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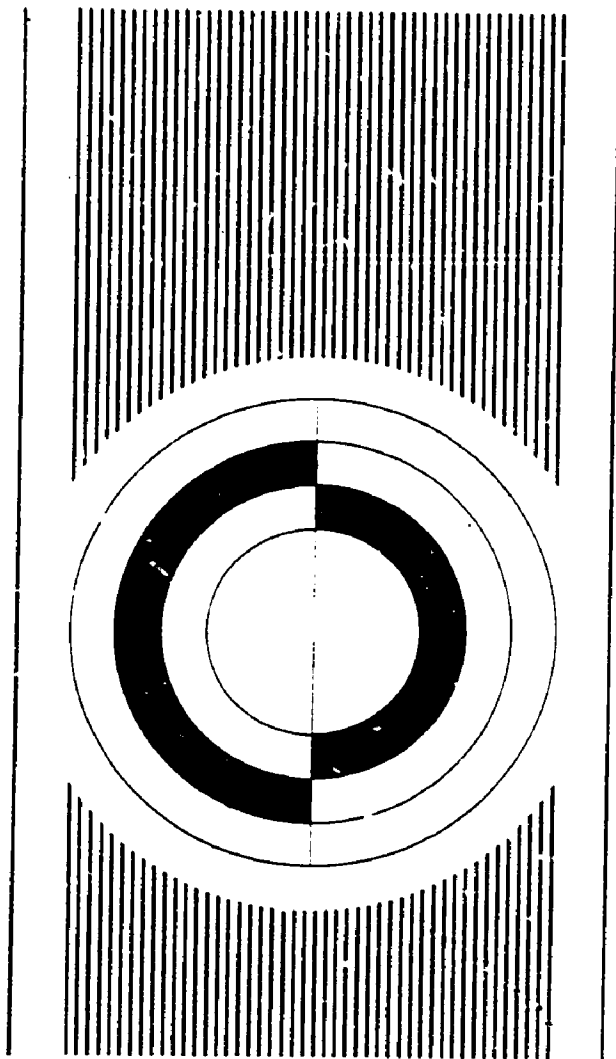IDENTIFIERS   *Nontraditional Education

ABSTRACT
              A study was undertaken for the Council or
Postsecondary Accreditation to develop evaluative criteria and
procedures for the accreditation of nontraditional education. The
summary report presents the major activities and findings of the
study. The Introduction gives its history and background and outlines
its scope, including the goals, organizational structure, and
implementation. In Chapter 1, nontraditional education is defined,
with its essential components and elements as well as its strengths
and weaknesses identified. Chapter 2 presents findings on the current
status of accreditation of nontraditional education, proposes changes
in the process, and touches on a number of related issues such as
experiential and prior learning, off-campus degrees and programs,
contractual relationships, continuing education, the meaning of
degrees, relationships to state and federal agencies, and the costs
of accreditation. The implications of the project's findings are
presented in Chapter 3, directly addressing the roles and
relationships of traditional postsecondary education, the
nontraditionalist, and accreditation. Twenty-five recommendations
addressed to specific audiences are made in Chapter 4. Significant
findings of a national survey undertaken for the project are reported
throughout. Appended are a sequential evaluation model for
institutions with off-campus programs, a list of advisory committee
members, a roster of participating institutions, and a report of the
PECA Seminar on the COPA Project. (Author/MSE)

THE COUNCIL ON POSTSECONDARY ACCREDITATION

ASSESSING NONTRADITIONAL EDUCATION

SUMMARY REPORT of the Project
to Develop Evaluative Criteria and
Procedures for the Accreditation
of Nontraditional Education
Volume 1 • September 1978

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ASSESSING NONTRADITIONAL EDUCATION • By Grover J. Andrews

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PREFACE

Nontraditional education has come to mean many different things to many different people: To the adult whose formal education, for one reason or another, was interrupted or never began, it means access through new delivery systems. To the individual constrained from further education by personal and professional responsibilities, it means new opportunities for learning. To institutions faced with a declining student market, it means a new clientele to be served. To faculties it may mean either opportunities for new ventures in teaching and learning or an erosion of the academic estate. To accrediting associations it means finding new ways to assess and assure educational quality. To the evaluator it means learning to assess educational achievements as well as processes. To students it means a shift of emphasis in the educational process to accomplishments and outcomes for more effective learning. To a changing society it means responsiveness to its educational needs. To American postsecondary education in general, nontraditional education means the beginning of needed and constructive change.

In the design and implementation of the project to develop evaluative criteria and procedures for the accreditation of nontraditional education for the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation (COPA), we have encountered and addressed these many and complex perceptions of nontraditional education. At first we anticipated that during the project a new term might emerge

to replace "nontraditional;" it has not and probably should not. The diversity and scope of educational activities offered as nontraditional can best be identified by this general term. The nature and character of the activities are so diffuse that any new label and attempt at definition would at best be only cosmetic. The term nontraditional has been a part of American postsecondary education for a decade now, and as ambiguous as it may be, most individuals have at least a conceptual image that a departure from the conventional is taking place when the term is applied. We have learned in this study that what may be considered nontraditional for one institution may not be so perceived by another. However, a single theme of <u>greater access to more effective learning opportunities</u> has emerged for most nontraditional education. Generally we have found that nontraditional education refers to the innovative or unconventional design and/or delivery of educational programs for a new clientele, programs that emphasize educational accomplishments and outcomes and recognize an individual's prior learning experiences when relevant to current educational goals.

In the project we have elected to view American postsecondary education holistically. Within the larger system are many subsystems composed of various types of institutions that award specific types and levels of educational credentials. It has become obvious to us through the research activities of the project that nontraditional education is a variation found in all types and levels of institutions. According to sociologist Charles P. Loomis, for any large and complex system to function effectively and efficiently there are certain master processes that need

to be in place and operating. These are boundary maintenance (who is responsible for what), systemic linkage (appropriate overlapping responsibilities), and communications (effective two-way flow of information). The problems of nontraditional education are the problems of American postsecondary education and are usually related to a dysfunction within one or more of the system's master processes. The problems we have identified in nontraditional education are presented in the summary report and the various research reports; however, it should be stated here that in general we have found the nontraditional education movement to be a needed and constructive change within postsecondary education. The concept of nontraditional education is generally accepted by educators and the public, and in practice, most of the programs have provided expanded access to postsecondary education of quality for a new clientele, especially adults.

We have also found that, in the main, accrediting associations have been effective and fair in their evaluations of nontraditional education. Access to the recognized and established accrediting associations is available to nontraditional education, and for the most part membership has been achieved within a reasonable time.

Throughout the reports of the project we have used the terms educational or learning outcomes, educational accomplishments, and performance criteria interchangeably. By these terms we are referring to the procedures and measures that have been or should be developed to assess individual learning that has taken place. In using these terms we are not merely referring to the use of existing psychometric tests and/or procedures used by institutions to follow up on their graduates.

This summary report for the project presents the major activities and findings of the study. The Introduction gives the history and background of the project and outlines its scope, including the goals, organizational structure, and implementation activities. In chapter 1 we discuss what is nontraditional education, identifying its essential components and elements, as well as its strengths, weaknesses, and problems. In chapter 2 we present findings concerning the current status of accreditation of nontraditional education. In this section we review the concept of accreditation, its role and functions, and how it has dealt with the evaluation of nontraditional education. We propose changes that should be made in the evaluation process. Chapter 2 concludes with a discussion of a number of related issues such as experiential and prior learning, off-campus degrees and programs, contractual relationships, continuing education and lifelong learning, the meaning of degrees, relationships to state and federal agencies, and the costs for accreditation.

The implications of the findings of the project are presented in chapter 3 and directly address the roles and relationships of traditional postsecondary education, the nontraditionalist, and accreditation. The significance of the findings and the collective impact of all activities of the project from the research and review of the accreditation of nontraditional education have led to a series of recommendations that are presented in chapter 4 of the report. The twenty-five recommendations are addressed to specific audiences to facilitate further action in effecting constructive change in American postsecondary education.

Throughout the summary report we have included significant findings from the national survey that was conducted during the project. We are especially grateful to the more than fifteen hundred individuals who took the time to respond to the questionnaire.

Briefly, we have found that nontraditional education (1) is basically a variation within, not a departure from the traditional purposes, processes, and outcomes of American postsecondary education; (2) focuses on equality of access, quality of results, and individual achievements; (3) is a positive and creative force in postsecondary education; (4) is a stimulus for constructive change in postsecondary education; and (5) is achieving acceptance among the constituent groups of postsecondary education as seen by the adoption and integration of nontraditional characteristics by a significant number of traditional institutions.

The traditionalist and nontraditionalist should close ranks and work together as partners in identifying common problems and developing effective means of serving all who need and seek postsecondary education. We have found and believe that there should be a single process and set of procedures applied in the evaluation of postsecondary education for accreditation purposes. There should not be separate standards or criteria applied in the evaluation of traditional and nontraditional educational institutions. Accreditation criteria or standards for all institutions should be such as to establish a clear relationship of institutional purposes to educational achievements with adequate resources and processes to insure quality.

Specifically the goals and objectives for the project have been thoroughly addressed in the following ways:

1. To identify the essential elements that should be present in the various types of nontraditional study programs that lead to a degree--e.g., associate, baccalaureate, master's, and doctorate.

The general characteristics and components of an institution and the essential elements of a postsecondary educational program have been identified and are included in chapter 1 of this summary report and are more fully presented and discussed in the various research reports of the project.

2. To develop a classification of the types of nontraditional educational programs.

A taxonomy for the classification and identification of the non-traditional nature of postsecondary institutions and programs has been developed and is briefly discussed in chapter 1 of the summary report. Volume 1 of the reports of the project includes a full presentation of the taxonomy; the essential elements, components, and criteria for evaluation; and profiles of the sixty-two institutions in the study.

3. To develop appropriate criteria and evaluation procedures for nontraditional educational programs and institutions for use by accrediting commissions.

As mention above, the taxonomy includes the essential elements and criteria that should be used in the development, implementation, and evaluation of postsecondary education, whether traditional or non-traditional. We have also reviewed the current models for evaluation of all postsecondary education institutions and have proposed changes that should be made. These are discussed in chapter 2 of the summary

report. A sequential evaluation model developed by Dr. Patricia Thrash

for use with multiple-site locations is presented in detail in Appendix A.

4.   To propose a new national policy to be adopted by COPA to
     facilitate uniform approaches to the development and
     evaluation of nontraditional educational programs and
     institutions of an acceptable quality.

A new statement on nontraditional education has been prepared and

is included in Chapter 4, Recommendations.

We feel that each objective of the project has been achieved to an

acceptable degree. An outside evaluation of the project was authorized

by the president of COPA and was conducted by Dr. Jerry Miller of the

American Council on Education. His report is on file in the COPA office

in Washington, D. C.

The project reports are presented in four volumes. Volume 1 is the

Summary Report of the Project and includes the general recommendations.

Volume 2 includes six research reports as follows:

Report No. 1   Nontraditional Certificate Programs (John Harris
               Philip McCullough)

Report No. 2   Salient Points from "A Study of the Acceptability
               and Negotiability of External Degrees" (John Harris)

Report No. 3   Institutional Accreditation and Nontraditional
               Undergraduate Educational Institutions and Pro-
               grams (John Harris)

Report No. 5   Critical Characteristics of an Accreditable Institution,
               Basic Purposes of Accreditation, and Nontraditional
               Forms of Most Concern (John Harris)

Report No. 6   A Review of Nontraditional Graduate Degrees (with
               particular emphasis on the problems of accreditation)
               (Paul Dressel)

Report No. 8   Analysis of the National Survey on Accreditation and
               Nontraditional Education (John Harris and Grover Andrews)

Volume 3, Report No. 4, "Problems and Principles in the Recognition of
Accreditation," is a special report prepared by Paul Dressel, with assis-
tance from Dr. Lewis B. Mayhew, Dr. Sterling M. McMurrin, Dr. Wimberly
C. Royster, Dr. Rudolph W. Schulze, and Dr. Herbert Weisinger. Volume 4,
Report No. 7, "A Taxonomy for Classification and Determination of the
Nontraditional Nature of Postsecondary Education Institutions: Essential
Components, Elements, and Criteria for Evaluation," prepared by Philip
McCullough and Grover Andrews, is the taxonomy for analysis, classification,
and evaluation of postsecondary education (traditional and nontraditional)
and includes the essential elements and components for postsecondary edu-
cation, and the criteria for evaluation. Volume 4 also includes an analysis
by Kay Andersen of the regional accrediting commissions' policies, pro-
cedures, and standards and the FRACHE policies. Also included are the
institutional profiles, based on the taxonomy, of the sixty-two institutions
that have participated in the project. Quotes included in the summary report
are taken from draft copies of the various research reports.

We wish to acknowledge with appreciation the many individuals who
have made major contributions of time, effort, and resources for the suc-
cessful implementation of this project. We are grateful for the cooperation
of the presidents and staff of the sixty-two institutions, who participated
in the project by supplying complete information and documents on their
institutions and programs as a data base for the study, and to members of
the Advisory Committee and the Presidents' Review Panel for their guidance
and direction throughout the project.

As director of the project, I wish to add a personal word of apprecia-
tion to the project staff--Kay Andersen, Paul Dressel, John Harris,

Jimmie Harmon, Mary Jo Rager, and Patricia Thrash--for their patience, endurance, commitment, and hard work for the past eighteen months. It is truly the finest and most capable group with whom I have ever worked. Special thanks go to Philip McCullough from the University of Tennessee, a doctoral intern with the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Associa- tion, and to Arthur Schlueter of the Commission staff for their valuable assistance in the research activities of the project; and to Marian Lord who has carefully and effectively edited all of the reports. To Kenneth E. Young, president of COPA, I am most grateful for the complete freedom and full support he has given to me and the staff in the implementation of the project.

Finally, I am grateful to Dr. Arlon Elser and the W. K. Kellogg Foundation for their confidence expressed through a $95,000 grant which made the project possible.

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Grover J. Andrews
Project Director

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INTRODUCTION

History of the Project

In April 1975 the board of the Council on Postsecondary Accredi-
tation (COPA), meeting in Washington, D. C., engaged in a lengthy
discussion of the problems arising from the creation of a variety of
unconventional forms and delivery modes of postsecondary education
known as "nontraditional education." By nontraditional education the
COPA board meant such things as external degrees, independent study pro-
grams, competency-based instruction, learning contracts, military base
education, experiential education, prior learning, off-campus operations,
and contracting arrangements among institutions, agencies, or organi-
zations for the delivery of education.

The problems identified by the board appeared to fall into two
interrelated categories: problems of quality assurance for nontraditional
education and problems related to accreditation of nontraditional edu-
cation, especially by the regional accrediting commissions for postsecondary
education. Both categories of problems appeared to have segments related
to policy issues and operational procedures.

An overriding concern of the COPA board was that the Council on
Postsecondary Accreditation--the new national organization for all
officially recognized voluntary, nongovernmental accrediting bodies--properly
address and accommodate the rapidly developing nontraditional education

movement through its constituent members. Procedures of the various
regional accrediting commissions for evaluating nontraditional education
stemmed from three policy statements of the Federation of Regional
Accrediting Commissions of Higher Education (FRACHE) which was a fore-
runner of COPA. Produced in 1973, these policies were the "Interim
Statement on Accreditation of Nontraditional Study, "Interim Guidelines
on Contractual Relationships with Non-Regionally Accredited Organizations,"
and "Postsecondary Educational Programs Conducted by Accredited or Candi-
date Institutions on Military Bases."

The COPA board concluded its discussion by authorizing a national
project to study the accreditation of nontraditional postsecondary edu-
cation: Dr. Kenneth E. Young, president of COPA then appointed an ad hoc
Committee on Nontraditional Study to assess the nontraditional education
movement and to recommend a plan for the development and implementation
of a national project on the accreditation of nontraditional education.

The ad hoc committee was composed of Dr. Kay J. Andersen, Western
Association of Schools and Colleges: Dr. Grover J. Andrews, Southern
Association of Colleges and Schools; Mr. William A. Fowler, National Home
Study Council; Mr. Dana R. Hart, Association of Independent Colleges and
Schools; Dr. Patricia A. Thrash, North Central Association of Colleges
and Schools; and Mr. Eugene Van Antwerp, Council on Postsecondary Accredi-
tation. The first meeting of the committee took place in Hyannis Port
in August 1975 in conjunction with the COPA Summer Conference. At the
first meeting four specific tasks in the assessment of the nontraditional
education movement were developed: (1) determine if there was a need to
revise the FRACHE policies, (2) survey the current policies, procedures,

and practices of the various accrediting commissions, (3) identify problems arising in the accreditation of nontraditional education, and (4) make recommendations to COPA on the development and implementation of the proposed national project.

