



**Strategic Planning Initiatives
Accomplishments
Fall 2008**

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Goal 1: Outstanding Faculty – Retain and attract outstanding faculty who excel in their subject area and discipline and are committed to excellence in teaching, ensuring student success and fostering a diverse academic community.

- In preparation for the 2008-09 academic year, step-by-step Curriculum Advising and Program Planning (CAPP) instructions were sent to each faculty member, along with Academic Advisement Center (AAC) contact information.
- Assistance and training, regarding general education requirements, have been offered to each academic department; one academic department has utilized AAC services.
- The AAC has implemented a monthly departmental teaching pedagogy workshop to discuss recommendations for teaching presented in the educational literature.
- Dr. Dora Pinou, Biology department, in collaboration with the University of Guadalajara, took students studying sea turtle conservation to the Jalisco Coast of Mexico to monitor and record nesting of sea turtles.
- Dr. Tom Lonergan, Chair of Biology, has led the collaboration with Loyola University, Chennai, India, and will give a lecture to students in India in “real time” about stem cell technology to a class at Loyola.
- Dr. Ruth Gyure, Biology department, also in collaboration with Loyola University, Chennai, India, will work with faculty and students at Loyola to create a solid, publishable research project in bioremediation re mercury.
- Mr. Truman Keys, Communication department, is working on a program at Yale/New Haven recording personal histories of patients for medical staff; Ms. Jessica Eckstein is working with Hancock Scholarship program on leadership skills; Dr. Karen Raftery: Concert Celebration of Ridgefield, CT’s Tri-centennial featured three of her videos; Dr. Bill Petkanas became Editor of *ETC: A Review of General Semantics*, the journal of the Institute of General Semantics.
- Professor Rona Gurkewitz, Computer Science department, published the book, *Beginner’s Book of Modular Origami Polyhedra: The Platonic Solids*.
- Professor Averell Manes, Social Sciences, in collaboration with Vice President Walter Bernstein, Student Affairs, in order to advance students, have created and will implement the Hancock Student Leadership Program in January 2009.

- Dr. Renate Ludanyi's (World Languages) chapter "German in the USA" was accepted for inclusion in the work *Language Diversity in the USA* to be published by Cambridge University Press in 2009.
- Dr. Galina Bakhtiarova, World Languages department, presented a paper studying opera at an international conference "Opera, Exoticism, and Visual Culture" in London, England during September 2008.
- Dr. Alba Skar, World Languages department, presented a paper studying Guatemalan women poets at an international conference "La Jalla" in Santiago, Chile during August 2008.
- Writer in Residence, Mr. Mark Sundeen wrote a travel report for the New York Times about Iceland's Ring Road.
- Dr. Dan Barrett, Psychology department, has assumed the position of Director of Faculty Advising, effective January 2008.
- Dr. Maidment successfully completed the AACSB Bridge Program for AQ faculty.
- The following faculty made paper presentations, Dr. Cronin (best paper), Dr. Ganon, Dr. Donegan, Dr. Drozdenko, Dr. Koza.
- The following faculty had papers accepted for presentation in Spring 2009; Dr. Coleman, Dr. Maidment, Dr. Drozdenko, Dr. Oumlil, Dr. Tesch, Dr. Bazan, and Professor Fenwick.
- Dr. Karen Burke is the recipient of the CSU Trustees Research Award, December 2008.
- Dr. Marcy Delcourt is the recipient of the WCSU Teaching Excellence Award, December 2008.
- Graduate Council has approved of the "Process for Faculty to Participate in Graduate Education," December 2008.
- Dr. Theresa Canada is the recipient of CWEALF "Educator of the Year" award, October 2008.
- Dr. Margaret Grimes, Art department, brought distinguished guest artists to campus for the MFA Lecture Series.
- The Music faculty has performed with NY Philharmonic, N. Haven Symphony, Broadway shows, Radio City Music Hall. Mr. Jamie Began recorded a new CD "Big Fat Grin." Mr. Jeff Siegel has a CD under Grammy consideration. Dr. Wesley Ball published (yet again). Hirshfield performed recitals in Florida and Arizona. Dr. Dan Goble attended NASM conference. Entire faculty participated in Strategic Planning for Dept. of Music in correlation with NASM Self-study.
- Mr. Frank Herbert, Theatre Arts department, with funding from the President's Initiatives Grant, produced "A Midsummer Nights Dream" at the Ives Center and also at the New Student Orientation. All faculty contributed to an outstanding production of Cabaret in the fall.
- Dr. Deneen Harris is presenting a paper in Louisville Kentucky (April 2009) at the National Association of Black Social Workers Conference entitled, "Can You Hear Me: The Experiences of African-American Doctoral Students Attending Majority Institutions."
- Dr. Kit Hinga presented a paper with Fr. Lasky on "Developing and Implementing a Geneva Based Study/travel Course on Human Rights" on 11/21/08 at the Connecticut State University International Educational Conference, International Connections:

Engaging Campus, Community, World, CCSU. She also has a paper accepted for presentation at the 2009 Baccalaureate Program Directors Conference on 3/19/09 entitled, "Increasing Understanding of International Policy Through Study Abroad Focused on Human Rights".

- Dr. Rob Veneziano was elected President-Elect of the International Society for Interpersonal Acceptance and Rejection (ISIPAR). He will serve as President-Elect from 2008 to 2010, and then as President from 2010 to 2012. He led a symposium on fatherhood and presented a paper at the 2nd Annual ISIPAR Congress in Crete during July, 2008.
- Dr. Daryle Brown received the Josephine Dolan Award in October 2008 from the CT Nurses' Association in recognition as the 2008 Outstanding Nurse Educator.
- Dr. Joseph Aina presented his research examining the experience of Nigerian children of Nurses and their pursuit of Nursing as a career at the Sigma Theta Tau International's Research Conference held in Israel during summer 2008. Dr. Joseph Aina will be on sabbatical this spring to pursue his work improving nursing education in Nigeria.
- Drs. Abate, Avery, Brown, Crouse, Daley, and Professors Lupinacci, Palladino and Riley presented at the Association for the Advancement for Educational Research November 2008.
- Dr. Karen Daley hosted several break-out sessions at the CT League for Nursing Deans and Directors Simulation Workshop held at Fairfield University this fall.
- Dr. Mary Ellen Doherty's research study, "The Lived Experience of Widowhood During Pregnancy" was accepted for presentation at the Mu Epsilon Chapter (Mount Saint Mary College) of Sigma Theta Tau International Research Day for April, 2009, and in November 2008 she had her manuscript accepted for publication, "Therapeutic Alliance: A Concept for the Childbearing Season", in *Journal of Perinatal Education*.
- Professor MaryAnn Riley presented "Current Trends on the Treatment of Pancreatitis" at the Infusion Nurses Society Fall National Academy in St. Louis, Missouri.
- Dr. Daley's co-authored book entitled, *Simulation Scenarios for Nurse Educators: Making It Real*, Springer Publishing Company.
- Dr. Theresa J. Canada received the One Woman Makes a Difference Award from the Connecticut Woman's Education and Legal Fund (CWEALF) in November 2008.
- Dr. Marcia A. B. Delcourt received the WestConn Excellence in Teaching Award in December 2008 and the Woman of Achievement Award from the Western Connecticut State University Chapter of Phi Delta Kappa this fall.
- Drs. Karen Burke, John Caruso, Ed Duncanson, Leah Stambler, Bonnie Rabe and March Delcourt were invited through the peer review process to present papers and workshops at national and international conferences this fall.
- Dr. Robyn Housemann contributed to development of the first Community Report Card of Western Connecticut; participated in the development of the Hancock Student Leadership Program and in the selection of the Program's first student leadership cohort and is currently serving as a mentor to students; received CSU Assessment funds to develop assessments for the BSHPS curriculum, and attended SABPAC Training in October 2008.

