Hubbell as co-chair
- Draft design plan reviewed and discussed by Provost’s staff, President’s staff
- Steering Committee submits Design Plan to MSCHE, April 6
- MSCHE staff liaison Klinman visits Ithaca campus to discuss Design (April 23)

**May - June 2009**
- Working Groups provided with administrative support
- Working Groups provided on-line, collaborative work spaces, e.g. wikis
- Working Groups establish schedule of meetings for 2009-10 academic year
- Steering Committee considers additional revisions to Design, submits final draft to MSCHE by June 30

**Summer 2009**
- Working Groups engaged in information gathering
- Steering Committee begins a monthly meeting schedule, receiving monthly progress reports from Working Groups at each meeting
- Steering Committee drafts University Overview and Approach to Self Study

**August 2009**
- Cornell Press release regarding the finalization of the Design

**September - November 2009**
- Representatives from the Steering Committee discuss accreditation with:
  - University Assembly
  - Student Assembly
  - Graduate and Professional Student Assembly
  - Employee Assembly
  - Faculty Senate
  - Educational Policy Committee
  - University Faculty Committee
  - Board of Trustees (October 22-24)
- Trustees appoint Trustee Task Force on Accreditation
- Working Groups provide Steering Committee with possible outlines for narrative

**November 2009**
- Steering Committee refines outline for Working Group reports
- Steering Committee connects with Provost’s Strategic Planning Process (Phase I of that process expected to be completed)
January 2010
- Working Groups provide initial drafts to Steering Committee (January 6); trouble spots identified

March 2010
- Working Groups provide second drafts of their reports (March 1)
- Steering Committee adopts biweekly meeting schedule
- MSCHE and Cornell agree on the Evaluation Team Chair
- Dates set for Evaluation Team visit
- Cornell Press release announcing Evaluation Chair, visit date, updating community on process

April 2010
- Steering Committee provides Working Group with comments on draft reports (by April 1)

May 2010
- Working Groups submit final drafts of their reports (by May 3)
- Working Group members thanked for their service
- Steering Committee refines plan for final self-study report
- Steering Committee apportions drafting and editing responsibilities for final self-study

Summer 2010
- Steering Committee compiles draft of single self-study report

October 2010
- Draft report shared with
  - University Assembly
  - Student Assembly
  - Graduate and Professional Student Assembly
  - Employee Assembly
  - Faculty Senate
  - Educational Policy Committee
  - University Faculty Committee
  - Board of Trustees & Cornell University Council (October 28-30)

November 2010
- Steering Committee revises self-study report
- Draft report shared across campus constituencies (through a press release and/or email from President)

January 2011
- Steering Committee continues revisions to self-study report
- Evaluation Team Chair makes preliminary campus visit
- Report and discuss revisions with Board of Trustees (January 21-23)

March 2011
- Self-study submitted to MSCHE

May 2011
- Evaluation Team visits Cornell
- Evaluation Team submits report

June 2011
- Cornell drafts response to report

Early Fall 2011
- MSCHE action
Working Group Reports: Style & Format

In their reports to the Steering Committee, Working Groups should go beyond simple description and provide thoughtful and frank evaluation. In considering possibilities for improving the university, Working Groups should not lose sight of Cornell’s special strengths.

While large portions of Working Group reports will appear in the final self-study report to be submitted to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, Working Group reports may be submitted to the Steering Committee as confidential documents. The Steering Committee will exercise final editorial control of the institutional self-study report.

Guided by the Self-Study Research Questions assigned to the group, each Working Group report should be written as a single, coherent narrative using clear prose and complete sentences.

As a starting point, each working group’s final report should be conceptualized upon the following outline:

I. Standard(s) and research questions
II. Approach and methods used to carry out the study
   A. Significant documents
   B. Additional sources of evidence
III. Results of the research
   A. Key evidence that Cornell meets the standard(s) in question
   B. Any challenges that Cornell faces with respect to the standard(s)
IV. Discussion
   A. The extent to which Cornell functions as “One University” with respect to the standard
   B. Observed strengths and weaknesses not described in Section III, above
   C. Recommendations for improvement
V. Conclusion

The Steering Committee intends to revisit and revise this outline in December 2009.