Prior to the second meeting of the committee, which was held in Atlanta in September 1975, the committee members collected the various documents containing the policy statements, standards, and procedures that were currently in use by the various accrediting commissions, and each member identified and listed the problems that the accrediting bodies were experiencing in the accreditation of nontraditional education. This information was analyzed, and a report was prepared for COPA that included a set of basic assumptions and identified specific problems concerning the accreditation of nontraditional education. The report also made recommendations concerning the development and implementation of a national project on the accreditation of nontraditional education to be conducted by COPA.

A brief summary of the report of the ad hoc committee follows:

Institutional agencies rely on basic, and sometimes written assumptions concerning nontraditional study:

1. Reasonable and sound innovation, consistent with institutional goals, should be encouraged.

2. Innovations should be considered in the context of the changing nature of postsecondary education (recognizing the explosion in the kinds of educational delivery systems used, the changing nature and structure of degree work, and the multiplying forms of learning).

3. The qualitative assessment of nontraditional study must assure acceptance by the educational community, attest to the integrity of the institution or program, and assure the public of the quality of such study.

4. The purpose (i.e., goals and objectives) of the non-traditional effort must be representative of postsecondary education in general.

5. The process as well as the outcomes must be measured to attest to the institution's or program's product as an acceptable representative of postsecondary education.

6. Recognizing that quality assurance and other responsibilities have been assigned to accrediting agencies by outside agencies (especially governmental) and the general public, accreditors must determine those areas which are appropriately their responsibility.

7. The development of methods and procedures should proceed from the generic to the specific.

8. Recognizing that accreditation of nontraditional study is generally more expensive, the process should not be allowed to become too burdensome and must remain reasonable in costs.

9. The policies and procedures of evaluation must be applicable to the broad spectrum of postsecondary education and should apply equally to traditional and nontraditional institutions and programs.

These basic underlying assumptions raise two sets of questions that should be addressed in the COPA project. They are:

1. Is accreditation a change agent? Is the major purpose of accreditation to "foster excellence" and improve institutions? Or, is accreditation best equipped to attest to institutional/program quality, certifying that, at a given point in time, the institution or program meets minimum standards?

2. Has the time come for a reconsideration of the policy of blanket accreditation? Should the regionals assume more responsibility for all educational programs within their territory, regardless of the status of the parent institution? Should accreditation be granted to a satellite or branch center only when that unit has state authority to operate? The "operationally separate" and "separately accreditable" concepts should be clarified.

The review of the current experience with nontraditional education by the various accrediting commissions that are constituent members of COPA reveals a number of operational practices and characteristics of note:

1. Adaptation of regular policies and procedures;

2. Enactment of additional policies and procedures;

3. Allotment of extra staff and commission time;

4. The necessity of visits to satellites and branch centers;

5. Stimulates change within traditional institutions and/or programs;

6. Additional requirements in the identification, selection, and training of evaluators;

7. Use of more flexible self-study options;

8. More extensive use of legal counsel;

9. More attention to the central administration and more contact with other agencies, such as the Veterans' Administration and state agencies;

10. Precise reporting;

11. Better communication with member institutions;

12. More use of agency publications;

13. More interregional cooperation in fielding teams;

14. More sharing of knowledge with other agencies and associations.

The major problems in the area of nontraditional education identified by the various accrediting commissions in 1975 included the following:

1. Difficulty in obtaining hard data (or even reliable judgments) on institutional policies and procedures concerning such areas as quality control of faculty (clear procedures for faculty performance) and faculty evaluation of student work (typically vague and descriptive, rather than analytical and critical in terms of real educational worth and rigor);

2. An attitude on the part of many individual faculty and staff members in nontraditional institutions that any kind of structure is basically inimical to genuine, worthwhile innovation in contemporary higher education;

3. A desire for "power without responsibility" (accompanied by an advocacy of complete academic and personal freedom for everyone) on the part of many faculty members (and their student followers) in nontraditional institutions, including a "holier-than-thou," "we-don't-need-you" attitude toward external evaluators;

4. Overwritten publications that, nevertheless, frequently lacked clarity and specificity with respect to degree and other program requirements;

5. Inadequate academic student advisement in an unstructured situation.

6. Lack of adequate methods of quality control;

7. Inadequacy of design and evaluation of a new delivery system;

8. Distortion and misrepresentation by a nontraditional institution and misunderstanding by others of its purpose and scope;

9. Resistance to legitimate nontraditional institutions by the established institutions;

10. Inadequate protection of the consumer and the dissemination of inaccurate information, especially to foreign students;

11. Inadequate training of evaluators and consultants to work with nontraditional institutions;

12. Inadequate procedures for dealing with the phenomenon of "instant accreditation," that is, when an accredited institution makes an unauthorized extension of its accreditation to cover another institution or operation.

The ad hoc committee concluded its report with two recommendations:

1. A task force should be established and made operational as soon as possible to frame a national policy for the accreditation of nontraditional efforts in postsecondary education. (Charges to the task force included identification of the universe

of nontraditional education and the development and publication
of guidelines for the evaluation of nontraditional education.)

2. In the interim, the FRACHE policies contained in
the "Interim Statement on Accreditation and Nontraditional
Study," "Interim Guidelines on Contractual Relationships with
Non-Regionally Accredited Organizations," and "Postsecondary
Educational Programs Conducted by Accredited or Candidate
Institutions on Military Bases" should be adopted by COPA and
kept in force. In addition, the regional accrediting commissions
should supplement these policies with a requirement that if an
institution extends its educational activity beyond the boundaries
of its accrediting region, the institution must notify its
accrediting agency and that of the region into which it is moving.
The institution involved should obtain legal authorization to
operate in the new state(s).

After the report of the ad hoc committee was issued, the COPA staff

considered several alternatives for implementing the project on nontradi-

tional education. In February 1976 at the COPA Invitational Conference

held in Atlanta, the COPA president reconvened the ad hoc committee to

review the various alternatives under consideration. The committee

recommended that a national research project from an accreditation per-

spective be undertaken to develop evaluative criteria for nontraditional

education and that a proposal be written to seek outside funding to provide

basic support. It was recommended that the project be jointly sponsored

with COPA by the six regional accrediting associations, which would

provide staff support from among their various commissions. Professional

research assistance would be contracted for if COPA were successful in

securing outside funding for the project.

The president of COPA and the executive secretaries of the regional

commissions involved agreed on the following personnel for the project:

Dr. Grover J. Andrews, associate executive secretary, Commission on Colleges,

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, director; Dr. Patricia A. Thras

associate director, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education,

North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, and Dr. Kay J.

Andersen, executive director, Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges

and Universities, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, staff

associates; and Dr. Paul Dressel of Michigan State University and Dr. John

Harris of Middle Tennessee State University, principal researchers. It

was further agreed that the proposed project was of such significance to

accreditation and postsecondary education that if outside funds did not

become available, the project would be jointly supported by COPA and the

regional accrediting commissions.

During the spring of 1976, explorations were made with the W. K.

Kellogg Foundation of Battle Creek, Michigan, which responded with genuine

interest. On 1 June 1976, a request for $86,000 was submitted to Kellogg

for basic support for a national project "To Develop Evaluative Criteria

for the Accreditation of Nontraditional Education." The foundation

executives and board, after appropriate deliberations and consideration,

acted formally on the request and on 3 March 1977 notified COPA that the

project had been funded. On 23 August 1977, in response to a request for

additional funds to add a review panel of presidents to the advisory

component of the project, Kellogg increased the grant by $9,000 bringing

the total amount received from the foundation to $95,000. The project

officially began on 1 April 1977 and continued for an eighteen-month period

until 30 September 1978.

Rationale for the Project

Apart from the action of the COPA board to initiate and authorize
the project on nontraditional education, there existed a logical and
compelling rationale for a study of the accreditation of nontraditional
forms of postsecondary education: Voluntary accrediting associations in
exercising major responsibility for assuring that educational institutions
and programs meet certain standards must adequately accommodate the non-
traditional education movement to provide an assurance of quality of the
new programs for the new students.

Many individuals, institutions, and other organizations and agencies
have tried and continue to attempt to "assign" to accreditation the issue
of boundary maintenance. Historically, however, the accrediting commissions
have not deemed the geographical location issue per se to be within the
scope of their jurisdiction. It is only when the quality of education
offered is in question that the accrediting commissions may have a role to
play and may take action that would affect the geographical movements of an
institution in establishing and maintaining off-campus centers and satellite
operations. State agencies and institutional governing boards have a more
direct role in the control and regulation of such operations by postsecondary
institutions. The boundary issue alone did not provide an appropriate
rationale for the COPA Project on Nontraditional Education.

An appropriate framework was found instead in a review of the variety
of nontraditional educational programs being offered by postsecondary insti-
tutions and their methods for preserving academic standards and a review and
assessment of the ways the various accrediting commissions have worked with

the unconventional programs and institutions to assure a preservation of academic standards. The framework and rationale needed to be broad enough to include the quality assurance issues concerning purpose, governance, organizational structure, students, curriculum content, delivery systems, and academic credits and credentials within the context of the reasonable and appropriate expectations of regional accreditation.

Since the reports of the Carnegie Commission Study on Higher Education began to appear in the late 1960s, followed closely by the reports of the Commission on Nontraditional Study completed in 1974, the demand placed upon institutions of postsecondary education to develop new delivery systems and innovative learning forms has been enormous. Many institutions responded with the creation of new programs for new clienteles far too rapidly to allow for adequate planning and training of faculty in the delivery of nontraditional education. Dr. Samuel B. Gould, chairman of the Commission on Nontraditional Study, estimates that eight hundred institutions have developed and implemented nontraditional educational programs since 1973. With such a rapid expansion of these programs, the quality of many in existence today is being questioned, and the ultimate outcome could be a serious deterioratic of the value of an academic degree or other credential damaging all students.

As a result of the dramatic growth of nontraditional education, the accrediting commissions are faced with new, unusual, and sometimes difficult problems in assessing the quality of the unconventional programs. A number of the commissions have adapted existing evaluative processes to accommodate the nontraditional, and, some have developed new procedures. All have worked from the FRACHE "Interim Statement on Accreditation and Nontraditional Study," which was helpful as a starting point but not completely adequate.

In order for the accrediting commissions to continue to serve the public
by fostering and attesting to academic excellence in their member insti-
tutions, new processes and procedures for the accurate and equitable
evaluation of nontraditional education must be developed.

Scope of the Project

The COPA Project was designed to be comprehensive in nature and to
include a representative number of postsecondary institutions that offer
nontraditional study leading to some type of formal credential or certifi-
cation. Nontraditional study, for the purpose of the project, included
external degrees, campus-free institutions, competency-based instructional
programs, modular curriculum design, multimedia instructional degree pro-
grams, learning contracts for degrees, off-campus programs, military base
education, independent study programs, credit for prior learning, experien-
tial learning, and contracting arrangements among institutions, agencies,
or organizations for the delivery of education. All degree levels were
included, in private, proprietary, and public institutions and organizations.
Information and data were gathered from all of the constituent groups con-
concerned--the institutions, the accrediting commissions, on-site visiting
committees, state licensing agencies, and graduates.

As the COPA project began to unfold, an awareness of several other
groups, agencies, and organizations with an interest in nontraditional
study became evident. Therefore, the study was organized to provide
articulation and coordination with the major groups interested in non-
traditional education.

The project was designed from an accreditation perspective with the following purposes:

1. To identify essential elements that should be present in the various types of nontraditional study programs that lead to some type of formal credential for certification or a degree;

2. To develop a classification of the types of nontraditional study programs;

3. To develop appropriate guidelines, criteria, and evaluation procedures for nontraditional educational programs and institutions for use by accrediting commissions and institutions; and

4. To propose a policy to the COPA board that will result in a more uniform approach by accrediting commissions in the evaluation of nontraditional educational programs and assist in the development of quality nontraditional study programs.

Implementation plans for the project were developed in five phases with intermediate steps within each phase.

PHASE I consisted of a status study of a nationally representative group of nontraditional educational programs and institutions.

Step One. Each of the regional accrediting commissions at the post-secondary level was asked to identify at least six nontraditional institutions or programs within its region that had been reviewed or were currently under review for candidate or accreditation status. More than one hundred institutions were nominated and invited to participate in the study. Seventy-seven institutions agreed to be included in the project, and sixty-two actually provided all of the data essential for the study and analysis. (Two of the sixty-two institutions have since closed.)

Step Two. Each of the accrediting commissions provided copies of its accreditation standards and procedures, special evaluation models developed for nontraditional education, and names and addresses of commission members and on-site committee members.

Step Three. Institutions selected for the study were asked to provide copies of bulletins, catalogues, syllabi, and other materials describing programs, state licensing information; names and addresses of administrators, faculty members, and students (including graduates) involved in nontraditional programs; and self-study and evaluation reports.

Step Four. Nineteen agencies, organizations, and studies currently involved in the nontraditional education movement were identified and contacted, and lines of communication were established. These organizations included the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges, American Management Association, Postsecondary Education Convening Authority, American College Testing Program, Council for the Advancement of Experiential Learning, Center for Research and Development in Higher Education (UC-Berkeley), American Council on Education, Educational Testing Service, Division of Eligibility and Agency Evaluation (USOE), Education Commission of the States, Coalition for Alternatives in Postsecondary Education, Bureau of Social Science Research, Council of Graduate Schools, National University Extension Association, Association of State Colleges and Universities, American Institute of Research, Clearinghouse of Community-Based Free-Standing Educational Institutions, Department of Defense, and the National Association of Institutions for Military Education Services. Numerous other individuals and organizations nave expressed an interest in the project and its outcomes.

Step Five. The materials gathered in the previous steps were reviewed and analyzed, and a taxonomy of nontraditional education and institutional characteristics developed. A profile of each of the sixty-two institutions responding fully and their nontraditional programs was developed including information on basic institutional characteristics and the essential elements and components of the non-traditional programs. (A copy of the institutional profiles based on the taxonomy is included in volume 4.)

Step Six. Survey instruments were developed, circulated, and analyzed from a sample of graduates of graduate-level programs. The data from a recently completed survey conducted by the Bureau of Scoial Science Research for the American Council on Education was summarized for use in the COPA project. The BSSR-ACE study involved graduates of under-graduate external degree programs. A national survey on nontraditional education and accreditation was developed for accrediting team members, commission members and institutional personnel. (Reports on these surveys are included in volume 2.)

PHASE II was the development of essential criteria that should be present in the various types and degree levels of nontraditional education programs.

Step One. A review of the current literature and current practice in postsecondary education at all levels was made.

Steps Two, Three, and Four. The taxonomy, essential elements, and classification components of the study were developed.

PHASES III and IV included the development of criteria for evaluation
and accreditation of nontraditional institutions and programs and the
development of a policy statement on nontraditional education.

PHASE V recommended follow-up activities concerning the implemen-
tation of the findings of the project.

Activities of the Project

Since the official beginning of the COPA project, a number of imple-
mentation activities have taken place. These have centered in the work
of the Advisory Committee, the selection of the institutions for the study,
the articulation conference cosponsored by the project and the Post-
secondary Convening Authority, research for the project, and the work of
the Presidents' Review Panel.

The Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee for the project was designed to represent
the basic constituent groups of COPA and those most involved in the
accreditation of nontraditional education. It included the executive
officers of the nine regional postsecondary accrediting commissions, one
state higher education coordinating officer, one specialized programmatic
accrediting executive officer, one national institutional accrediting
officer, and one representative of the COPA board. Membership of the
Advisory Committee is included in this report as Appendix C.

The first meeting of the Advisory Committee was held in Chicago on
13 April 1977 in conjunction with a COPA board meeting. In addition to
a general discussion of the overall project, the implementation plans were

presented and discussed. The Advisory Committee set two policies.
(1) The institutions to be included in the study must have had at least
one visiting committee from an accrediting commission. If an institution
was included in the study without having had such a review, a vital set of
documents would be missing from which essential data was to be gathered,
i.e., self-study reports, visiting committee reports, and records of
commission actions. (2) Visiting committee reports would be obtained
from the participating institutions rather than from the accrediting
commissions. This procedure would respect the current confidentiality
policy of the various commissions. Other minor suggestions for revision
of the plans were made. A proposal was presented to the Advisory Com-
mittee, and approved, to accept the offer of the Postsecondary Education
Convening Authority (PECA) to cosponsor an articulation conference to
bring together the key representatives of other agencies, organizations,
and studies currently active in the nontraditional education movement
throughout the United States.

