

Report to
Faculty, Administration, Trustees, Students
of

Hamilton College
Clinton, New York

Prepared following review of the institution's
Periodic Review Report

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Introduction

Hamilton College is a first-rate institution of higher education in the liberal arts tradition. It is clearly, and rightfully, proud of its long history of excellence. It is also an institution that is willing to look at itself critically and make adjustments to the way it operates in order to better provide its students, as is stated in the executive summary, "with an excellent environment worthy of their talents and abilities."

The Periodic Review Report prepared and submitted by Hamilton College is a model of clarity and focus. It is thoughtful, concise and well organized. The readers especially appreciate the candor with which the college let its imperfections show. All of the accompanying materials helped the readers form a clear picture of the institution, and its goals and accomplishments.

In all of the materials provided it is clear that there is a strong connection between the accreditation process, the college's strategic planning processes, budgeting, campaign planning, institutional assessment, and constituent governance.

Accomplishments in the last 5 years

The college has navigated several major changes in the five years since its Re-accreditation Review. There have been several significant changes in its administration. The college has welcomed a new president, Joan Hinde Stewart, and will introduce a new Vice President for Academic Affairs this coming year. Other key personnel changes include a new Dean of Admission, and a new Director of Financial Aid.

The college has implemented a new and distinctive curriculum that emphasizes writing and oral communication skills as important tools for liberal learning. To support its emphasis on communication, the college has beefed up its teaching of oral presentation skills by creating the Oral Communication Center and the Multimedia Presentation Center, two new centers that complement the Nesbitt-Johnson Writing Center, the Quantitative Literacy Center, the Peer Tutoring Program, and the Language Learning Center.

The new curriculum has replaced the traditional prescribed menu of required distribution courses with recommended first-year pro-seminars, and required team-taught sophomore seminars, which are the centerpiece of the new general education curriculum. With the aid of a Mellon Foundation grant, Hamilton has been engaged in an in-depth assessment of this new curriculum.

In addition to implementing the new general education experience, the college has also expanded its disciplinary offerings. Two new majors have been created in Communications and Environmental Studies, and a new minor in Japanese has been added.