Working group reports may vary in length, but it is anticipated that they will fall between 20 and 50 pages in length (not including any supporting documentation).
“Any Person ... Any Study” within One University

To facilitate sharing documents, working group reports should be shared with the Steering Committee as Microsoft Word (2007 or earlier) documents. All abbreviations and acronyms should be spelled out the first time they are used within a report or a chapter of a report. The body of the document should be single-spaced and use 12-point Times New Roman font. Paragraphs should be separated with a space between paragraphs (e.g. Paragraph... Spacing... Before: 12pt) without tabs or multiple carriage returns. Where possible, bullets should be used instead of numbered lists.
Self-Study Research Questions

Institutional Stewardship Working Group
(Chair: K. Rasmussen)

Standards:
1. Mission and Goals
2. Planning, Resource Allocation and Institutional Renewal
3. Institutional Resources
7. Institutional Assessment

1. How well do the current Mission and Vision statements (as presented in the Cornell University Strategic Plan) serve Cornell now and going forward?

2. How are the major themes of the overall university mission and goals reflected in the strategic plans of the individual colleges and schools? How do individual units (university-level units, colleges, schools) use these planning documents to inform the allocation of resources, budget planning, program development, and other activities? How could these planning efforts be better integrated across and among all units?

3. To what extent are the strategic planning and goal-setting processes of the university and colleges/schools integrated with budget, financial, and facilities planning and management efforts at the university level and within the colleges/schools? How well do the strategic planning documents reflect the university’s responsibilities in undergraduate and graduate education?

4. How well does the university communicate its mission and goals to faculty, students, and staff? What evidence is there that faculty, students, and staff incorporate or reflect these values in their own activities?

5. What steps have been taken to evaluate how effectively resources are allocated and expended? What evaluation processes are in place to monitor the impacts of budgeting and financial management changes? How well does the university evaluate the impacts of its central budget and financial management policies in relation to the programs of its units (e.g., Campus Life, Facilities, etc.) and its colleges and schools, including the contract colleges and endowed units?

6. How do Cornell’s resources and use of resources, including the endowment payout, compare with those of its peers? What are the reasons for any significant differences?
7. What are the most significant challenges facing Cornell relative to human resources, technology resources, and facilities over the next five years? What is the process by which these challenges have been or will be identified? What is the process for formulating specific and comprehensive plans for addressing these challenges within the context of overall institutional planning?

8. Has Cornell optimized the financial and programmatic benefits from the consolidation of services across the university, such as business services/finances, human resources, information technologies, etc.? What concerns are associated with further consolidation or centralization?

9. How are Cornell’s several campuses (Ithaca, Geneva, Weill, and Qatar) coordinated and integrated to address the university’s overall mission and goals? What additional synergies or partnerships would be desirable, and what resources would such changes require?

10. What processes are in place to ensure that the recent Campus Master Plan effort services the research, teaching and outreach mission of the university? What systems are in place to assure periodic evaluation of progress in implementing the Campus Master Plan? How well is the Campus Master Plan integrated with efforts to plan for facilities to support student learning?

11. How well are the goals of the Capital Campaign being reached? What milestones and evaluation processes have been established to assess progress and determine if mid-course corrections or changes in strategy are required?

12. How adequate is support for institutional assessment, including policies and governance structures to facilitate assessment, professional development opportunities and resources, and the administrative, technical, and financial support required to conduct assessment and implement assessment recommendations? What changes should be made in the metrics and outcomes (quantitative and qualitative) used for assessment, or in the types of data collected?

13. How well do university and college/school documentation of assessment policies, structures, plans, methods, results and use of results demonstrate coherence among assessment efforts? To what extent has learning occurred based on assessment efforts, and what institutional (university or college/school) changes have occurred as a result of assessment results and associated learning? How could current institutional research and assessment efforts be used more effectively throughout the university?
“Any Person ... Any Study” within One University

Integrity, Governance & Administration Working Group
(Chair: C. Walcott)

Standards:
4. Leadership & Governance
5. Administration
6. Integrity

1. To what extent is the core Cornell value of “freedom with responsibility” evident in its governance and judicial documents, systems, and processes?

2. To what extent are the distinct roles and responsibilities of each constituent group with arenas of shared governance understood and accepted by those involved? To what extent are existing structures utilized for decision making and to what extent are structures circumvented?

3. What faculty groups contribute to shared governance? In what ways does and should faculty service (e.g. participation in University administrative committees) translate into authentic faculty governance? To whom do these groups make recommendations and to what extent are these recommendations reflected in institutional decisions? Specifically, to what extent do faculty have an appropriate degree of influence in key areas of institutional governance?