The second meeting of the Advisory Committee was held in Annapolis
on 2 August 1977. A general progress report on the project was made to
the committee at this meeting. Specific information was presented on the
institutions that had accepted the invitation to participate in the study
and on the results of the PECA conference, which was held in Columbia,
Maryland, 6-8 June 1977. It was reported to the Advisory Committee that
a request had been made to the W. K. Kellogg Foundation for an addition
to the grant to add a Presidents' Review Panel to the project, which was
the major recommendation of the PECA conference. A correlative activity
to make a case study of postsecondary education offered on military bases

was presented and discussed. It was also reported to the Advisory Committee
that the first major work session of the project staff and researchers would
be held later that month in Atlanta. The meeting concluded with the selec-
tion of dates in January for the next meeting of the Advisory Committee,
to be held in Atlanta. The first meeting of the Presidents' Review Panel
would be held in conjunction with that Advisory Committee meeting.

The third meeting of the Advisory Committee was held in Atlanta on
29-31 January 1978 to discuss progress on the implementation of the pro-
ject and to review the first drafts of three of the research reports.
These reports dealt with (1) articulation of the findings of the BSSR-ACE
study of undergraduate external degrees with the COPA project, (2) review
and analysis of the visiting committee on-site reports for the participating
nontraditional institutions and programs. Other items discussed included
the Military Base Case Study, the accreditation concerns of the Council for
the Assessment of Experiential Learning (CAEL), the offer of the Postsecond-
ary Education Convening Authority to sponsor a second conference for the
project to disseminate findings, the follow-up activities for the project
with the various accrediting commission executive groups, and the formation
of a graduate review panel.

The Advisory Committee held a joint meeting with the Presidents'
Review Panel on Monday, January 30.

A fourth meeting of the Advisory Committee was held in Pomona,
California at Kellogg-West on 2 August 1978 in conjunction with the COPA
Summer Conference. The agenda for this meeting included a general over-
view of progress and a review of six research reports dealing with certi-
ficate programs, undergraduate and graduate education, and accreditation.

The structure of the final report was discussed along with dissemination, implementation, and follow-up activities. Tne final meeting for the Advisory Committee was set for (and held) 6-7 September 1978 in Chicago to reviei the final drafts of the project reports. It was recommended by the Advisory Committee that the second PECA conference for the project not be held prior to the presentation of the final reports to the COPA board on 10-11 October 1978.

The Selection of Institutions

As mentioned earlier, the institutions invited to participate in the study were recommended by the various postsecondary accrediting commissions of the regional associations. Each commission was asked to nominate at least six institutions from its region that were either nontraditional institutions or institutions with a nontraditional program. It was further decided by the Advisory Committee that institutions to be included should have had at least one visiting committee review so that the documents necessary in such a review would be available to the study.

Once the nominations were received, a letter of invitation was sent to the institutions informing them of the study, outlining the information that would be needed and their responsioilities should they accept the invitation. Seventy-seven institutions accepted the invitation; full information and essential documents and data were received from sixty-two of these. The resulting sample of sixty-two institutions includes a wide variety of types of nontraditional programs and is national in scope. There are six institutions from the Middle States Association, eleven from the New England Association, eight from the North Central Associa-

tion, seven from the Northwest Association, thirteen from the Southern Association, and seventeen from the Western Association. At the beginning of the study, three institutions were applying for accreditation, nine were candidates for accreditation, and forty-nine were accredited. The other participating institution is a consortium of ten accredited institutions. A roster of participants as well as copies of the letter of invitation and follow-up requests are included in this report in Appendix C.

The PECA Articulation Conference

The Postsecondary Education Convening Authority offered to sponsor an articulation conference on th COPA project to bring together representatives of the various agencies, organizations, and other selected studies to enter into a discussion and dialogue on the topic cf mutual concern, nontraditional education. With the approval of the project's Advisory Committee that such a conference be held, the director of the COPA project and Mr. Kenneth C. Fischer, director of PECA, met and developed the program and invitational list for the conference. Thirty individuals representing the COPA project and eighteen other groups attended the three-day session in Columbia, Maryland, on 6-8 June 1977. Objectives of the conference were as follows:

1. To provide COPA and its staff and Advisory Committee an opportunity to describe the project's goals, design, and implementation plans;

2. To provide the directors of related studies in progress the opportunity to inform the COPA project staff and Advisory Committee about their research efforts, and to explore ways in which the COPA project could best be articulated with these studies;

3.   To provide a forum for groups and organizations with a special interest in the COPA project to share their views with the project staff and Advisory Committee.

The conference program and a list of participants is included in this report in Appendix D.

It was generally agreed that the purposes of the conference were achieved.   The major issues and concerns that arose from the discussions were as follows:

1.   The COPA project (and the nontraditional education movement in general) should be sure that the focus of its activities is on serving the "public interest."

2.   The COPA study should:

a.   Establish and maintain lines of communication with the agencies, organizations, and other studies represented at the conference;

b.   Seek to clarify the "nontraditional" terminology;

c.   Identify and articulate important distinctions between traditional and nontraditional education;

d.   Face the economic and political realities that foster the nontraditional education movement;

e.   Conduct the study with significant involvement of the nontraditional institutions and programs;

f.   Study both the traditional and nontraditional institutions and programs; and

g.   Include the total lifelong learning concept in the study.

3.   The COPA project and the total conference group should be sure to:

a.   Reflect on the social context of the work of the respective groups;

b.   Consider the oppressed;

c.   Listen to the learners (nontraditional students);

   d.   Consider the independent learners; and

   e.   Consider the public interest.

One specific recommendation from the conference was that some way
be found to involve formally a representative group from the nontraditional
institutions in the work of the COPA project at the advisory level.

   As a result of this recommendation, it was proposed by the COPA pro-
ject staff that a review panel of presidents be selected to meet through-
out the project to review the work and findings of the study. A request
was made to the W. K. Kellogg Foundation for additional funds to appoint
and convene such a panel, and in August 1977 notification was received
from Kellogg that an additional $9,000 had been granted for this purpose.
The members of the Presidents' Review Panel were:

               President Abraham S. Fischler (Chairman)
               Nova University
               Ft. Lauderdale, Florida   33314

               President Daniel J. Evans
               The Evergreen State College
               Olympia, Washington   98505

               President Leigh Gerdine
               Webster College
               470 East Lockwood
               St. Louis, Missouri   63119

               President James W. Hall
               Empire State College
               Saratoga Springs, New York   12766

               Dr. Donald J. Nolan, Director
               Regents External Degree Program
               University of the State of New York
               Albany, New York   12230

               President Peter P. Smith
               The Community College of Vermont
               Montpelier, Vermont   05602

Dr. Charles Wolf, Jr., Director
Rand Graduate Institute for Policy Studies
1700 Main Street
Santa Monica, California 80406

The first meeting of the presidents' panel was held on 30 January
1978 in Atlanta in conjunction with a meeting of the project Advisory
Committee. Panel members identified and discussed a number of issues in
nontraditional education concerning accreditation that should be addressed
in the COPA project. These included the need to identify the following:
(1) appropriate "sorting" criteria for nontraditional education, (2) the
critical, decisive questions for accreditation of nontraditional educa-
tion, (3) primary problems of nontraditional education, e.g., too few
resources, sense of "profiteering," extensive off-campus centers, graduate
education without a complete graduate institution, quality assurance,
integrity of traditional education outcomes vs. integrity of nontraditional
educational outcomes, and (4) critical indicators of quality.

A second meeting of the presidents' panel was held on 5-6 September
1978 in Chicago, at which time the panel reviewed drafts of the various
reports produced by the project. It was the consensus of the group present
that the findings of the study were important and that the Summary Report
of the Project should be widely distributed. Also, the results of the
national survey were considered to be important new findings that would
be of interest to educators and accrediting personnel.

Research

Research activities for the project were conducted primarily by the
three members of the project staff and the two researchers. While all
had contributed to the overall discussions of issues and concepts,

specific areas of responsibility have been assigned and have been inde-pendently developed. These assignments includec an analysis of the various standards and procedures of the different accrediting commissions the analysis of graduate-level programs and the survey of a sample of graduates, the review and analysis of the BSSR-ACE study, and the survey of visiting committee members, commission personnel, and institutional personnel.

Three work sessions of several days in length have been held during the project, 9-19 August 1977, 24-27 January 1978, and 16-18 July 1978. Dr. Kenneth Young, president of COPA, attended part of each of the work sessions. All sessions were helc in Atlanta. In addition, the project staff and researchers were together for the PECA Articulation Conference.

The August 1977 meeting was a very productive session. Out of this work period came a better conceptualization of the project and the various tasks to be completed. Dr. Patricia Thrash brought before the staff a quote that stimulated within the project staff an awareness of a larger goal for the project than perhaps was first envisioned.

> We're living in topsy-turvy times, and I think that
> what causes the topsy-turvy feeling is inadequacy
> of old forms of thought to deal with new experiences.
> I've heard it said that the only real learning re-
> sults from hang-ups, where instead of expanding the
> branches of what you already know, you have to stop
> and drift laterally for a while until you come
> across something that allows you to expand the
> roots of what you already know. Everyone's familiar
> with that. I think the same thing occurs with whole
> civilizations when expansion's needed at the roots.1

As interpretation, it can be said that postsecondary education and those agencies, such as regional accrediting commissions, which serve it exist within the context of the external realities of time. As the realities change, institutions change, and to remain effective, accreditation must be responsive to these changes. As postsecondary educational institutions have struggled to be responsive to the external realities of the sixties--e.g., the exploding universe, greatly expanded federal aid, dissident students, Viet Nam--and the seventies--e.g., financial exigencies, diminishing student market, public demands, extended campus, increased sta   regulations--the regional accrediting commissions have also struggled to respond to and accommodate these changes.

The nontraditional education movement is one response to the external realities of time and one evidence of change. A central focus of the movement is a more direct focus on educational outcomes and student performance. The inadequacy of traditional postsecondary educational institutions, and therefore of accreditation, in addressing outcomes may very well be at the root of the concern about the evaluation of non-traditional institutions and programs. The COPA Project on Nontraditional Education, therefore, represents a lateral drift by the accrediting community--a stepping aside to view the total situation--which may provide the basis ᶠ   ⁻⁻ʷ dimension in the evaluation and accreditation of all postsecc   ⁻ⁿ.

An   :ational outcomes will place greater demands on educators   ⌐ the basic questions of "What is education?" "What is learning?" and "How can both be best achieved and appropriately ᵉ⁻ted?"

In other words, it is hoped that the project has achieved its
original purposes and goals by producing specific materials that will
be useful to the nontraditional educational institutions and programs
and the commissions for accreditation; but perhaps the study has also
produced a new conceptual framework for the redevelopment of the accredi-
tation process for all of postsecondary education that stresses perfor-
mance criteria and individual achievement. Such a redevelopment can be
of great service to the postsecondary educational community in general
and directly address the current concerns over educational outcomes and
assurance of quality.

CHAPTER 1

THE STATUS OF NONTRADITIONAL EDUCATION

Nontraditional education is not new to the postsecondary educational
community in the United States, though the term nontraditional is relatively
new. A review of the growth and development of higher education in this
country, particularly since the mid-1980s, is replete with unconventional
and innovative approaches in content, methodology, and delivery. A dis-
tinguishing characteristic of American postsecondary education that is
often lauded is its "diversity." Even the final report of the Commission
on Nontraditional Study issued in 1973 was entitled Diversity by Design.

Perhaps the first significant benchmark in the diversification of
American higher education came in 1862 with the creation of the land-grant
colleges. This was followed by the development of the elective system at
Harvard in 1900. In 1914 came the establishment of the cooperative extension
service with the passage of the Smith-Lever Act. The W. K. Kellogg
Foundation's establishment of the continuing education center concept, the
GI Bill following World War II, and the development and rapid expansion
of the community college concept were major new developments of postsecondary
education leading into the sixties. The various federal programs of the
sixties effected further diversification. These programs included Title I
of the Higher Education Act of 1965, the Technical Service Act of 1965, and
a number of other programs with a special focus on vocational, career

education and adult education. (It has been estimated that more than three hundred federal programs have now been created to support adult learning at the postsecondary level.) These benchmarks represent a continuous and progressive evolution of a nontraditional approach to the structuring and delivery of postsecondary education for the American people. Each has contributed in its own unique way to a diversification of American higher education.

National studies in the past decade have showed the need for even greater flexibility in higher education. In the Carnegie Commission reports (1968 through 1971), the Newman Reports (1971), and the report of the Commission on Nontraditional Study (1973), strong emphasis was given to allowing reentry to education at periods throughout life and to the further explanation of nontraditional study programs. The final report of the Commission on Nontraditional Study noted:

> . . . Inside the vast U. S. higher education establish-
> ment of more than twenty-six hundred institutions and
> in the world outside it, there is a quickened and even
> urgent sense that the long-sought dream of universal and
> broadly based educational opportunity is still much too
> far from accomplishment. Recent years have been marked
> by a fertile creation of new institutions, inventions,
> systems, theories, and practices, some put forward
> modestly but many heralded as panaceas. Questions touch-
> ing every facet of existing schools and colleges--what is
> to be taught, to whom, by whom, how, when, where, why,
> and to what effect--are being asked. Non-traditional
> answers are coming swiftly into being, often in piecemeal
> fashion, and even more often in isolation from one another.
> Some of these innovations are nearer to accomplishment
> than ever before; some are near extinction or have already
> been quickly laid to rest. Many are still under discussion,
> and the heightened interest they have aroused has brought
> the possibility of educational transformation to the fore-
> front of educational attention.[2]

As noted in the introduction of this report, the Chairman of the

Commission on Nontraditional Study, Dr. Gould, estimates that approximately

eight hundred institutions have developed one or more programs of a non-

traditional nature to serve in some way a portion of the nontraditional

student clientele.   In 1970, the Carnegie Commission stated:

> What the American nation needs and expects from higher
> education in the critical years ahead can be summed up
> in two phrases: quality of results and equality of access.
> Our colleges and universities must maintain and strengthen
> academic quality if our intellectual resources are to
> prove equal to the challenges of contemporary society.
> At the same time, the nation's campuses must act energeti-
> cally and even aggressively to open new channels to
> equality of educational opportunity.[3]

It now appears that many institutions have responded to the call

for new programs energetically and aggressively, due in part to the

availability of federal support.   The issue of access is already being

addressed effectively.   With the rapid development of new porgrams for

new student groups, however, there has also come a general concern about

quality.   The issue of quality and results is a focus of the COPA study.

With the evolution of voluntary, nongovernmental, regional accredi-

tation over the past ninety-plus years, educators and the public have come

to rely on the accrediting agencies for some assurance of quality in

institutions and programs. In effect, the accrediting agencies have become

legitimizers of new and different institutions and programs as they have

developed, and as such accrediting agencies have become one of the most

influential forces in the development of American higher education.

Prior to this century, American higher education in general resisted

innovative and nontraditional study programs.   The education community

and the publics are now looking to accreditation for assurances concerning the quality of the nontraditional education movement. The COPA project has reviewed a representative sample of nontraditional institutions and programs to see how well the accrediting agencies have dealt with this area. In so doing the project has also been able to gain some insight into the scope and structure of nontraditional education. The remainder of this section will discuss briefly the findings of the study that relate to the status of nontraditional forms of American postsecondary education.

What Is Nontraditional Education?

One of the interesting observations about the nontraditional education movement is the lack of a clear definition for the term nontraditional. When asked what is meant by nontraditional education, most practitioners respond by giving a description of a particular program or institution. Previous studies have also not been able to produce a clear and precise definition of the term.

The definition produced by the Commission on Nontraditional Study is the one most often used and quoted:

> Nontraditional study is more an attitude than a system and thus can never be defined except tangentially. This attitude puts the student first and the institution second, concentrates more on the former's need than the latter's convenience, encourages diversity of individual opportunity rather than uniform prescription, and deemphasizes time, space, and even course r quirements in favor of competence and, where applicable, performance.[4]

Unfortunately, many of those who have used this definition have not gone beyond the passage quoted, leaving out some of the other important elements given. The Commission stated further:

> It has concern for the learner of any age and circumstance, for the degree aspirant as well as the person who finds sufficient reward in enriching life through constant, periodic, or occasional study. This attitude is not new; it is simply more prevalent than it used to be. It can stimulate exciting and high-quality educational progress; it can also, unless great care is taken to prevent the freedom it offers, be the unwitting means to a lessening of academic rigor and even to charlatanism.[5]

In its totality this statement embraces the range and scope of the nontraditional education movement remarkably well. A more specific and precise definition, with which many educators would be more comfortable, would tend to enforce a rigidity and conformity on a movement that must remain open and free to foster educational innovations of "academic rigor" and quality. In other words, a precise definition would probably result in a "traditionalization" of the nontraditional.