- Dr. Jeff Schlicht, who attended Center for Educational Development and Assessment Workshop on Faculty Assessment, Promotion and Tenure in March 2008 has provided several workshops for SPS DEC's and other schools' departments; used the knowledge gained to suggest promotion and tenure guidelines for the department; continues to write wellness-related column three times a year for Connecticut Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance; provided lectures and discussion on aging during the Fall semester entitled, "Who is in that mirror?" (i.e., discussion about what usually happens to our bodies with aging, and how we can do better) at the *Ridgefield Crossings University Lecture Series*, and the *Visiting Professor Lecture Series at Brookfield Common*.

Goal 4: Range of Quality Academic Programs – Offer a range of quality academic programs, including featured signature programs that together educate a diverse student population and meet the needs of the state and region within the context of a global environment.

- The NEASC Fifth Year Interim Report submitted by WCSU was accepted by the Commission and the University was commended on the progress that has been made. The University will have its 10 year comprehensive evaluation, fall 2013, consistent with the Commission's policy.
- The university was visited by faculty from a Siberian university in Russia, exploring possible collaborations with WestConn.
- Arts & Sciences—Building a Bridge to Improve Student Success: Assistant Dean and Director of the Bridge program took 11 faculty from the Bridge High Schools and the university to Washington, D.C., Education Trust Conference on "It's Up to Us: Going the Distance to Close Gaps and Raise Achievement for All" (November). The Bridge project involves Danbury and Bethel High Schools in collaboration with the university in closing achievement gaps in Mathematics, Writing, and the Sciences.
- Arts & Sciences—Dr. Darius Rejali, Reed College professor, gave the Steven Neuwirth Annual Arts & Sciences Lecture this year on his book, *Torture and Democracy* (October), and conducted a special workshop with a select set of students in the afternoon.
- The Biology department has a complete curricular review of the undergraduate options and the MA graduate program was initiated in Fall 2008, with an emphasis on methods to improve enrollment, retention and graduate rate. A new recruiting program will start in spring 2009.
- The Department of Biology is identifying hurdles students face with retention issues and create an action plan for corrective action, including evaluating advising strategies for at-risk students and students who fall behind as a result of dropping courses.
- Dr. Dora Pinou's Biology student who traveled with her to Crete was selected to present his paper at the Sigma-Xi conference in December 2008.
- The Communication department is implementing a new BA Media Arts program this year.

- Dr. Burton Peretti, chair of the History department, is chairing the Lincoln initiatives that will take place to celebrate the birthday of Abraham Lincoln and his legacy.
- The Psychology department has undergone an external review and anticipates a reexamination of its program after the final review report is received.
- The MAT in Spanish was officially approved, and the World Languages department has received its first applications for the program. (12 plus to date, December 2008)
- NCATE accreditation was awarded to the Spanish-Secondary Education program with conditions. The department is currently revising the report based on suggestions.
- Pulitzer Prize winning writer, Anna Quindlen, spoke to Professor Elizabeth Cohen's first-year writing students.
- Professor Elizabeth Cohen and Professor Lynne Paris-Purtle have set the date for the first "Voices of Veterans" writing conference, April 15th. Writer Anthony Swofford, author of *Jarhead*, will speak at 12:30, and will sign his book after. Following that, he will lead a special writing workshop for select student veterans. We are hoping it will be a collaboration with the News-Times.
- The Department of Social Work offers one undergraduate degree program: Bachelor of Arts in Social Work, recognized as a professional entry level, generalist social work practice degree, commonly designated "BSW" (bachelor degree in social work). The program has been nationally accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) since 1984, with the most recent re-accreditation awarded in 2005.
- The Social Work department is committed to continuing its accredited status, and has begun its review and revisions of curricular materials based upon the most recent (June 2008) revisions to the CSWE's Educational Policy and Standards (EPAS).
- Dr. Gene Buccini and Dr. Fred Tesch are leading the effort to develop a proposal to revise and update the ASB MBA program.
- Dr. Jack Trifts, the ASB AACSB consultant, visited our campus in mid-September to review Ancell's new mission, AQ/PQ standards, and plans to prepare the School's pre-eligibility application. Dr. Trifts made recommendations regarding the application process and related data collection/analysis.
- Dr. Rick Bassett attended the AACSB Assessment conference in order to become familiar with the AACSB standards on assessment. In addition, the ASB has acquired Sedona software to be used in capturing faculty AQ/PQ information and preparing tables for the pre-eligibility application.
- Recruitment and admissions for the new Master of Arts in Teaching program – Biology, Math and Spanish secondary education level, November-December 2008.
- The Art department brought NASAD Consultant, Mr. Roger Williams, President of New Hampshire Institute of Art, to campus to assess programs and advise on future direction for the Art department. His early comment is that our undergraduate program is already close to BFA degree program.
- The Music department's NASM re-accreditation effort is in full swing with a visit, April 2009. Opera ensemble selected to perform at Carnegie Hall. Numerous positive press articles regarding the Music program. See Dept. retention rate, number of students in honors program, etc.