4. What student groups contribute to shared governance? To whom do these groups make recommendations and to what extent are these recommendations reflected in institutional decisions, especially those that affect students directly?

5. What staff groups contribute to shared governance? To whom do these groups make recommendations and to what extent are these recommendations reflected in institutional decisions, especially those that affect staff directly?

6. How does the membership of the Board of Trustees reflect constituent and public interests? What processes are in place for the Board to solicit student, staff, and faculty input and how does the Board communicate its responses? What evidence is there that campus community input is collected and communicated effectively to trustees?

7. How well articulated are the goals of the Board of Trustees? What process is used to assess the effectiveness of the Board in meeting its goals? Are the results of such an assessment used to improve the Board’s value to the university?

8. Are the decisions of administrative leaders appropriately informed with data and supported by effective data delivery systems? Are decision-making processes adequate to support the leadership in decisions?
9. How do academic and administrative leaders create an environment for performance improvement, accomplishment of the mission and institutional objectives, innovation, and organizational flexibility?

10. How do academic and administrative leaders create an environment for organizational and faculty and staff development? How do they participate in succession planning and the nurturing of future organizational leaders? How does the university manage effective career progression for faculty and staff?

11. How are constituent groups (students, staff, faculty, administrators) involved in the development of new academic and other programs? To what extent is their representation and voice proportionate to their expertise and interests?

12. How are individuals in administrative leadership roles—including senior leaders and department chairs—selected, trained, supported and evaluated? To what extent are the processes fair and transparent? What mechanisms are in place to solicit evaluative information about the leadership from staff and faculty and to communicate it to appropriate audiences?

13. What are the challenges and what strategies are effective in achieving effective communication and efficient skill sharing across departments, colleges, jobs, and locations?

14. What methods does the university utilize to ensure fair and impartial practices in the hiring, evaluation and dismissal of employees? How are those methods assessed and what mechanisms exist to allow for change?

15. How are standards of ethical conduct conveyed to the university community? What policies and procedures exist to support the articulation and expectation for such conduct in all activities and at all levels of the institution?

16. How consistently does the institution follow through on its stated policies involving students, faculty, staff and students?
Self-Study Research Questions

Student Admissions & Supports Working Group
(Chair: K. Adler)

Standards:
8. Student Admissions & Retention
9. Student Support Services

1. What principles and goals inform enrollment targets for first-time full-time freshman numeric enrollment numbers? How are targets set for the university and for the seven undergraduate colleges? How well have the university and the undergraduate colleges met those enrollment targets?

2. How do the practices of the university and the seven undergraduate colleges sufficient to ensure that prospective and current students have access to necessary, accurate, and timely information regarding Cornell’s policies and practices regarding tuition, financial aid, payment plans, and loans?

3. How well do Cornell’s need-blind admissions and need-based aid policies support Cornell’s goal of recruiting and retaining an academically excellent, diverse undergraduate student community that is reflective of Cornell’s mission? How are admissions of enrollment-priority groups handled within this context?

4. How adequate are Cornell’s financial aid policies in meeting the needs of undergraduates receiving financial support? How is this success best measured?

5. What are the environmental factors that facilitate or impede the successful recruitment and retention of a diverse, academically talented student community at Cornell?

6. How is pre-major and major advising organized across the seven undergraduate colleges? To what extent are the differences across colleges purposeful and reflective of programmatic differences in the colleges? How well do current practices assist students in attaining their academic and career objectives?

7. To what extent has information on students’ academic progress (including academic probation, attrition, and time to degree) been used to assess and improve admissions processes across the colleges, schools, and graduate fields?

8. What challenges does Cornell face in the retention of under-represented students? What does the institution do to address these challenges?

9. How are students in trouble—academically or personally—identified? Are existing systems to address concerns about students in trouble effective? How well are mental health issues addressed?
10. How have the living/learning Residential Initiatives contributed to meeting university goals for undergraduate students? How is the success of the Residential Initiatives being measured? How have they contributed to meeting university goals?

11. To what extent is Cornell’s system of graduate fields, including the variation in graduate student funding models across fields, organized to recruit and retain superior graduate students?

12. Has the Graduate Community Initiative been appropriately prioritized by the university and within the Graduate School? What progress has been made towards meeting the goals of the Graduate Community Initiative? How is the success of the Graduate Community Initiative being measured?