In an analysis of all current attempts to define nontraditional education, Edward G. Simpson concludes that they were made from either philosophical precepts of the movement (attitudes and ideals) or the construction and discussion of models. His study identifies as a basic premise underlying all of the previous attempts to define nontraditional education, "that the student's goals were of paramount concern rather than the institution's."[6] This finding is consistent with the original definition and recommendations of the Commission on Nontraditional Study and, in general, is consistent with the findings of the COPA project.

This general agreement on the primary purpose or goal of nontraditional

education also seems to imply, if not specify, an agreement on the

assurance of quality issue.

In making its analysis of institutions and programs, the COPA pro-

ject developed a framework for a profile of nontraditional education

divided into two major parts, Institutional Characteristics (General)

and Nontraditional Characteristics (Elements/Components). (See Figure 1.)

From the profile, an outline of which follows, came information for the

taxonomy of identification and classification of nontraditional education.

It is the consensus of the project staff that the essential elements

and components for a nontraditional educational institution or program

are represented in the profile and that an appropriate development and

application of each element or component will provide the framework for

an effective and acceptable nontraditional institution or program. The

components and elements are also equally applicable to traditional insti-

tutions and programs.

The resulting taxonomy for the identification and classification of

institutions is shown in Figure 2.

Any variety of combinations of characteristics, components, and

elements can be configured according to their mode (traditional or non-

traditional). In the final analysis, the basic character of the institution

or program (traditional or nontraditional) can then be determined by a

review of the total educational effort.

The question obviously arises about weighting the elements or

components. If this were done, the greater weight would probably be

Figure 1

Nontraditional Institution/Program Profile

I.   Institutional Characteristics (General)
     A.   Purpose
     B.   Sponsorship/Governance
     C.   Size: _____Students _____Faculty
     D.   Degree or Credentials Offered
     E.   Costs: (Tuition and Fees)
     F.   Financial Data: _____Budget _____Endowment _____Support
     G.   Recognition/Accreditation
          1.   State Licensing
          2.   Regional Accreditation
          3.   Other
II. Nontraditional Characteristics (E'ements/Components)
     A.   Definition of Nontraditional Learning
     B.   Characteristics/Elements/Components of Nontraditional
          Program(s)
          1.   Purpose of Program (Goals and Objectives)
          2.   Curriculum/Faculty
          3.   Delivery System:
               (a)   Time/Space Requirements--Residency
               (b)   Independent Study Utilization
               (c)   External Nature
               (d)   Media Utilization
               (e)   Other
          4.   Methods for Learning/Instruction
          5.   Admissions Requirements
          6.   Completion Requirements--Awarding of Credits
          7.   Advanced Standing Processes:
               (a)   Credit by Examination
               (b)   Experiential Learning
               (c)   Transfer of Credit
               (d)   Other
          8.   Advising and Counseling
          9.   Learning Resources
          10. Evaluation Systems:
               (a)   Students
               (b)   Program
          11. Costs:
               (a)   Tuition and Fees
               (b)   Program Costs (Budget)
     C.   Recognition/Accreditation
          1.   State Licensing
          2.   Regional Accreditation
          3.   Specialized
          4.   Other

Figure 2

Sample Taxonomy for Determining Traditional/Nontraditional
Mode of an Institution or Program
(T = Traditional, N = Nontraditional)

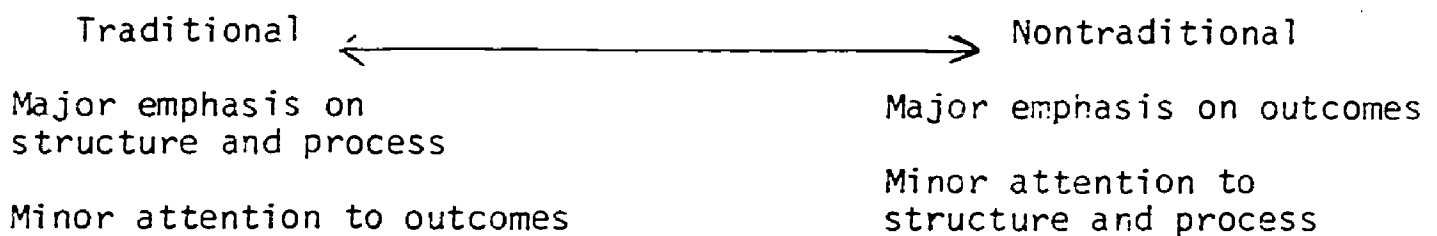| Institutional Characteristics	Purpose	Program/Curriculum/Faculty	Delivery System	Methods for Learning	Admissions	Completion Requirements (Outcomes)	Advanced Standing Processes	Advising and Counseling	Learning Resources	Evaluation Systems	Mode
Institution A	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T
Institution B	T	T	N	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T
Institution C	T	T	N	N	T	T	T	T	T	T	T
Institution D	T	T	N	N	T	T	N	T	T	N	T
Institution E	T	T	N	N	T	T	N	N	N	N	T
Institution F	T	N	N	N	T	T	N	N	N	N	N
Institution G	T	N	N	N	T	T	N	N	N	N	N
Institution H	T	N	N	N	T	N	N	N	N	N	N
Institution I	T	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Institution J	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N

given to Purpose, Program/Curriculum/Faculty, and Completion Require-
ments (Outcomes). However, it is the opinion of the project staff that
the components and elements are of equal importance and that they are
all essential to a well-developed institution or program.

Postsecondary education, then, should be viewed as a continuum,
with the traditional institution or program at one end and the non-
traditional institution or program at the opposite end. (See Figure 3.)
Institutions predominantly traditional in character usually place
primary emphasis on structure and process with less attention given to
outcomes. Institutions predominantly nontraditional in character usually
place primary emphasis on outcomes with less attention to structure and
process.

The institutional profiles developed in the COPA study and the taxonomy
with the essential elements and components are included in volume 4 of the
reports of the project and discussed more fully there.

Figure 3

Postsecondary Education Continuum

Traditional <————————————————————> Nontraditional

Major emphasis on   Major emphasis on outcomes
structure and process
                                     Minor attention to
Minor attention to outcomes   structure and process

Scope of Nontraditional Education

The field of nontraditional education has no boundaries. It has come to involve every level of postsecondary education--noncredit, certificate, associate, baccalaureate, master's, doctoral, and post-graduate--in a wide variety of locations, in formal and informal settings, and it generally relies heavily on some form of individualized and independent study. Much of nontraditional education involves the offering of educational programs at remote sites with a heavy dependence on part-time faculty. Nontraditional programs and institutions have usually been designed to serve the "new" students who are most often older and employed full-time.

Nontraditional programs generally have nontraditional objectives and outcomes. In his work on this project Paul Dressel has noted that, "Non-traditional education is education which can be provided in nontraditional ways by nontraditional teachers to nontraditional students seeking non-traditional outcomes." Such an open-ended approach to the identification of the nontraditional mode leads to an observation and conclusion that what is nontraditional for one institution may not be for another. There-fore, the scope of the field for nontraditional study is delimited in very few ways.

Based on the taxonomy developed, the project delineated six general classifications of institutions and programs. These are:

1. Traditional institutions with traditional programs and pro-cesses, but with traditional outcomes.

2. Traditional institutions with some nontraditional programs and processes, but with traditional outcomes.

3. Traditional institutions with some nontraditional programs and processes, including outcomes.

4. Nontraditional institutions with some traditional programs and processes, including outcomes.

5. Nontraditional institutions with some traditional programs and processes, but with nontraditional outcomes.

6. Nontraditional institutions with nontraditional programs and processes, including outcomes.

Among the various types of programs reviewed in the COPA project that are nontraditional, based on some variation of the essential elements and components from the institutional profile and taxonomy, are:

external degrees
independent study
competency-based education
modular curriculum
multimedia instruction
off-campus operations
learning contracts
week-end college
military base education

contracting with other
   institutions or agencies
educational brokering
experiential learning
assessment of prior learning
community-based education
corporate-based education
government-based education
examining institution

In the national survey conducted as a part of the study, the 1,319 respondents to the survey selected the following types of programs from a prescribed list and ranked them as the most representative of non-traditional education:

1st--External degrees granted on the basis of examined achievement
     without required periods of study or residency.

2nd--External degree programs offering off-campus, independent study through instructional systems, programs, and materials designed for home study.

3rd--Contract degree programs, individualized not only in terms of instructional means but also in outcomes and achievements expected of graduates.

4th--Competency-based curricula within conventional institutions.

5th--Educational brokering efforts that offer no instruction or credit, but which link learner interest and needs to educational resources such as instruction, assessment of prior learning, and counseling.

6th--Off-campus, conventional instruction such as military base programs often using part-time and adjunct faculty.

7th--Courses and/or degrees offered by an accredited institution through a contractual relationship with another institution or an unaccredited organization or agency.

It is obvious from the national survey and the review of the literature in the field that the external degree in its various forms is considered by most individuals as a primary form of nontraditional education if not the principal form. However, it does not represent the form most frequently used by institutions, nor does it encompass the majority of individuals served by nontraditional education. The BSSR-ACE study of the undergraduate external degree carefully documents this fact. That study identified all of the undergraduate external degree programs operating in the United States as of the fall of 1976 and found 244 degree programs within 134 institutions. Ninety percent of the institutions and programs were either accredited or candidates for accreditation. Enrollments were slightly more than 54,000, and graduates of these programs since their beginning numbered only 18,421. When compared to the more than eleven million students enrolled in all postsecondary institutions in 1976, external degree enrollments represent slightly less than

one-half of one percent. Of course, the significance of the number in no way lessens the significance or importance of the programs to the individuals enrolled. A summary of the BSSR-ACE study has been prepared and is included in volume 2 of these reports.

We have not been able to discover comprehensive, reliable data on the current number of institutions involved in nontraditional education (other than the external degree) or on the number of students involved in all types of formal nontraditional educational programs. In our own survey of some 1,300 institutions, 78 percent indicated that they offered nontraditional programs. Of these, 73 percent indicated that approximately 10 percent of their total educational effort was nontraditional in nature, while the remaining 17 percent indicated that almost 25 percent of their programs were nontraditional. Five percent of the institutions with non-traditional programs indicated that a full 50 percent of their total educational effort was nontraditional. Sixty-two percent of those surveyed also indicated that they plan to develop and offer new nontraditional pro-grams within the next two years. The Commission on Nontraditional Study estimated in 1973 that there were eighty million adults in the potential market for nontraditional education. In 1978, the Future Directions for a Learning Society program of the College Board estimated that 58.4 million adults were involved in some formal type of learning. Of this number, 12.4 million are enrolled in educational institutions while 46 million are studying through non-school organizations. Though the focus of the COPA project is on the institutions of postsecondary education that offer non-traditional study and are eligible for regional accreditation, it is important that the scope of the total nontraditional movement be seen in proper perspective.

Strengths, Weaknesses, and Problems

The strengths of the nontraditional education movement are many. After a decade of struggles since the beginning of the movement in the 1960s, it is apparent from the results of a number of recent studies and the COPA project that diversification of postsecondary education in the United States to serve new students in new ways is taking hold in a positive way. This success is due primarily to the dedicated work of a few educators, the support of private foundations, motivation by state and federal agencies, requests from educational consumer groups (students, community, business, industry, and professional), and the general support of the concept of nontraditional education by many other educators and accreditation officials.

In the COPA national survey, administrators of postsecondary institutions selected and ranked from a preset list the following factors as most influential in the establishment of nontraditional programs.

    Ist--Needs of the community (business, industry, professional)

    2nd--Student requests

    3rd--Basic interests in curricular reform

    4th--Educational dream of a top administrator

    5th--Declining traditional enrollments

    6th--Meeting competition from other institutions

    7th--Institutional financial problems

    8th--Stimulus from state-wide coordinating boards

    9th--Accreditation standards, policies, and procedures that allow
        recognition

Perhaps the greatest strength of nontraditional education today lies in the apparent support for the concept by administrators of postsecondary institutions and programs. In the COPA survey, 94.5 percent of the administrators who responded agreed that the concept of nontraditional education is sound. Eighty-five percent went further to agree that a nontraditional degree program was a logical option within the philosophy and structure of their own institutions.

Another obvious strength of the nontraditional education movement is in the quality of the programs offered. For the most part, institutions have worked diligently to develop and implement nontraditional programs that are academically sound and acceptable. Substantial evidence for this observation is found in the fact that most institutions involved in non-traditional education are accredited. The BSSR-ACE study found that 90 percent of the 244 external degree programs offered by 134 institutions either are accredited or are making progress toward accreditation. In the COPA project, all but three of the sixty-two sample institutions (offering more than one hundred nontraditional programs) are accredited. Another supporting factor in the quality of nontraditional education is the successful experiences of nontraditional degree holders. The BSSR-ACE study surveyed 2,647 graduates of external degree programs. Though this study did not specifically deal with issues of program quality, it documented the acceptance and effective utilization of the nontraditional degree, which must be considered a positive indication of quality. In the two areas of achieving access to further education and achieving work-related benefits, the study found that most nontraditional degree holders achieved one or

both of these goals. The study concluded the report of its findings with these significant observations:

> Within the limitation and boundaries which were set for this report, we feel that the data presented provide valuable baseline information in an area where to date only anecdotal evidence and ideological rhetoric have been available to those who sought to judge the usefulness of external degree programs for students in need of new options.
> Furthermore, in our opinion, it seems clear that credentialling benefits can accrue to individual external degree program graduates. On this basis, these programs should be considered as legitimate educational alternative prospective students, their sponsors and edu rs.[7]

Other strengths of the nontraditional education movement, which will not be discussed in this report but are important and significant, concern the expansion of postsecondary education to serve the older and usually employed student with a diversity of subject areas and program options.

The nontraditional education movement, though generally strong today, is faced with a number of serious issues which must be faced by those in responsible positions if the movement is not to become bogged down by its weaknesses. These weaknesses can be classified as either internal issues or external issues, with a few extending into both categories.

Internal issues generally relate to the various processes and constituent groups that make up an institution. A significant number of the nontraditional programs that are part of traditional institutions have been set up as separate entities within those institutions. While this mode of operation was probably necessary in the early days of the movement to circumvent str   resistance from established institutional groups, it is a questionable practice today if nontraditional education is to be accepted

as a legitimate part of the postsecondary education community. Nontra-
ditionalists and nontraditional programs should work within the framework
of the normal institutional structure and processes of purpose, governance,
finance, organization, quality assurance and controls, curricula develop-
ment and approval, credentials, and evaluation systems. When nontraditional
programs are created separately and operated independently of the normal
academic and administrative processes of an institution, there is suspicion
and distrust of the unconventional programs by faculty and academic adminis-
trative groups that have responsibility for the academic integrity of the
institution as a whole. If the nontraditionalists work within the normal
structure of the institution, then the traditionalists have a responsi-
bility to accept and accommodate them, reviewing and modifying the established
processes if necessary. The creation and maintenance of a dichotomy between
the traditional and nontraditional is an unfortunate situation that does not
benefit any of the constituencies of postsecondary education. Regardless
of methodology involved, any credential earned by a student from a post-
secondary education institution should represent the academic integrity of
that institution. Of course, the complexities of achieving such a unity of
educational effort are difficult at best. The lack of internal cohesiveness
in the development, administration, and assessment of postsecondary edu-
cation by institutions is probably the greatest weakness of postsecondary
education, traditional or nontraditional.

The lack of cohesiveness that exists today in many of the nontraditional
programs is illustrated by data from the national survey. While there was
a strong endorsement of the concept of nontraditional (94.5 percent), there
was a strong disagreement (74.5 percent) with the statement that college

and university faculties generally support the concept. Also, even though 85 percent of those responding indicated that the establishment of a nontraditional degree was a logical option for their institutions and 66 percent indicated that they had plans to develop such programs within the next two years, only 49 percent said that the nontraditional degree is comparable in quality to the traditional degree. This interesting set of perceptions by institutional and program administrators provides ample ground for future debate by academics. It is our opinion that the basic issue is one of institutional legitimization of the nontraditional as academically sound. This issue can best be addressed by active participation of all parties responsible for quality assurance in all postsecondary educational programs.