- The Theatre Arts department put on a successful production of Cabaret in Fall, 2008 as well as a series of one-act plays by and/or produced by students for the Children's theatre during the holiday season.
- Social Work Department increased its new student retention rate for its Fall 2007 first time students by 24.6% (from 63.6% to 88.2%) over last year's retention rates.
- Enrollment in the SW major has climbed steadily (40%) in the past five years, stretching the department's capacity to sustain course enrollment size standards, and to locate sufficient field internships with suitably credentialed professional supervisors within a reasonable campus commute (personal and public transportation). In response this year, the Department is moving forward to cap upper class enrollments, by raising academic acceptance criteria and by refining behavioral standards. Another Professional Studies academic program's growing enrollment (i.e., BSHPS) has also impacted on several social work courses, since it either requires or highly recommends them. This growth is seen, then, as both positive (students choosing human and health service careers), but a challenge to address, due to resources.
- Affiliation side-by-side agreements with several regional community colleges' human services programs have been made (NCC) or are in progress (NVCC, Dutchess) to assure a more seamless, efficient transfer of academic credits for that source of students. Faculty has continuing communication with CC human service faculty to provide advisement and supports in the transfer processes.
- The 2008-09 academic year has been notable for the accreditation visit by the Commission of Colleges of Nursing (CCNE) in October 1 – 3, 2008. The visitors met with undergraduate, RN-BS, and MS students, recent graduates and community leaders. The visitors commented positively the access they had to the community of interest while on campus. In their verbal report to the University community, all standards were met, and DON is awaiting the written report.
- The Nursing department enrollments in all programs are at an all time high. We have 158 students in our generic undergraduate BS in Nursing Program. The RN-BS program enrollment is at 46 students. The MS in Nursing program enrollment has grown to 35 students.
- The NCLEX-RN pass rate for 2008 graduates is 91.6%. Seven out of eight graduates in our MS program were successful on the ANCC Certification Examination as Adult Nurse Practitioners.
- In summer 2008, the University received word on the 12 SPA reports it submitted for review. One program department (i.e., Elementary Education) received national recognition; 6 Secondary Education Programs received national recognition with conditions (i.e., Biology, Chemistry, Earth Science, History, Social Studies, Spanish); 4 other programs (i.e., English, Mathematics, Health Education, Intermediate Administrative and Supervision) did not meet the standards established by their respective SPA's, and thus submitted SPA revised reports on 9/15/08 for review.
- The first cohort of 12 candidates enrolled in the Certificate for Intermediate Administration and Supervision Program received a 100% pass rate on the Connecticut Administrator's Test (CAT).