13. How clearly does the university communicate the policies and processes related to student grievances? Does the campus judicial system offer sufficient protections for students, faculty and staff involved in grievance procedures?

14. How does the university communicate the policies that govern access to confidential information about students (including grades, disciplinary proceedings and health records) to faculty, staff, students and students’ families? Are existing policies and practices adequate to protect confidential information?
The Faculty Working Group (Chair: A. Villarejo)

Standards:

10. The Faculty

1. How successful have university-wide academic initiatives been in facilitating collaboration, innovative research, teaching and service by the faculty over the last decade? What are the matrixes for success?

2. What institutional procedures in place to ensure that faculty compensation, salary improvement procedures, and promotion and tenure practices fostered and supported those who excel in teaching, research and service? Have promotion and tenure procedures been transparent and consistent with equity for equally productive faculty?

3. The university often speaks of the goal of achieving an optimal living-learning environment for undergraduates where the faculty is influential and involved with undergraduates outside the classroom. What programmatic efforts have been most successful in incorporating faculty into the undergraduate living-learning environment and what are the obstacles for further development of faculty involvement in this mission?

4. To what extent do the outreach/extension expectations of Cornell’s land grant mission enhance the academic work of the faculty and the integration of research, teaching and service? How widely is the land grant mission demonstrated in faculty work in all colleges, both contract and endowed?

5. What do demographic data about the faculty (such as gender, race, age, citizenship, and family/relationship status) suggest about Cornell’s ability to retain and recruit the highest quality faculty? What institutional strategies and programs have been adopted to deal with the challenge of recruiting and retaining diverse faculty?

6. What are the challenges of building the diversity of Cornell’s faculty? How effectively is Cornell meeting those challenges?

7. How has the significant investment in new buildings in recent years facilitated the teaching and research of the faculty?

8. How well do faculty use instructional technology to advance their teaching? What mechanisms exist to encourage them to do so?

9. How is teaching evaluated? How effectively are faculty rewarded for high quality teaching? To what extent are there appropriate developmental programs available to support all faculty engaged in teaching?
10. To what extent do graduate students support Cornell’s teaching mission? What resources support graduate students in the classroom and to what extent are those resources used effectively?

11. How consistent are current tenure, promotion, hiring, and grievance procedures across the numerous colleges that comprise Cornell University? To what extent do they support the academic freedom of the faculty?

12. As stewards of the curriculum, how are faculty involved in academic program development? What methods are used to ensure that course offerings and majors are appropriately conceived and reflect the most recent state of the fields?

13. How well are the processes for hiring, supervising, and evaluating non-tenure track academic staff (such as visiting faculty, lecturers, instructors, adjuncts, research associates, and extension associates) articulated and implemented to ensure excellence in teaching and research?

14. What proportion of instruction is accounted for by tenure-track faculty? To what extent does faculty engagement in the classroom support and enhance the opportunities for undergraduate research?

15. How does the academic work of faculty (in research, teaching and outreach) benefit from Cornell being both a private and state-supported university with seven undergraduate colleges, a number of professional schools, and several campus locations? What challenges does this arrangement provide for faculty?

16. How do post-doctoral fellows contribute to the teaching and research mission of the faculty? To what extent do they move into faculty positions at Cornell and elsewhere? How well are emeritus professors incorporated into the life of the university? How well does Cornell make appropriate use of the available talents among emeritus professors?
Educational Offerings Working Group (Chair: L. Brown)

Standards:
11. Educational Offerings
12. General Education
13. Related Educational Activities

1. How well have Cornell’s programs and departments articulated clear general education goals (such as the enhancement of oral and written communication skills, critical reasoning and analysis, scientific literacy and the capacity for quantitative reasoning, information literacy and basic technological competence, as well as attention to ethical values and the appreciation for diversity)? How adequately do educational offerings in each of the colleges with undergraduate programs embody and promote these goals for general education?

2. How well do university and college distribution requirements reflect and contribute to the achievement of student learning goals as articulated at the major, the college and the university levels?

3. To what extent do departments and programs make clear the links between specific requirements or learning goals and the overall structure and content of their courses of study?

4. What principles, policies, and processes ensure that Cornell programs of study are coherent and reflect purposeful design? How well do college curriculum committees function in terms of ensuring individual courses and the curricula of the available undergraduate majors reflect appropriate content and ensure academic rigor and coherence?