External issues that cause concern about nontraditional programs and institutions usually emerge from their relations to other institutions, government agencies, clientele, and public groups. We cannot overemphas e the importance of establishing and maintaining good relationships with the various groups critical to the successful development, implementation, and acceptance of a nontraditional institution or program. The failure of some nontraditionalists to attend to these and oth. appropriate external relationships is a weakness in the current nontraditional movement. This failure by some has hurt the cause of nontraditional education in general: It provoked a solidification of resistence by other institutions, a proliferation of rules and regulations by state and federal agencies, the development of additional policies and procedures by accrediting agencies, and a questioning in the minds of potential clientele and other public groups concerning the integrity and quality of nontraditional programs and institutions.

This we refer to as a problem of perception. Many of the critics of non-traditional education are critics because of inadequate communications between the nontraditionalist and the traditionalist. In many cases, perceptions concerning nontraditional learning forms are based on inadequate information and hearsay rather than on actual experience and knowledge, and this has led to a general misconception about the nature and values of nontraditional education.

Accreditation and state authorization procedures provide a bridge to both internal and external issues and will be discussed in chapter 2 of this report.

The major problems facing nontraditional institutions and programs appear to fall into three categories. One, with the rapid development of the nontraditional movement, many institutions have moved too quickly into the development of new programs for new students without fully developing the elements necessary to have a program or institution of acceptable quality. A second problem is the entrepreneur with charlatan motives. Both individuals and institutions that have a primary goal of personal "profit" in some form may have deceptive motives. In his work on the project, Kay Andersen, executive director of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, has noted that, "in a crass sense, (to the entrepreneur) nontradition has come to mean little more than poor quality programs delivered anywhere to any student for purposes of monetary gain or survival." The quickness with which the nontraditional movement developed and expanded has made it vulnerable to the educational huckster. A caution in this area was also noted in the reports of the Commission on Nontraditional Study, quoted earlier.

A third problem in nontraditional education is a questioning of
some of the degrees it awards. Institutions or programs that generally
have nontraditional students, objectives, curricula, faculty, and out-
comes and award nontraditional degrees or credentials appear to raise
few questions. Problems exist where a traditional degree nomenclature
is used for a nontraditional educational experience without adequate
attention given to the criteria and elements normally associated with the
particular traditional degree. Paul Dressel has noted this problem in his
work for the project with this observation: "Insisting on being nontradi-
tional in every respect, the nontraditionalist finally succumbs to the
traditional in that he wishes to give a degree which has traditional
significance. And it is at this point that the major problems of recognizing
and accrediting such degrees arises."

This problem is also addressed by the Task Force on Educational Credit
and Credentials of the American Council on Education in its report "Recom-
mendations on Credentialling Educational Accomplishments," issued in the
spring of 1978. While recognizing and advocating that the postsecondary
community modify its present credit and credential system to accommodate
and recognize learning attained in a variety of circumstances in order to
serve present day educational and social needs, the task force is strong in
its recommendations that relate to preserving the traditional meaning and
value of a degree:

> Degrees will continue to be socially useful only if they
> retain their uniqueness. That uniqueness flows from the
> historical and central role of faculties in designing edu-
> cational programs, in establishing requirements for degrees,
> and in certifying and setting standards for educational
> accomplishments.

Qualified faculties, with substantial and academic
independence with their responsibility delegated to them
by boards of control, and with peer review provided by
nongovernmental accreditation, are the best sources in
society for the expertise needed to exercise the degree-
granting function. In a complex, technological society,
education for work requirements must be balanced with
cultural considerations in education. While the importance
of education for work cannot be minimized, neither can the
importance of education designed to advance the understand-
ing and quality of cultural values, the environment, the
human condition, and to develop analytical, communication,
quantitative, and synthesizing skills. The composition
and organization of faculties, though not guaranteeing
the avoidance of narrow, self-seeking interests, tends to
bring balance to these considerations.

External degree programs embodying the above charac-
teristics for granting degrees are useful and valid means
of certifying educational accomplishment and should be
considered acceptable alternatives to traditional degree
programs.

RECOMMENDATION

Institutions or organizations that lack the proper degree-
granting structure described above should limit their awards
to certificates or other credentials whose designations are
clearly distinguishable from degrees. Undergraduate degrees
should not be awarded by any institution for programs that
lack a general/liberal education component.[8]

The concerns of Dressel and the recommendations of the ACE Task
Force are consistent and support the findings in the COPA project, pre-
sented earlier in this section, that postsecondary education should not
be dichotomized into traditional and nontraditional segments. Such
separation provides the framework for a questioning of the validity of
the credential offered by the nontraditional component.

In summary it may be said that the status of nontraditional study is
good. It is a movement that is still in the developmental process, and as
such it is an evolving, dynamic entity in American postsecondary education.
The nature and structure of the programs and institutions (organization,

finance, students, curricula, delivery systems, and assessment systems)
are in a state of progressive flux. There are strengths and weaknesses
in the movement. There are problems that must be resolved as there are
in education at large. It is our hope that the findings of this project
will contribute to a strengthening of all of American postsecondary
education.

CHAPTER 2

THE STATUS OF ACCREDITATION OF NONTRADITIONAL EDUCATION

The primary responsibility for the development of postsecondary education in the United States historically has rested within education itself, in concert with various groups reflecting social, religious, and civil needs. Excellence has been a product of a decentralized, independent "system" of postsecondary education. With a few exceptions, such as the New York Regents, the means employed to assess and improve the American processes have traditionally been in the hands of those other than government--local, state, or federal. As a result of this self-directed, self-regulated process, a variety of autonomous accrediting organizations have emerged to give guidance and provide evaluation for self-improvement of educational institutions, which have sought to fulfill their missions according to the educational needs of their constituents.

Accreditation came into being in the state of New York in the late 1700s in response to a need for a commonality of acceptable practices and admission standards among educational institutions. The first voluntary, nongovernmental, regional accrediting association was formed by the New England states in 1885. By the 1890s the Middle States, North Central, and Southern associations had been established. The Northwest was founded in 1917 and the Western in 1948, giving a national scope to regional accreditation.

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The Concept of Accreditation

Voluntary, nongovernmental accreditation has since developed with
two basic forms, institutional and specialized. Institutional accredi-
tation is conducted by the six regional associations, each serving a
specific geographic area of the United States. (Currently, there are
also four national accrediting agencies for special-purpose institutions.)
Specialized accreditation is conducted by more than fifty professional
programmatic accrediting agencies recognized by the Council on Postsecondary
Accreditation. Specialized accrediting developed as the result of a need
by various professional groups to exercise quality assurance in the edu-
cational preparation of members of their professions. Usually an insti-
tution of higher education will possess both institutional and specialized
accreditation. Institutional and specialized accreditation parallel and
complement each other. While specialized accrediting agencies are con-
cerned with specific educational and professional requirements, institu-
tional accrediting agencies are primarily concerned with the operational
and quality assurance processes of the total institution.

Since the founding of regional accreditation, the purpose and
functions have undergone significant change: "Admissions and the
maintenance of minimum academic standards were the two initial problems
which accreditation was devised to meet."[9] By 1960 the basic functions
of accreditation identified by L. E. Blauch were:

1. To encourage institutions to improve their programs by
   providing standards on criteria established by compe-
   tent bodies;

2. To facilitate the transfer of students from one institution to another;

3. To inform those who employ graduates or who examine its graduates for admission to professional practice, the quality of training the graduates have received; and

4. To raise the standards of education for the practice of a profession.[10]

In 1970 the U.S. Office of Education published criteria listing nine functions of accreditation:

1. Certifying that an institution has met established standards;

2. Assisting prospective students in identifying acceptable institutions;

3. Assisting institutions in determining the acceptability of transfer credit;

4. Helping to identify institutions and programs for the investment of public and private funds;

5. Protecting an institution against harmful internal and external pressures;

6. Creating goals for self-improvement of weaker programs and stimulating a general raising of standards among educational institutions;

7. Involving the faculty and staff comprehensively in institutional evaluation and planning;

8. Establishing a criterion for professional certification, licensure, and for upgrading courses offering such preparation; and

9. Providing one basis for determining eligibility for Federal assistance.[11]

Currently, the regional accrediting associations claim to focus on two major concerns, educational quality and institutional integrity, while continuing to promote institutional self-improvement and to protect the institution from undue and improper external and internal pressures.

Because accreditation is still conducted by voluntary, nongovern-
mental organizations, it is a process of self-regulation of the insti-
tution by other institutions, with the accrediting agencies having no
legal authority to control or regulate postsecondary institutions. An
institution voluntarily seeks accreditation by agreeing to submit itself
to an evaluation both from within and by its peers. Upon achieving
ar .re^itation, membership within the agency is usually automatic, thus
allowing the institution to join its peers in the organizational pro-
cesses through a representative from of governance. In his research
work for the COPA project, John Harris has identified accreditation as,

> . . . essentially institutional membership in a volun-
> tary association of institutions. The authority of
> accreditation is the democratically expressed will of
> member institutions. It is not the administration
> of government decrees. Hence, its goals and purposes
> change with the new circumstances of new days as well
> as changes in the composition of the membership per
> se. This is to say the principles and policies of
> accreditation are not like regulations and executive
> orders of a large and distant body. Rather, accredi-
> tation policies and standards are essentially the
> rules of membership in a 'voluntary' association.

Regional and specialized accrediting agencies are relatively autono-
mous bodies. Prior to 1975 there was no single national organization
for the control or coordination of accreditation. An informal coordi-
nation function existed by communciations among three formal agencies:
the Federation of Regional Accrediting Commissions of Higher Education
(FRACHE), the National Commission on Accrediting (NCA, for the pro-
fessional agencies), and the Accreditation and Institutional Eligibility
Unit of the Bureau of Higher Education of the United States Office of
Education. In 1975 the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation was

formed by a merger of FRACHE and NCA to provide an organization for the coordination and representation of accreditation at the national level.

Historically, changes in the accreditation process have followed major modifications in the nature and structure of postsecondary education. This passive role is appropriate for accreditation because it must be responsive to change as it occurs within the institutions. Rarely have the accrediting associations assumed an active or leadership role in initiating change, but they have generally encouraged and supported new developments in postsecondary education and have worked cooperatively with institutions in the implementation and assessment of educational innovations. ndards and procedures for evaluating institutional effectiveness in providing quality education normally evolve from current practices of accredited institutions. In other words ited institutions cooperate in the establishment of appropriate criteria for an accreditable institution and voluntarily agree to a periodical evaluation of themselves by their peers. Once the standards or criteria for evaluation have been set, the accrediting associations assume a more active role in postsecondary education through assessment and evaluation against the established standards or criteria for reaffirmation of or initial accreditation.

Accreditation and Nontraditional Education

As the nontraditional education movement began to unfold in the late sixties, the accrediting associations accommodated the early developments, which were few in number, through an "exception-to-the-rules" process. Goddard, Antioch, Oklahoma, Maryland, and South Florida

are colleges and universities exemplary of accreditation's early encounter
with the nontraditional movement. The rapid expansion of institutions
into new learning forms and structures for new student clientele, as well
as the creation of totally new institutions of a nontraditional nature,
presented the accrediting associations with a need to examine their pro-
cedures to see what changes might be needed in order to deal with the new
institutions and programs effectively.

In 1972 Norman Burns, executive director of the North Central
Association and chairman of FRACHE, appointed a committee representing
the six regional accrediting associations and nontraditional education,
"to identify and describe the various types of instructional and institu-
ional arrangements which depart from traditional patterns and recommend
meaus for evaluating such educational activities for accrediting pur-
poses."[12] Paul Dressel of Michigan State University, a principal re-
searcher for the COPA study, was appointed chairman of this Committee on
Nontraditional Study. After a year of research, the committee presented
its report to the Federation for its consideration and use. .From the
report was drawn the "Interim Statement of Accreditation and Nontradi-
tional Study," which was approved by tne Executive Council of FRACHE
on 14 March 1973 and was circulated to the various accrediting commissions
for use with accredited institutions developing nontraditional programs
and with newly created institutions of a nontraditional nature seeking
initial accreditation. In his letter of transmittal of the committee
report to FRACHE, Dressel states, "The Committee is in full accord that
these innovations have merit which should be considered for adaptation
in traditional programs."

The "Interim Statement" begins with an endorsement of the movement,
asserting that "accreditation procedures for nontraditional programs
should encourage innovation and imaginative approaches to providing
quality education whether in new institutions or in those already
accredited." While the FRACHE policy called for a move toward assess-
ment of educational results, it also included an important caveat that
accreditation has a major conc. -n for institutional improvement and
"that attention to outcomes only, without considering the relation of
these to the environments and educational processes, would be of little
assistance to either traditional or nontraditional programs in raising
questions and providing suggestions for improvement." The statement
concludes with a set of general policies and guidelines that were in-
tended to form a framework for use by accrediting organizations and
nontraditional institutions and programs for evaluation purposes. Prior
to the 1973 statement on nontraditional study, the regional accrediting
commissions had worked from a 1970 Federation policy statement on
innovation. The statement, which was brief and conceptual in nature,
noted that the Federation "welcomes perceptive and imaginative experi-
mentation which aims at intensifying the effectiveness of higher educa-
tion . . . [and] insists only that new departures or adaptations be
consistent with an institution's purposes and objectives as originally
established or as modified to accommodate new conditions."

Both FRACHE statements evince a reasonably quick and positive
reaction by the regional accrediting associations to the nontraditional
education movement. Individual accrediting commissions responded to

the FRACHE policies in a variety of ways to accommodate the nontraditional.
One example to the specific actions taken is the extensive research acti-
vity of the Southern Association of Co' ges and Schools (SACS) in up-
dating the Standards of the College Delegate Assembly. A 1969-70 survey
of all of the collegiate members of SACS concerning their public service
activities resulted in a revision in 1971 of Standard Nine, Special
Activities, to include specific information concerning nontraditional
study. This was the first standard of an accrediting association to
recognize nontraditional education explicitly. As a result of research
in nontraditional education by the Commission on Colleges of SACS, a
committee of the Commission was appointed to review the accreditation
procedures to determine if they were effective for nontraditional pro-
grams of member institutions and applicable to newly created nontradi-
tional institutions that might seek accreditation. The review did not
reveal a significant presumption of traditionality. However, some
special provisons and additions to the procedures and standards seemed
appropriate to encourage and accommodate nontraditional study in the
direct assessment of graduates for the purposes of accreditation. The
following statement was developed and approved by the Commission and
College Delegate Assembly of SACS in December 1975 as an addition to
the Standards:

> If a program of a member institution is at
> variance with the Standards, the institution is
> expected to submit the program for review by appro-
> priate committees of the Commission. Institutions
> applying for initial accreditation whose programs
> are at variance with the Standards must follow the
> same proceudre. In general, variances are allowed
> on the basis of credible evidence that one or more

specific elements of the Standards is educationally
dysfunctional with reference to the unconventional
characteristics of the institution or its programs,
and credible evidence, also, of evaluation proce-
dures which certify the effective learning outcomes
of students and so validate the unconventional
effort in terms of its acceptable educational pur-
pose. All member institutions are encouraged to
develop reliable instruments for the direct assess-
ment of graduates. If direct assessment is to be
employed as a route to special recognition sufficient
to warrant a variance from Standards, the institution
must establish that it has clear educational goals
and objectives which are sufficiently explicit to be
assessable and which presuppose in their realization
the learning necessary for successful performance in
the fields for which students are being educated;
maintains a system of educational delivery which
embraces and affords the necessary learning; applies
performance criteria which, if met, would reasonably
assure graduates of acceptance in fields for which
they are being prepared; and employs instruments for
the assessment of the attainments of students which
would be acceptable if independently examined by
experts in the field.

As a result of this change in the accreditation procedures, a joint

subcommittee of the standing committees on Admission to Membership and

Standards and Reports has been established to review nontraditional insti-

tutions and programs. A revision of Standard Nine was adopted in 1977

based on a follow-up to the 1969-70 study. In this revision, further

refinement was made to the sections dealing with nontraditional educa-

tion and off-campus activities, and new statements were added on experi-

ential learning and contractual relationships with other institutions,

agencies, and organizations. The adoption of this policy by the

Southern Association represented the first formal procedure by an

accrediting association emphasizing the assessment of student achieve-

ment as an element in the considerations for accreditation.