- The Masters of Art in Teaching Program, with options in Secondary Education - Biology, - Mathematics and - Spanish which received CSDE and CDHE approvals, began accepting applications and scheduling interviews for the first candidate cohort to begin in the summer 2009.
- The Counselor Education Program received UPBC and Graduate Council approvals this fall to replace the current Community Counseling option with a Mental Health Counseling option. The faculty have currently begun work on their CAREP Re-accreditation Report.
- HPX prepared an activity plan toward seeking SABPAC Approval of its BSHPs curriculum in fall 2011. Currently, HPX is beginning assessment data collection for the self-study report.
- The BS Health Education Program is aggressively seeking national recognition by its professional association, and working toward the WCSU's unit receipt of NCATE accreditation, including ongoing assessment data collection. It submitted a revised SPA Report on 9/15/08.

Goal 5: Enriching and Supportive Student-Focused Environment – Foster a holistic approach to intellectual and social growth and development that prepares students to be productive citizens of the state of Connecticut and the world by developing their knowledge, experience, and critical thinking and by fostering life-long learning characterized by intellectual curiosity, imagination, and creativity.

- The Academic Advisement Center (AAC) is in the process of transitioning from a grant-funded, ePortfolio based workshop, "Major Discoveries," to an in-person (individually or in small groups) workshop, affording students an opportunity to self-assess values, interests, and abilities that will lead to the choice of a major.
- The Peer-to-Peer Mentoring Program (P2P) continues to develop programs and support students.
- The Academic Advisement Center's (AAC) webpage has been updated to provide more information regarding placements test scores, tutoring services, final exam schedule, links to undergraduate and graduate program sheets as well as lists of advisor and advisee responsibilities.
- The AAC reviewed each student's records, regardless of major, to ensure that an appropriate advisor has been assigned to the student.
- Advisors in the AAC continue to send emails and letters to students who are "at risk," on academic probation or academic suspension, offering to discuss strategies for success in future coursework.
- AAC hours are offered at the Westside Campus Center, one afternoon per week, during Fall and Spring registration periods, ensuring availability and access for students.
- Computers in the AAC provide a convenient way for students to register immediately following advisement sessions.

- Biology students who drop courses that are only scheduled once a year are at risk because of an inability to replace the dropped course in a timely manner. The department is developing a plan of action to correct this situation with a date of implementation set for fall 2009.
- Club IMPACT (department of World Languages) held meetings every other Thursday in fall 2008 to plan for student activities related to multiculturalism and community service. 12 members of the club attended the Latino Scholarship Gala in November 2008.
- The Spanish table met weekly on Tuesday afternoons for the entire university community to engage in Spanish conversation with faculty in Spanish outside of class.
- The accounting club sponsored its annual accounting career symposium with representatives from local accounting firms.
- The JLA club took its annual trip to NYC to visit the Federal Court and the United Nations.
- Three MBA students and Dr. Koza have revised their written case study for publication.
- Dr. Rick Bassett developed a systems based approach to revising the WCSU advisement process, for use in the deliberations of a Spring 2009 University wide task force on improving the advisement process.
- Diana Appleby, Rebecca Narel, and Carlin Rogers won the Certificate of Excellence in Research Methodology in JLA.
- The Music department hosts numerous student clubs, engages in cohort-based scheduling, pioneered common hour concept (the entire department meets together once a week at recital hour). Supports coffee house, Spirit Band and other Student Life initiatives.
- Theatre Arts department has strong advising and individual faculty coaching for all students.
- Students in the Social Work Program continue to be involved in the following activities related to this goal. Seniors in the current SWK 315-16 course are working on the issue of domestic poverty. With the assistance of the President's Initiative, the Social Work Department, the Social Science Department and the Diocese of Bridgeport, 12 students and two faculty traveled to Geneva Switzerland and participated in a 18 day course on Human Rights during the 65th Anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights and the summer convening of the UN Human Rights Council in June 2008.
- The BSHPS senior internship experience has resulted in positive learning outcomes for program students, again culminating in December 2008 with a Health internship Fair, where students formally presented their internship experiences with their external affiliate supervisors present.