5. To what extent have Graduate Fields and professional programs described and instituted clear and rigorous curriculum requirements appropriate to each degree offered (e.g., M.S., M.P.S., M.A.T., M.Eng., Ph.D.)?

6. How does the system of Graduate Fields foster opportunities for superior training in research and education? How do the different systems of graduate student funding across the institution affect the delivery of graduate-level training?

7. What structures are in place for the training and assessment of graduate students who provide undergraduate instruction? What do graduate-student instructors specifically contribute to educational opportunities, across the institution?

8. How well do programs and departments articulate expected learning outcomes for specific courses and for their programs of study? What institutional mechanisms ensure that such learning outcomes are consistent with goals articulated at the college and university level?
9. What institutional mechanisms allow for periodic, systematic evaluation of the effectiveness of curricula, programs of study and educational offerings? To what extent have programs that have excelled at documenting learning outcomes served as models for other majors/programs in the university to emulate?

10. How and to whom are course syllabi and course evaluations made accessible, and how do those practices vary between colleges? Are levels of access reasonable and appropriate to facilitate decision making for students, staff and faculty?

11. How do professional library staff, faculty, Cornell Information Technologies staff and other administrators across the university collaborate to foster information literacy and technological competency skills across curricula?

12. How clear are the university and college requirements, processes, and criteria in relation to the acceptance of transfer credits from other institutions?

13. What criteria and processes guide the recruitment and admission of transfer students to Cornell? What support structures exist for transfer students, and how are support efforts evaluated? How do the graduation rates (and other success metrics) differ among transfer students and other matriculants?

14. How freely are students able to engage in courses across the University, no matter their home college? How does the “accessory instruction” system affect course offerings or availability of courses to students? How do college-imposed limits on credit hours taken outside the college affect the quality, breadth, and depth of the student experience?

15. How well do university-sponsored curricular and extra-curricular programs articulate expected learning outcomes for students? What institutional mechanisms ensure that the goals of curricular and extra-curricular programs are consistent with goals articulated at the university level? How, and how well, are such programs assessed?

16. How does Cornell encourage educational experiences that take students outside of the traditional classroom or laboratory? How clear are the policies and procedures governing these experiences? By what methods does Cornell assess the appropriateness of granting academic credit for such experiences?
17. To what extent do Cornell and its individual colleges support student participation in scholarly activities that capitalize on the benefits of studying at a major research institution (e.g., publications, participation in conferences, independent research)?

18. What opportunities are provided for intensive, specialized, advanced, or capstone studies or projects (e.g. independent research, honors programs, independent majors)? What are the particular educational goals of these projects for the individual student, and how are outcomes assessed? What are the larger aims and strategies of these opportunities, within or in relation to the specific programs involved, and how are these aims maintained?

19. How are educational offerings made available at locations beyond the major Ithaca and Weill Cornell campuses (including study abroad programs, pre-medical training at Qatar, and courses taken through agreements with other domestic institutions) and how are these offerings integrated into the institution’s core academic mission?

20. How does Cornell determine that academic programs delivered at the various locations of the university (including Geneva, Qatar, and programs delivered as distance or distributed learning) are conducted with an academic rigor appropriate to a world class university? How does Cornell define the goals of these offerings and assess their success?

21. How has the West Campus residential initiative affected the quality of the student academic experience? What processes are in place to evaluate the impacts of this initiative?

22. How adequately does Cornell identify and respond to the needs of talented students who come from educationally or socially disadvantaged backgrounds? How adequately does Cornell identify and respond to the needs of students with disabilities?
Assessment of Student Learning (Chair: D. Gries)

Standard:
14. Assessment of Student Learning

1. How well do the university’s colleges, schools, and graduate fields define clear learning goals for their students, carefully articulating what students should know or be able to do at the conclusion of individual courses, in their major fields of study, and when they have completed a Cornell education? How and how well are those learning goals communicated to prospective and current students?

2. To what extent do accredited majors or programs that require careful articulation of student learning outcomes serve as a model or point of departure for other majors/programs in the university to develop their own statements of student learning outcomes? How effectively are these learning goals used to shape curricula?

3. How consistent are program, unit and college learning goals with Cornell’s fundamental mission and goals?

4. How effectively does the institution link the assessment of student learning to the enhancement of teaching?

5. Has the institution found an appropriate balance between direct and indirect measures of student learning? Are there relevant measures adequate to the task of making curriculum and resource decisions?