In the analysis in this project of all of the COPA-recognized accrediting association policies, procedures, and standards, few were found to have specific statements concerning nontraditional education except those of the regionals. All of the regionals have addressed nontraditional studies either by developing special procedures or adapting existing procedures to accommodate nontraditional study. The regional associations have also operated within the general framework of the FRACHE policies (which were subsequently recognized by COPA in 1975) for nontraditional study. These policies include "Substantive Change." "Accreditation of Operationally Separate Units," "Study Abroad Programs," "Innovation," Interim Statement on Accreditation and Non-traditional Study," "Interim Guidelines on Contractual Relationships with Non-Regionally Accredited Organizations," and "Postsecondary Education Porgrams Conducted by Accredited or Candidate Institutions on Military Bases." It is obvious from our review that the regional accrediting associations have worked diligently and rather effectively with the nontraditional institutions and programs as the movement has developed. The accreditation experience of the sixty-two institutions reviewed closely in this study and of the 244 external degree programs in the BSSR-ACE study provide sufficient and reliable evidence of this fact. A report for the COPA project on the analysis of the regional accrediting com-missions' policies, procedures, and standards and the FRACHE policies has been prepared by Kay Andersen and is included in volume 4 of the reports on the study.

Evaluation of Nontraditional Education

While the accreditation of nontraditional education appears to have been accomplished in relatively good order ' the regional associations, this does not mean that there have not been problems encountered. The current format for the evaluation of an institution, traditional or non-traditional, for accreditation purposes is essentially a process-oriented model (though not necessarily exclusively so). Variations exist within and among the regional commissions to recognize and accommodate the diversity of types of institutions with which they deal--e.g., public, private, proprietary, and special purpose--in accreditation activities. Variations may also occur within those components of the process model that deal with educational programs. This model is referred to as a "process model" because the primary emphasis in the various components is keyed to descriptive materials and the evaluation of the effectiveness of institutional processes--e.g., administration, organization, financial resources, educational program, student services, and physical resources--in achieving the institution's purpose and mission. Attention is also given to the environmental conditions conducive for positive educational achievements.

The process model generally operates with the following components: (1) Documentation--a set of documents prepared by the institution, including self-studies, new program prospecti, annual audits, and other relevant studies such as state agency and specialized accreditation studies; (2) On-site Review--an on-site evaluation report based on established standards or criteria prepared by a team of peers selected and trained by the accrediting commission; (3) Institutional Response--the institution's written

response to its self-study and the on-site report; (4) Commission

Review--review committee reports and recommendations; and (5) Commission

Action--commission action on candidate or accreditation status. Each

accrediting commission maintains a data base that includes the history

of the institution's accreditation experiences and basic institutional

descriptive information that is usually up-dated annually. This base of

information supports the on-going process of accreditation evaluations,

review, and decisions by the various commissions.

It is only in the first component of this model, documentation, that

some attention is usually given to the assessment of student performance.

In self-studies an institution may address outcomes, but rarely do insti-

tutional responses or commission reviews and commission actions address

or weigh evidence of educational outcomes in making decisions on accredi-

tation. A few notable exceptions do exist, such as the work of the Middle

States Association in the accreditation of the New York Regents External

Degree and the Southern Association's work with Nova University's External

Degree Programs. Both institutions rely heavily on the demonstration of

competencies and the examination of proficiencies for the awarding of

degrees, and in both cases the accrediting associations have taken the

results of student assessments into consideration in making decisions on

accreditation.

When problems do occur in the evaluation of nontraditional study

they appear to be in two basic areas: (1) the adaptation of the process-

oriented evaluation model of the accrediting body to an evaluation of

the nontraditional and (2) the inadequacy of the operational processes

and procedures of the nontraditional institution or program. Many times

there simply is not enough to look at to be comfortable with the decision

that must be made. Procedurally, the accrediting agencies have had little

difficulty in working with most of the nontraditional institutions and

programs. Variations on the process model, such as that developed by the

North Central Association and described in its Quarterly,

> . . . required more staff time and institutional
> resources in the development of an evaluation design
> that was sequential in nature. Typically, the evalu-
> ation design included such elements as the purpose of
> the evaluation; desired evaluator competencies; sup-
> porting material for the evaluation team; and accredit-
> ing options to be considered.[13]

The sequential evaluation used by several of the regionals in the evaluation

of an institution that operates in geographically disperse locations is

further explained:

> When a sequential evaluation included visits to a num-
> ber of sites, often instruments were developed to assure
> consistency in the evaluative criteria applied, as two-
> person sub-teams from the total team sites. Teams were
> more complex, in that evaluators from other regionals
> were required if the institutions to be visited had sites
> in another accrediting region; and evaluators chosen for
> the team were experienced evaluators of demonstrated
> competence who were willing to be open to the evaluation
> of a different form of learning.[14]

A final step in this variation of the process is to see that the decision-

making bodies of the accrediting commissions have been fully informed as

to the special nature of the evaluation and the institutions to be

considered. A full report on this model of evaluation has been prepared

by Patricia Thrash and is included in Appendix A of this report.

Two serious shortcomings have resulted from the zeal of some non-

traditionalists to focus on educational outcomes. First, they have often

neglected to identify, define, and de   p those elements necessary for

an adequate "process" to insure the integrity and quality of the learning
opportunities provided. Interestingly enough, we have also found that
very few of the nontraditional institutions and programs have developed
new and exceptionally good models for the assessment of educational out-
comes, and this is their second shortcoming. A notable exception is the
work of the New York Regents External Degree and the Council for the
Advancement of Experiential Learning, which is discussed later in this
section of the report. With the emphasis on educational outcomes, the
nontraditionalists have tended to focus on those things most easily measured
with instruments and methods already present. Research is needed to iden-
tify the areas of educational achievement that are difficult to evaluate and
to develop appropriate techniques for their assessment. What has developed
that seems to work reasonably well is a patchwork effort using many of the
existing procedures of the traditional institutions. These would include
such measures as examinations, performance where appropriate, competencies,
p .ects, and peer and/or professional reviews. The effectiveness of these
efforts is substantiated by the FRACHE/COPA study that was conducted by
Norman Burns.

The purpose of the Burns study was to experiment with institutional
assessment in terms of outcomes through the institutional self-study. A
guideline was developed that included a compendium of existing assessment
resources. Six institutions representing a variety of institutional and
educational characteristics joined with their respective regional accredit-
ing associations to experiment with the assessment of institutions in terms
of outcomes. While most proponents of outcome measurement call for a shift
from a subjective judgment model to the objective judgment model, the Burns

study points out that the development of such scientific techniques of analysis have not been perfected to the point where objective measures can be substituted for the subjective measures currently used. What the study did explore and find useful in institutional evaluation was a combination of the two processes. Such a combination will broaden the base for judgments and perceptions about an institution's effectiveness in the area of student learning through systematic and more comprehensive procedures. The study proposed "an approach to institutional evaluation which would (1) emphasize broader measurement of outcomes, and (2) establish a clearer relationship between institutional purposes and the resources and processes employed by an institution in attempting to accomplish its purpose."[15]

Accreditation Concerns about Nontraditional Education

In their research analysis for the project of the various levels of nontraditional education, Harris (certificate and undergraduate) and Dressel (graduate) have identified the major concerns and issues that are present in the current practice of accreditation of nontraditional education.

In the review of certificate and diploma programs, a variety of institutions was examined from among the technical institutes, community colleges, and vocational-technical schools participating in the study. Most of these programs can be characterized as occupational in nature, preparing individuals in a skill for employment or advancement in a particular vocation or career. Among some private trade and technical schools credits and credit accumulation are not emphasized; however,

their use is more prevalent among collegiate institutions. General
education is not always required, and the academic calendar is usually
open to a more frequent entry pattern. The most typical nontraditional
delivery system used is individualized, self-paced, competency-based
instruction. Concerns in the accreditation of such programs involved
the number of part-time faculty used, the use of conventional accredi-
tation standards, advertising practices, subletted or contracted edu-
cational programs, criteria for the awarding of credit, insufficient
support services, and inadequate outcome measures. A more complete
analysis of certificate programs is included in volume 2 of the reports
on the project.

John Harris, in his review of the accreditation of nontraditional
undergraduate education, made a thorough analysis of on-site reports and
other relevant materials about the sample institutions in the study.
His summary comments concerning his overall findings is rather enlighten-
ing:

> The most striking thing in reading these reports is
> how completely devoid they are of any apparent philo-
> sophical hesitancy about the varied manifestations of
> nontraditionality. In the minds of some, accreditation
> staffs and the administrators and faculty they call up-
> on to form site teams are assumed to be rigid tradition-
> alists reacting in "knee-jerk" against any deviation
> from the status quo. In fact, I believe any reader of
> these reports will conclude teams and staffs are generally
> enthusiastic about change and innovation. The only
> scolding that comes through in the site reports is where
> programs of institutions have not lived up to their stated
> nontraditional or innovative aims. In some cases, the
> evaluators also suggest that aims outdistance resources,
> but in these cases they do not indicate any basic disagree-
> ment with the aspirations themselves.

What then are the most critical concerns of accrediting agencies about nontraditional undergraduate education? Most of the issues are about general processes rather than the nontraditional aspects. These issues are concerned with:

1. Institutional and program organization, including governance and faculty;

2. Internal systems of control for a valid assurance of quality within programs and of the meaning of the degree awarded;

3. Non-campus-based forms of study, including external degrees, and off-campus operations, including military base instruction;

4. Contractual relationships with other institutions, agencies, or organizations for the delivery of education;

5. The accumulation of academic credits through nontraditional means such as the assessment of prior learning experience and experiential education; and

6. Adequate means for the assessment of student outcomes.

Though some problems may exist in these areas within nontraditional institutions and programs, on the whole the accrediting associations have been successful in applying the process model to the evaluation of nontraditional education for purposes of accreditation. John Harris has observed

> Another perspective is staffs and visiting teams did not indicate any difficulty in applying current or "traditional" accreditation policies, standards, or procedures to the wide spectrum of institutions and programs represented in this study. There were very few cases where either a visiting team or staff representative found a fundamental inconsistency between any given standard and an institutional practice.[16]

Interestingly enough, little that is conceptually new has been discovered in our review of the nontraditional educational institutions and programs in this study. As has been noted earlier in this report, most of what is considered nontraditional in the current movement is basically an innovation based on a former or current practice in American postsecondary education. Harris has noted this in his research report by the following observation:

> It is not a recent phenomenon that institutions have been seeking ways to credential students in the most direct ways possible. Urban universities with large evening programs for employed students and commuter community colleges in effect say that the benefits of collegiate education are possible without full-time study and residence on a campus. Correspondence courses suggest that with added diligence one can learn at home as well as in the classroom. Established, traditional universities have for years made considerable use of adjunct, part-time faculty. Study off-campus has not only been tolerated but encouraged. The value of intermingling work with study has been encouraged through cooperative education. Direct credentialling of competence is theoretically approved whenever a college allows students to receive credit for performance on examinations without attending class.[17]

The question may very well be asked, what then is nontraditional education? Harris's own answer to this question, based on his research in the project and his general knowledge of American postsecondary education may be correct, "It may be no more or less than a valence shift. That is, the nontraditional ventures of traditional institutions are minor variations on a major theme. It's when the minor variation becomes the dominant theme that the institution becomes nontraditional."[18]

A full report on the review of the accreditation of undergraduate nontraditional education is included in volume 2 of the reports on the project.

Paul Dressel conducted the research on the accreditation of nontraditional graduate education for the COPA project. His research activities include a thorough analysis of the institutions in the project that offer graduate-level programs, a review of the current literature on graduate education, and a survey of a sample of graduates from the various programs. Some assistance in this review was given by Sterling M. McMurrin, Lewis B. Mayhew, Wimberly C. Royster, Rudolph W. Schulze and Herbert Weisinger. Dressel's personal philosophy concerning a nontraditional graduate degree is stated in the preface to his research report where he asserts

> For at least thirty years I have felt that there
> should be a route to a graduate degree apart from
> the credit accumulation and time serving now tradi-
> tional on most university campuses....From long
> involvement with such rigidities, I have become a
> proponent for programs that offer degrees in non-
> traditional ways. I insist only that the degree be
> well defined, that standards are clear and enforced,
> and that nontraditional degrees avoid such traditional
> designations as the Ph.D. unless they can be fully
> justified as equivalents.[19]

Unlike what we have found in our research and review of certificate and undergraduate education, where major problems and concerns are few, nontraditional graduate education seems to be plagued with a number of serious and significant issues and problems. Early in the work of the project, the staff became aware of a more widespread national concern over graduate education, both traditional and nontraditional. Graphically, the concern over the different levels of education in the United States can be illustrated by two pyramids sitting side by side, one resting on its base and the other balancing on its point. If horizonally

divided into three parts, the pyramid sitting on its base represents the volume of institutions, programs, and students in postsecondary education; the other represents the intensity of concern about post-secondary education. (See Figure 4.) The area of postsecondary edu-cation with the largest volume of students and programs seems to have caused the least concern, while the area with the smallest number of students and programs (graduate) seems to have caused the greatest concern.

Figure 4

Proportion of and Concern about
Levels of Postsecondary Education in the U.S.
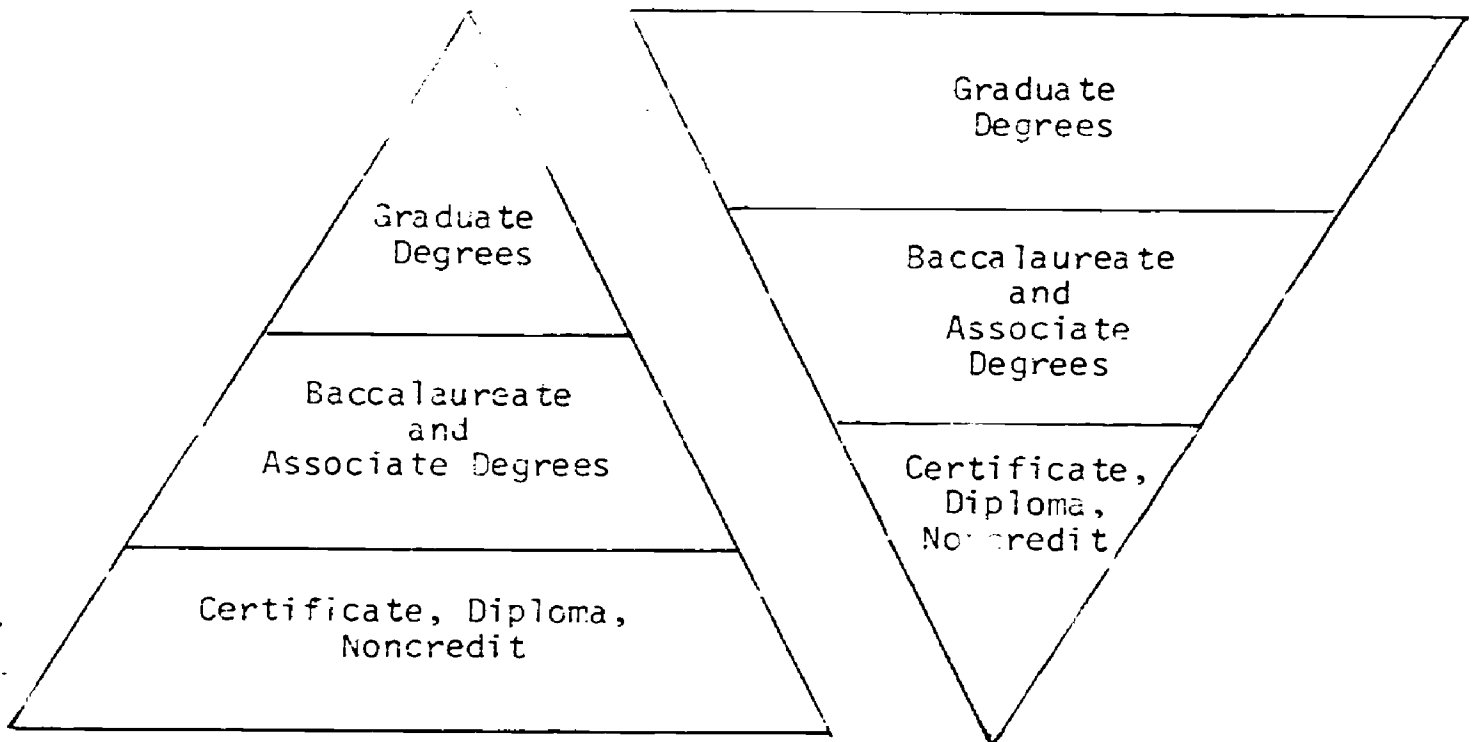
LEFT: Volume of U.S. postsecondary education insti-
tutions, programs, and students. RIGHT: Intensity
of concern about postsecondary education.

For the purpose of the COPA project, Dressel has defined non-traditional graduate education as institutions or programs that are not dependent upon:

- traditional credit and class hour specifications,
- campus residency requirements,
- existence of a full-time faculty,
- ready availability of a library, counseling, or other learning resources
- rigidly defined requirements.