6. How adequate are efforts to create an institutional culture that values and supports the assessment of student learning and ensures its integration into institutional assessment?

7. Has the institution found an appropriate balance between localized (e.g. department-specific) and centralized (e.g. university-wide) assessment activities? Are there adequate resources available across the university to support programs, units and colleges in their efforts to assess student learning outcomes?

8. Taken as a collective, are the results of learning assessments carried out across the university effective in assessing the success of the institution as a whole?

9. To what extent does the process of academic program review overseen by the Faculty Committee on Program Review generate candid and useful information that guides continual self-improvement? Is the periodicity of academic program review appropriate?
Membership in the Working Groups (as of July 1, 2009)

Institutional Stewardship

- Kathleen Rasmussen, Working Group Chair and Professor of Nutritional Sciences, College of Human Ecology
- Steve Cohen, Vice Dean for Administration and Finance, Weill Cornell Medical College
- Joanne DeStefano, Vice President for Financial Affairs and University Controller
- Sandy Dhimitri, Director of Human Resources, College of Human Ecology
- Cathy Dove, Associate Dean of Administration, Engineering
- Robert Smith, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Professor of Labor Economics, School of Industrial & Labor Relations
- Kristin Walker, Manager of Academic Support, Institutional Research & Planning
- Kyu-Jung Whang, Vice President for Facilities Services

Integrity, Governance & Administration

- Charlie Walcott, Working Group Chair and Professor Emeritus of Neurobiology & Behavior, College of Agriculture & Life Sciences
- Christopher Ahn, Graduate Student, Asian Studies, Graduate School
- Judith Appleton, Associate Dean and Alfred H. Caspary Professor of Immunology, College of Veterinary Medicine
- Michael Esposito, Assistant Director, Academic Personnel Policy Office
- Mary Beth Grant, Judicial Administrator, Office of the Judicial Administrator
- James Kahn, Deputy University Counsel and Secretary of the Medical College, Cornell Weill Medical College
- Beth McKinney, Employee Trustee and Director, Cornell Wellness Program, Physical Education
- Mary Opperman, Vice President for Human Resources
- Nelson Roth, Deputy University Counsel, Office of University Counsel
Any Person ... Any Study” within One University

- Carin Rundle, Executive Staff Assistant, Office of the Provost

Student Admissions & Supports

- Kraig Adler, Working Group Chair, Professor and Chair of Neurobiology & Behavior, College of Agriculture & Life Sciences
- Rosemary Avery, Chair and Professor of Policy Analysis & Management, College of Human Ecology
- Susan Cook, Graduate Student, Ecology & Evolutionary Biology, Graduate School
- Doris Davis, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Admissions & Enrollment
- David DeVries, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Education, College of Arts & Sciences
- Betsy East, Assistant Dean for Student Services, College of Engineering
- Chari Fuerstenau, Senior Research Associate, Institutional Research & Planning
- Sarah Hale, Associate Dean for Student Services, Graduate School
- Timothy Marchell, Director of Mental Health Initiatives, Gannett Health Services
- Steve Morgan, Associate Professor of Sociology, College of Arts & Sciences
- Rebecca Smith, Undergraduate, School of Industrial & Labor Relations
- Jennifer Westling, Administrative Assistant, Division of Budget & Planning

The Faculty

- Amy Villarejo, Working Group Chair, Chair and Associate Professor of Theatre Film & Dance, College of Arts & Sciences
- Mark Albano, Assistant Dean for Faculty Affairs, Weill Cornell Medical College
- Cynthia Bowman, Dorothea S. Clarke Professor of Law, Law School
- Jefferson Cowie, Associate Professor of Collective Bargaining, Law & History, School of Industrial & Labor Relations
“Any Person ... Any Study” within One University

- Ronald Hoy, David and Dorothy Merksamer Professor of Neurobiology & Behavior, College of Agriculture & Life Sciences
- Rolf Pendall, Associate Professor of City & Regional Planning, College of Architecture, Art & Planning
- William Searle, Research Associate, Institutional Research & Planning
- Kim Weeden, Chair and Associate Professor of Sociology, College of Arts & Sciences
- Randy Worobo, Associate Professor of Food Sciences (Geneva), College of Agriculture & Life Sciences