They are more likely to be characterized by:

- flexibility and individualization in programs,
- convenience to students in location and scheduling of courses,
- use of adjunct, temporary faculty members,
- special attention and relevance to mature individuals, particularly full-time employed adults.

In reviewing the various forms for the delivery of nontraditional graduate education, Dressel has identified four basic patterns:

1. Institutions offeri· at various off-campus sites degrees essentially identical to those offered on campus.

2. Institutions offering at various off-campus sites degree programs especially developed for an off-campus, employed clientele.

3. Business, industrial, or research enterprises offering a degree program (through an in-house ·n.:·tute, center, or other unit) primarily for persons er·· ‚ed by the enter-prise.

4. Free-standing institutes, colleges, or universities lacking campuses, full-time faculties (at least in traditional terms), and other traditional university attributes.

In developing this classification system and the various patterns of nontraditional graduate study, Dressel has identified the problems and concerns unique to each:

> These four patterns pose somewhat different prob-lems for study. The first type, being a traditional institution, offers an on-campus traditional program

at a distance (perhaps in a slightly modified form),
but controls the character and quality of the program
by developing curricula and evaluation materials, by
selecting teachers, and by monitoring the selection and
performance of both teachers and students.
  The second pattern poses more difficult problems,
especially when the extended program becomes very large
relative to the home campus or involves programs in which
the home faculty lacks either extensive experience or
excellence. In this circumstance, tne materials and
policies cannot be effectively monitored by the campus
faculty. Program quality and character depend heavily
on administrators and a few associates and on the
selection and coordination of adjunct faculty. The
latter task is never ending and time consuming. It is
also expensive if done well.
  The third pattern can involve the disadvantages or
advantages of any of the others, but introduces an
additional element--the extent to which the program may
be so dominated by corporation interests that academic
freedom is destroyed, faculty role in formulation and
enforcing policy may be abridged, and program continuance
and quality may depend more on corporation needs than on
sound educational principles.
  Finally, the fourth pattern presents the most diffi-
cult problem to evaluate because there is really nothing
much to observe except as some degree candidates meet as
a group for brief periods. There are no resources, no
processes, and no permanent faculty to be seen or heard.[20]

The major concern over nontraditional graduate education in the

United States seems to stem primarily from the issue of maintenance

and improvement of quality in the programs offered. We are well aware

of the complex issues surrounding the operational aspects of off-campus

and sa llite centers for the delivery of graduate programs; however,

we must reassert that the major issue for accreditation is and should

be over the qualitative factors concerning the nature, structure; con-

tent, and outcomes of graduate education regardless of the method and

characteristics of the delivery system, traditional r nontraditional.

This position by the accrediting agencies is in keeping with the Council

of Graduate Schoo   joint statement issued in May 1978 about the
purposes and func.   graduate education. The purposes and functions
specified in the statement are:

1. The advanced education and intellectual development of able
    and motivated individuais in a variety of forms and disciplines
    essential to the pursuit of specific careers.

2. The production of new knowledge through research and intel-
    lectual inquiry and/or the application of knowledge toward
    the sclution of technological, social, economic, and political
    problems and issues.

3. The presentation and transmission of knowledge and the extension
    of our cultural heritage to successive generations.

In the evaluation of nontraditional graduate education for accredi-
tation purposes, Dressel has identified a number of major concerns.
Briefly summarized, these are:

1. Graduate programs that degenerate into mere accumulation
    of credits, which result in a degree lacking in cumulative
    impact and rigor.

2. An accredited college or university with limited or .o
    experience in on-campus graduate education that begins to
    offer it at a distance.

3. The offering of graduate degrees by a large organization
    or research enterprise, independent of a university, that
    may be narrow in scope and lack permanence. Even though
    the program may be excellent because of the quality of the
    available resources, such operations pose uniquc problems

for accrediting associations in areas such as administration, faculty participation in governance, academic freedom, and institutional autonomy.

4. Nontraditional degree programs that have developed around a cultish or deviant faction of an established discipline or a totally new, socially oriented segment of a society that does not place a significant emphasis on the basic tenets of graduate education.

5. Free-standing nontraditional graduate institutions that award degrees based almost entirely on the submission of an individual's outcomes (project, dissertation, or performance). These programs are the most difficult to evaluate for purposes of accreditation.

These concerns are more fully stated and discussed by Dressel in his research report on nontraditional graduate education contained in volume 2 of the reports of the COPA project.

Dressel has come to the conclusion--which is a major fi...ing of this project--that it would be far more ethical and responsible on the part of educational institutions of all types and at all levels to define their pr grams in terms of a set of competencies and insist that students demonstrate the attainment of these competencies in order to acquire what?ver credentia, the program offers. "Ultimately, the attainment of a number of competencies at specified levels might result in a degree or other designation," says Dressel. Dressel further notes:

> Neither the character nor quality of the final product
> for any of the doctorates has been authoritatively pre-
> scribed and enforced. Thus, evaluation of a program

> or degree quality by appraisal of the quality of the
> culminating task is difficult. Nevertheless, the
> appraisal of outcome quality is a more promising and
> more appropriate procedure for nontraditional programs
> than a focus on program requirements and processes.
> An application of the same emphasis to traditional pro-
> grams is then necessary and highly desirable.[21]

Also as a part of his work for the COPA project, Paul Dressel has

prepared a report on "Problems and Principles in the Recognition and

Accreditation of Graduate Education." In this report, Dressel proposes

guidelines for the development and review of all graduate education,

traditional and nontraditional, guidelines that identify essential

characteristics and components for graduate degrees, and principles

and criteria for their evaluation for accreditation purposes. The full

report is included in the reports of the project as volume 3.

It is important to note that the basic findings of both Harris and

Dressel are consistent, though their research was carried out independently

and in different areas. Their findings show that there is considerably

more concern within the postsecondary education community and the public

about nontraditional graduate education than about undergraduate or

certificate and diploma education. Where there are concerns, these relate

primarily to quality assurance and ethical practice issues in such areas

as individualized degree programs, free-standing institutions, corporate-

and/or business-based degrees, cultish and/or socially defined study areas

unaccepted by established disciplines, acceptable institutional and/or

interinstitutional relationships and practices, use of part-time faculty,

and inadequately developed systems for the assessment of educational out-

comes. These findings are more fully discussed in the research papers

themselves. Also, they are verified by the results of the national survey.

In the survey for the project we found several interesting and divergent opinions concerning perceptions of the accreditation of nontraditional education. Eighty percent of the respondents thought that nontraditional education has been treated fairly by the accrediting associations; however, 86 percent thought that nontraditional education presents a basic problem to the accrediting community. Further, when asked if a new national accrediting agency should be created to deal specifically with nontraditional institutions, only 13 percent agreed that this should be done. While the data cited provides a general base of support for the accrediting associations in the evaluation and accreditation of nontraditional education, it also reflects a pervasive uneasiness among the 1,500 educators who participated in the survey concerning the accreditation of nontraditional education.

Specific information was presented in the survey on the work of the visiting committees from accrediting associations in the evaluation of nontraditional education. Allowing for the difficulty respondents may have had in generalizing a variety of experiences in response to a set of specific questions, the volume of the data is still sufficient to have some validity in the insights it reflects. Eighty-nine percent of the respondents thought the purpose of the visit was clear to the visiting team and to the institution. The accrediting commission staffs provided appropriate assistance to the institution, according to 85 percent. Eighty-one percent felt that the written reports and documents prepared by the institution were adequate. Responses indicated that major problems exist about the criteria to be used for the evaluation and about the proper orientation of the visiting team to the nontraditional

nature of the institution or program before the on-site visit. Thirty-eight percent felt that the criteria for the evaluation of the nontra-ditional institution or program were unclear to both the institution and the visiting team, and 36 percent felt that the team was not adequately oriented.

It was the opinion of the respondents that the on-site visitors to nontraditional educational ventures were most concerned (as ranked below) about the following areas:

1. Institutional processes

    1st--Purpose and goals
    2nd--Degree requirements
    3rd--Faculty and teaching
    4th--Institutional resources
    5th--Finance

2. Quality Assurance

    1st--Comparability of degree expectations
    2nd--Comparability of student achievements
    3rd--Consistency of procedures used to evaluate
            student achievement against purpose and goal
    4th--General intellectual ability and interest of
            students
    5th--Provision of instruction, courses, or degrees
            through a contractual relationship with another
            institution or unaccredited agency

3. Faculty Matters

    1st--Educational attainment
    2nd--Use of adjunct, part-time faculty
    3rd--Relevant experience of faculty
    4th--Independence of faculty judgments on educational
            attainments of students from managerial concerns
    5th--Academic leadership

When asked to select and rank from a preset list of a variety of nontraditional educational modes those that were perceived as most

threatening to quality education, the following were selected:

1st--An institution or agency created by the federal govern-
ment to award credit or. to instruct.
2nd--A private, free-standing institution founded for the
sole purpose of offering unconventional degree pro-
grams.
3rd--An institution or agency created by a private corporate
body to award credit or instruct.
4th--Special institutions created by a state system of higher
education to offer external degrees.
5th--Courses and/or degrees offered by an accredited insti-
tution through a contractual relationship with another
institution or an unaccredited agency.

The following options were selected and ranked as those that hold

the most promise for improving access to groups perceived not to have

had adequate access to American higher education.

1st--External degree programs offering off-campus, independent
study through instructional systems, programs, and
materials designed for home study.
2nd--External degrees granted on the basis of examined achieve-
ment without regard to required periods of study or
residency.
3rd--Off-campus, conventional institutions.
4th--Educational brokering efforts that offer no instruction
or credit but which link learners' interests and needs
to educational resources such as instruction, assess-
ment of prior learning, and counseling.
5th--Competency-based curricula within conventional institutions.

Finally, the participants in the survey were asked, based on their

exper ence or observations of accrediting association actions on non-

traditional education (institutions and programs), to indicate whether

they thought the decisions made were fair, questionable, or unfair.

Eighty-three percent thought they were fair, 16 percent thought they

were questionable, and only 1 percent thought that the decisions were

unfair.

We are sure that all who read this report will not agree fully

with these observations concerning the status of accreditation of

nontraditional education. However, when the evolutionary state of the nontraditional education movement is taken into consideration, the propensity of accreditation appears to have been toward the nontraditionalist. And all things considered, the propensity of American postsecondary education, including its system of accreditation, is toward the expansion of access to postsecondary education of quality through viable unconventional and alternative means, with a valence shift from process concerns to appropriately defined, assessable, educational outcomes.

Comments and Observations on Related Matters

Other factors in the nontraditional education movement have created concerns that should be addressed in more detail in this report. Some are not exclusively under the purview of accreditation. These are credit for experiential and prior learning, off-campus educational operations, contractual relationships, continuing education and lifelong learning, the meaning of degrees and other educational credentials, relationships to state and federal agencies, and financial responsibilities and costs for accreditation. While most of these matters have existed in some form for some time, the practical and emotional issues surrounding them have been greatly intensified within the postsecondary education community and other segments of American society in recent years by the nontraditional education movement. Each of these factors has been addressed to some extent in the COPA project.

Awarding college credit for experiential and prior learning is a practice in postsecondary education that is both praised and criticized, but is nonetheless accepted by most as a significant element in the current

nontraditional education movement. While much work has been done in
this area by the New York Regents, the Council for the Advancement of
Experiential Learning (CAEL) is currently the major protagonist for the
awarding of credit based on the assessment of experiential learning and
has done the most important work in developing reliable procedures for
validating the quality of such learning. As defined by CAEL, "Experi-
ential learning is the knowledge, understanding, appreciation, and skills
one acquires in a given experience, a cluster of related experiences, or
in the totality of one's experience."[22] In the CAEL Principles of Good
Practice in Assessing Experiential Learning, Warren M. Willingham notes:

> CAEL has devoted rigorous attention to the assessment
> of two large classes of learning: that which is sponsored
> by the institution and typically off-campus, and that
> which is not sponsored by the institution and typically
> occurs prior to enrollment. There are numerous varieties
> of sponsored learning including internships, cooperative
> work study, field experience, study abroad, community
> service, and so on. The variety of prior learning is even
> more diverse and may include virtually any type of college-
> level learning that is relevant to the degree objective of
> the student and the mission of the institution.[23]

CAEL identifies three functions basic to the assessment of experi-
ential learning: the certifying function, the educative function, and
the evaluative function. In addressing its work, CAEL has asserted
that there are also three essential obligations for institutions in
assessing and crediting experiential learning:

1. To develop a sensible rationale for the experiential
   learning that is consistent with the institution's
   mission, reasonable in relation to its resources, and
   useful to its intended clientele;

2. To translate that rationale into workable policies, guide-
   lines, and operating procedures that are made clearly
   known to all students and interested parties; and

3. To insure that those policies, guidelines, and procedures are followed with reasonable fairness and consistency and useful outcomes.[24]

It is important for educators who may question the validity of credit for experiential learning to know that the principles and practices proposed by CAEL are not very different from those already existing in educational literature and theory concerning good practice in classroom teaching, testing, grading, and educational measurement. Actually, what CAEL proposes is an adaptation and application of existing assessment practices to the unique circumstances and problems posed by experiential learning in post-secondary education. CAEL has recently set up a Commission on Accreditation to work cooperatively with accrediting associations in their evaluation of experiential education. This joint venture should be useful to institutions and accrediting teams in reviewing such programs effectively when an institution is undergoing evaluation for accreditation purposes.

The credit-by-examination program developed by the New York Regents in 1960 provided the base for the first "examining university" in the United States, the New York Regents External Degree. This program includes approximately sixty examination programs in the arts and sciences, education, business, criminal justice, and nursing and also includes a "special assessment" component for the evaluation of students who may have acquired knowledge in subjects for which there are no appropriate standardized examinations.

The rationale for the inclusion of this information in this section of the report is because of the basic philosophical-theoretical aspects concerning the validity of such a practice. The rightness or wrongness

of the practice is a matter for the educators themselves--administrator,
and faculty--to decide. Once the practice is determined to be acceptable,
then the role of accreditation is to see that the standards for good
practice are established and met by the accredited institutions involved.

Based on the research and review of the COPA project, it is our
opinion that the concept of crediting experiential learning in post-
secondary education is sound. Furthermore, we think the principles and
guidelines developed by CAEL, if properly implemented by institutions,
provide the bases for quality assurance in the awarding of credit for
experiential learning. Where abuses are found, it is because good
practices have not been applied and standards have not been set or fol-
lowed by the institutions concerned. The potential damage to the indivi-
dual student who may receive an inappropriate or inaccurate evaluation
of prior learning should be the greatest cause for concern. The COPA
study has not found any major resistence to the <u>concept</u> of experiential
education even through the respondents to the national survey did rank
experiential learning (credit for on-the-job or life experience) first
as the cause for greatest concern with regard to the awarding of credit
for prior learning. The survey rankings of the four options given of
causes for concern were as follows:

    1st--Credit for on-the-job or life experience.
    2nd--Credit for military courses
    3rd--Credit for performances on examinations developed by
            the institution.
    4th--Credit for performance on CLEP or other standardized
            achievement tests.

One of the more emotional issues to surface in the nontraditional
movement concerns off-campus degrees and programs. Unrest over off-campus

activities came to a head in October 1976 when the Council on Post-
secondary Accreditation, responding to pressures from a number of
institutional organizations and government agencies, issued a policy
statement on the issue. The statement acknowledged the legitimacy
of such learning opportunities, noting that "In recent years, however,
the number, size, and variety of such educational activities have
grown rapidly" based on encouragement by state and federal funding
programs and the nontraditional movement to reach out and serve new
student clienteles. Concern was not for the fact that such was
happening, but rather for a perceived lack of quality in some of the
off-campus programs. Among the problems identified by COPA were the
following:

- Institutions with little or no experience in running
  off-campus degree programs have plunged into such
  operations.

- In response to demands, institutions have sponsored
  programs off campus for which they have no counter-
  parts on campus.

- Institutions in some instances have formalized a
  differential standard of quality by labeling credits
  earned off-campus as being not acceptable on campus.

- Institutions have offered off-campus programs that
  require little or no involvement or oversight by on-
  campus faculty. In some instances, responsibility
  for the operationally separate units have been contracted
  out.

- Institutions have established satellite operations far
  removed from the parent campus, often crossing state
  and even regional boundaries.

- Off-campus offerings have ranged from large, relatively
  permanent educational units to short-term ventures
  consisting of one course, one faculty member hired
  locally, and a handful of students. [25]

The COPA statement concluded with a request to the accrediting bodies to
deal quickly and effectively with the off-campus issues by applying
existing procedures to all educational programs of an accredited institu-
tion regardless of location, to develop new procedures if necessary, and
to develop appropriate procedures for dealing with institutions operating
interregionally.