Educational Offerings

- Laura Brown, Working Group Chair and John Wendell Anderson Professor of English, College of Arts & Sciences
- Steve Ceci, Helen L. Carr Professor of Developmental Psychology, College of Human Ecology
- Matt Miller, Associate Professor of Mechanical & Aeronautical Engineering, College of Engineering
- Natalie Raps, Undergraduate, College of Arts & Sciences
- Annelise Riles, Jack G. Clarke Chair in Far East Legal Studies, the Law School and Professor of Anthropology, College of Arts & Sciences
- Nick Salvatore, Maurice and Hinda Neufeld Founders Professor of Collective Bargaining, Law & History, School of Industrial & Labor Relations
- Patricia Stark, Executive Staff Assistant, Office of the Provost
- Carol Storey-Johnson, Senior Associate Dean for Education and Associate Professor of Clinical Medicine, Weill Cornell Medical College

Assessment of Student Learning

- David Gries, Working Group Chair, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs and the William L. Lewis Professor of Computer Science, College of Engineering
- Brian Chabot, Professor of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology, College of Agriculture & Life Sciences
- Mark Constas, Professor of Education, College of Agriculture & Life Sciences
“Any Person ... Any Study” within One University

- Kathy Dimiduk, Director, Teaching Excellence Institute, College of Engineering
- Marne Einarson, Senior Research Associate, Institutional Research & Planning
- Kathleen Gemmel, Director of Planning, Policy and Academic Support, College of Arts & Sciences
- Kathleen Gibson, Associate Professor of Design & Environmental Analysis, College of Human Ecology
- Katherine Gottschalk, Walter C. Teagle Director of First-Year Writing Seminars, College of Arts & Sciences
- Zsuzsa Koltay, Director, Research & Assessment Unit, Library
- Ed McLaughlin, Robert G. Tobin Professor of Applied Economics & Management, College of Agriculture & Life Sciences
- Terry Plater, Associate Dean, Graduate School
- Don Viands, Associate Dean and Professor of Plant Breeding & Genetics, College of Agriculture & Life Sciences
- Kristin Walker, Manager of Academic Support, Institutional Research & Planning
- David Way, Director of Faculty Services, Center for Teaching Excellence
## Inventory of Documents Available to Support Accreditation:

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Outline for Final Self-Study Report

I. Executive Summary

II. Cornell University: An Overview

III. Approach to Self-Study
   A. Theme: “Any Person ... Any Study” within One University
   B. Organization of Standards & Working Groups
   C. Procedures for Compiling and Assessing Evidence

IV. Institutional Stewardship
   A. Standards 1, 2, 3 and 7
   B. Strengths and Weaknesses
   C. Recommendations for Improvement

V. Integrity, Governance & Administration
   A. Standards 4, 5, and 6
   B. Strengths and Weaknesses
   C. Recommendations for Improvement

VI. Student Admissions & Supports
   A. Standards 8 and 9
   B. Strengths and Weaknesses
   C. Recommendations for Improvement

VII. The Faculty
   A. Standard 10
   B. Strengths and Weaknesses
   C. Recommendations for Improvement

VIII. Educational Offerings
   A. Standards 11, 12 and 13
   B. Strengths and Weaknesses
   C. Recommendations for Improvement

IX. Assessment of Student Learning
   A. Standard 14
   B. Strengths and Weaknesses
   C. Recommendations for Improvement

X. Conclusion:
   A. Myths and Realities of Cornell as One University
   B. Striving to Achieve Cornell as One University

Appendices
Recommendations for Members of the Visiting Team

We expect that the Chair of the Evaluation Team would be the President/Chancellor or President/Chancellor Emeritus of a highly selective research university comprised of several colleges. The Chair should have a special interest in fostering undergraduate education in the context of a research university.

We request that one member of our Evaluation Team be an Executive Vice President for Finance or other chief financial officer from a large institution that receives public financing and has a substantial endowment.

We further request that our Evaluation Team includes an academic officer from a medical college and a seasoned faculty member or administrator from an agricultural, land grant university.

The membership of the Evaluation Team should represent expertise in several of disciplines reflected in the Cornell curriculum, including:

- Engineering
- The Life Sciences
- The Social Sciences
- The Physical Sciences
- The Humanities
- Fine, Applied, and Performing Arts

Finally, we request that our Evaluation Team include a faculty member or senior administrator with significant experience with a living-learning initiative.