The various regional accrediting commissions for postsecondary educa-
tion responded to the COPA statement quickly by reviewing their policies
and procedures to see if they were adequate and if they were being applied
uniformly. At the time of this report all commissions have responded in
some form giving adequate assurance that off-campus operations of accredited
institutions are being evaluated. This review and subsequent action as
appropriate by the various regional associations evolved from a "Memorandum
of Agreement" reached by the executive staff of the commissions, which
included the following statement of principle:

> The nature and scope of an educational institution
> are defined in its legal charter and informal statements
> of purpose and mission prepared by the institution.
> The accreditation of an institution is in part an
> affirmation that the institution has established condi-
> tions and procedures under which its purposes can be
> realized and appears in fact to be accomplishing those
> purposes.
> Off-campus educational activities initiated subse-
> quent to the most recent evaluation are not automatically
> included in the institution's accreditation. Offering
> educational programs at new locations often in fact
> alters the purposes and procedures of institutions and
> the nature of the constituencies it seeks to serve.
> Change in institutional purposes, in the nature of the
> potential student body to be served, and/or in the acti-
> vities undertaken to accomplish these purposes affect
> the validity of an institution's accreditation and thus
> may necessitate its review.

For institutions operating off-campus programs outside the geographical

region in which they are accredited, the regional commissions have developed cooperative, sequential evaluations such as that of the North Central Association cited earlier in this report and described in detail in Appendix A. The cooperative and/or sequential evaluation model appears to be an effective process for the evaluation of interregional as well as intraregional operations of accredited postsecondary educational institutions.

One aspect of the off-campus issue that has generated unusual concern is the jurisdictional-territorial problem. As has been mentioned earlier in this report, there are those who wish to assign to accreditation the responsibility of boundary maintenance for institutions against intruders with off-campus programs. This is not, however, an issue rightly or appropriately within the jurisdiction of regional accreditation. It is a matter of concern to all, but jurisdictionally it is the prerogative of the individual institution and its governing body to determine the geographical scope of an institution, working within the framework of state approval and licensing authorities. Accreditation decisions concerning institutional operations regardless of geographical location, can only rightfully be made in terms of the quality factors of the programs offered. It is the responsibility of the accrediting commissions to see that accredited institutions with off-campus operations have developed, implemented, and maintain an adequate system of quality assurance for all such programs.

Another type of off-campus operation that has generated a great deal of concern is postsecondary education offered by accredited institutions on military installations. Because of the scope of these operations and the complex nature of the situation, a separate study

of postsecondary education on military bases has developed out of the
COPA project for implementation in late 1978. This study will involve
a case-study approach for the evaluation of all postsecondary educa-
tional programs offered on ten military installations selected from
across the United States and overseas. Supported by a $60,000 grant
from the U.S. Department of Defense, the study will be conducted by
COPA and the six regional accrediting associations with results to be
released in 1979.

In their move to develop new educational programs for new student
markets quickly, many institutions have sought assistance from outside
sources for a variety of services. The establishment of contractual
relationships with other institutions and nonaccredited organizations
or agencies in the implementation of nontraditional degree programs and
courses has given rise to one of the more controversial issues of the
movement. In 1973 FRACHE developed and issued a policy statement with
interim guidelines for contractual relationships aimed at curbing the
improper use of an institution's accredited status in such arrangements.
This policy required that the primary purpose of the courses or programs
involved must be educational and must be consistent with the purpose
and objectives of the accredited institution. In addition, all courses
to be offered and credits to be earned must be subject to the academic
purposes of an remain under the sole and direct control of the accredited
institution.

The most problems seem to emanate from the contracting organization
or agency which offers a variety of configurations of services ranging
from total prepackaged programs (i.e., market research, curriculum,

course materials, faculty, evaluation, and recruitment) to procurement of a single service, or any combination of functions associated with the development of nontraditional education not fully controlled by the sponsoring institution. The least concern seems to be with the educational brokering organization that embodies a number of activities designed primarily to bring together nontraditional students and institutions (i.e., an organization that has no courses or programs or faculty and offers no degrees).

It is recognized that an institution may have a real need to acquire experienced assistance in developing and implementing new programs of an unconventional nature. However, there is a basic question of propriety when an accredited institution contracts for the delivery and award of its degrees through an outside agency or organization. There is much support from a variety of sources for the "imprinting" function of postsecondary educational institutions on their students that goes well beyond the acquiring of skills, the accumulation of credits, and the awarding of degrees. Such a function is directly related to an institution's commitment to its students in the achievement of its purpose and educational objectives. The question of propriety is compounded if the contractor is an entrepreneur seeking legitimization through an indirect use of an institution's name, degrees, and accreditation. The institution has a basic responsibility to its constituents to insure that the programs and degrees it offers are academically sound and appropriately identified and, when completed, are representative of the institution's purpose and philosophy of education. The

accrediting association has the responsibility to its members and the public to insure that the authority of its accreditation is not misused to authenticate courses, programs, or degrees offered under contract with crganizations or agencies not so accredited.

The nontraditional movement at the postsecondary education level has had a serendipitous effect in at least two areas--a renewed emphasis on continuing education and a formalization of the concept of lifelong learning. The two are not unrelated, and both are interrelated with nontraditional education in many respects.

Continuing education is generally reco.   ed as learning activities that individuals engage in after their forma.   ucation is over, for personal enrichment, professional improvement, or both. For years a large number of postsecondary educational institutions have enrolled millions of individuals in evening classes, short courses, workshops, seminars, conferences, institutes, and other forms of continuing educa- tion, either for credit or noncredit. Today many of the nontraditional programs are managed and delivered through the continuing education divisions of institutions.

The prevalent concept of lifelong learning is the process by which individuals continue to develop their knowledge, skills, and attitudes over their lifetime.[26] The interpretation of lifelong learning is rather broad in nature and includes continuing education as one of several activities or programs through which learning opportunities occur.

In the COPA project, we have researched the various standards, policies, and procedures of all of the COPA-recognized accrediting

associations to see what provisions have been made for quality assurance
in areas of continuing education and lifelong learning. ⁻ research
revealed that most of the associations have acknowledged or recognized
these functions as a legitimate activity of the institutions, but few
have developed specific standards or policies to incorporate contin⸱⸳ ⸳
education and lifelong learning activities into the evaluation proce⸱
for purposes of accreditation. Notable exceptions are the Southern,
Western, and Northwest regional associations, which have specific
standards and/or policies for continuing education. Each of these also
recognizes the Continuing Education Unit (CEU) as a means for formally
acknowledging the noncredit educational accomplishments of individuals.

Accurate use of the CEU can also have a qualitative effect on the
program development of noncredit continuing education in the lifelong
learning process. Many postsecondary educational institutions, though
active for years in extension and continuing education programs, have
not rushed to develop and implement lifelong learning programs per se.
With the passage of the Lifelong Learning Act in October 1976 and as
federal funds become available for such activities, the goals and
objectives of the lifelong learning movement and the role for post-
secondary educational institutions will become clear. As this area of
postsecondary education is more sharply focused, the accrediting
agencies will need to be sure that their evaluation procedures include
this function in the process of institutional and program accreditation.
As a forecast of the future, participants in the national survey
selected noncredit continuing education as the second most viable

program expansion option for traditional institutions in the 1980s.

Throughout the work of the COPA project, concern has been expressed about the "meaning" of degrees. In attempting to identify problems in meaning, it became apparent that there are two basic situations that cause concern. One situation is the nontraditional institution or program that is unconventional in every respect (objectives, structure, curriculum, delivery system, faculty, credit accumulations, and educational outcomes), but awards a traditional degree, which by nature and historical precedent conveys certain meanings not present in the usage in question. The other problem occurs when there is an absence of those elements normally expected in the content and structure of degree programs. John Harris and Paul Dressel discuss both of these problems in more detail in their respective research reports for the project (see volumes 2 and 3).

These problems are not exclusively those of the nontraditionalist; they are present throughout all of American postsecondary education. They were thoroughly addressed by Stephen H. Spurr in his report on Academic Degree Structures for the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education and by Paul Dressel in College and University Curriculum. Spurr said:

> Academic degrees are not important in themselves, but they do serve to characterize simply and directly an academic program in terms of generally accepted admission standards, curriculum, duration of efforts, and level of accomplishment....The name of the degree is relatively unimportant as long as it has an accepted interpretation.[27]

If a degree is to mean more than the fulfillment of course requirements and credit accumulation, then as Dressel noted, the total curriculum

should be designed to provide for continuity, sequence, and integration in the educational experience with a breadth and depth appropriate for the level and type of credential to be earned.

The latest and most comprehensive review of educational credentials and degrees is the work of the Task Force on Educational Credit and Credentials of the American Council on Education cited in the Introduction of this report. Directly addressing the growing concern about the meaning and value of degrees, their report states:

> A credential designated as a "degree" has been the primary device used by colleges and universities to recognize learning of the depth, breadth, and rigor associated with college study. The meaning of the undergraduate degree should be protected to preserve its legitimacy as an accolade for educational accomplishment at higher and broader levels of learning.[28]

It then includes this recommendation:

> Each credential-granting institution should clearly define, to the extent possible, the meaning of the certificates and degrees it awards.[29]

The task force report also cautions against improper use of the terms "arts" and "science" resulting in a loss of clarity in the generally accepted meanings for these terms in connection with degrees.

The consistency with which the problem of meaning has surfaced in this study and those by Spurr, Dressel, and the American Council on Education points to a call for action by American postsecondary education institutions to bring clarity and consistency to the use and meaning of educational degrees and credentials. The role for accreditation was clearly indicated in the national survey for the project when respondents selected and ranked second as a function for accreditation assurance that "respective degrees represent certain minimal

attainments as a critical function for voluntary accreditation."

The proliferation of new degrees is also a concern that has been stimulated by the nontraditional education movement. The sentiment discovered in the research of the project seems to indicate a discouragement for the creation of additional degree nomenclatures and an encouragement for structuring degree programs within the framework of established credentials and degrees.

The various state and federal government agencies have significant roles to play in postsecondary education. In addition to funding considerations at both levels, the individual states have the unique function of legally authorizing (chartering, licensing, registering) an institution to operate within a state. Both state and federal authorities have the responsibility to assure the proper use of public funds in the educational endeavor. While the consumer protection responsibility of the states includes the educational enterprise, there are additional, more complex issues involved, such as exempting certain institutions from certain procedures, setting minimum criteria or standards, evaluation procedures, off-campus activities of in-state as well as out-of-state institutions, and state funding for private nonprofit and proprietary institutions. A significant issue has developed between the states and the nongovernmental accrediting community over the boundary maintenance problem created by the nontraditional movement, which has been discussed earlier in this report. The jurisdictional issue is an important matter; however, it is not an issue for the accrediting associations except where matters of

institutional quality are of concern. There is also an important issue

between the states and accrediting associations about unnecessary

duplication of effort. In some states the recognition process has

taken on the accoutements of accreditation. A few states defend their

actions by charging that accreditation standards are at such a minimal

level they do not satisfy the requirements of the state. While there

may be an occasional situation involving an individual institution that

can be used to illustrate this charge, there is substantial evidence

that the reverse is true. For example, a significant number of insti-

tutions recognized or licensed to operate by states have consistently

over time been unable to meet standards of accreditation. A double

system of accreditation is an unwarranted expense to the taxpayer and

an unfair, unnecessary duplication of effort for the institutions

concerned. The states and the nongovernmental accrediting community

need to seek ways to coordinate their efforts to fulfill their respec-

tive roles in a complementary way which will best serve the American

postsecondary educational institution.

Most federal agency concerns over the legitimacy and quality of

postsecondary education could probably be satisfied through a joint

effort on the part of the states and voluntary accreditation.

In his 1975 study for COPA of the "Respective Roles of Federal

Government, State Governments, and Private Accrediting Agencies in

the Governance of Post: ry Education," William A. Kaplin concluded

that each member of the   will continue to be significantly

involved in governance of postsecondary education for the foreseeable

future and that the immediate goals should be: "increased understanding

of each element's capabilities; sharper emphasis on each element's strong points; clearer definition of each element's functions; and better division, coordination, and interrelationship of functions."[30]

Those involved in the development of nontraditional educational programs and institutions need to be realistic about the costs involved of evaluations for accreditation purposes. While some educators have expressed concern about these costs, we have not found evidence in the course of the project of unreasonable or unnecessary costs associated with the evaluation process for nontraditional education. Actually, the indirect costs to accrediting agencies in working with nontraditional institutions and programs have usually far exceeded the reimbursements received. The accrediting associations, of course, have the responsibility to assure that their costs are fair and reasonable. The institutions must also include in their research and development budgets for new programs the necessary costs related to the review and evaluation of their institution or programs for purposes of accreditation. Recognizing the importance and value of quality control to their operational effectiveness, business and industry routinely allocate resources for that purpose. The adequacy of institutional resources to begin a new nontraditional endeavor must be questioned if there is concern about evaluation costs.

CHAPTER 3

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Nontraditional education is a constructive, needed reform
in American postsecondary education. Difficulties arising
from nontraditional education result not from the basic con-
cept of alternative approaches to education but the manner
in which the innovations are implemented. Many conventional
institutions are developing "innovative or nontraditional"
programs for adults to compensate for the decline in the 18-21
year old student enrollments--without proper institutional or
faculty commitment to alternative approaches to education and
without adequate instructional resources and support services.

Innovative programs raise basic academic questions con-
cerning the purposes of higher education, expected outcomes
for degree programs, the meaning of quality in postsecondary
education, and the adequacy of current approaches to accredi-
tation. These questions apply to conventional programs as
well as the nontraditional ones.

There should not be two sets of accreditation standards--
one based on input measures for conventional programs and
another, more rigorous output-oriented set for nontraditional
programs. A common set of accreditation guidelines should be
developed and should apply to both conventional and uncon-
ventional programs.

Accrediting agencies and academic institutions should
cease the debate concerning whether traditional programs are
"better" than nontraditional ones or vice versa and strive
to develop quality educational programs that respond to indi-
viduals' needs--realizing that traditional and nontraditional
programs are not mutually exclusive and the best programs
for many students are a blend of the two. The individual
seeking the educational services will choose the approach--
traditional or nontraditional--which is best suited for his
or her needs and learning style. Therefore, these approaches
are alternatives, as seen from the perspective of the student.
Perhaps this should also be considered in the present study
of nontraditional approaches.

Statement by
Reatha C. King, President
Metropolitan State University

In the COPA Project on Nontraditional Education we are grateful to Reatha C. King, president of one of the institutions participating in the study, for the preceding statement, which parallels with great insight the major findings of the project. President King's statement, voluntarily submitted response to the national survey, provides a framework for this section of the report.

> Nontraditional education is a constructive, needed
> reform in American postsecondary education.

For the past three decades, many educators, as well as those not professionally in education, have called for reform in American postsecondary education. Some have been protagonists for curricula reform (general education and vocational-occupational education vs. liberal education); others have called for equal access for all citizens regardless of prior educational achievements (egalitarianism vs. elitism); many have questioned the historical purposes of a college education (an intellectual pursuit of knowledge to become a cultured human being vs. highly specialized, narrowly defined skills or competencies that are salable); and there are those who have called for--in some cases demanded--radical change in the modus operandi (on-campus residency for preset curricula vs. remote or noncampus, individualized delivery of education); and, finally, there are the nontraditionalists who are evangelical protagonists in varying degrees for all of these and other issues relevant to reform in postsecondary education.

As we have noted in earlier sections of this report, it is our belief--based on the activities of this project--that the nontraditional

education movement when qualitatively implemented is good and has been a positive and creative force in postsecondary education. It is not only a "constructive, needed reform," it has the potential to serve as a catalytic force for reform of all of American postsecondary education. Lewis B. Mayhew in Legacy of the Seventies presents a valuable overview of the origin, history, and nature of the "revolutionary innovations and radical changes" in American higher education since the late 1960s and identifies the "generalized spirit of educational reform that grew up during the 1960s in orthodox institutions"[31] as the most important influence on the emergence of the nontraditional movement. Mayhew presents a thesis that in 1968, American higher education entered an era of radical change in many ways and that if these changes persist, higher education will become significantly different from what it was before. Most of these changes are found in the various forms of nontraditional education. Mayhew cautions that though the movement is ten years old and has had significant impact on postsecondary education, it is still too soon to judge if it will live or die.

> Whether the nontraditional movement will follow the
> trajectory of the general education movement--rapid
> rise, brief stabilization, and equally rapid decline--
> cannot be known. Given the nature of movements in
> education, the odds are it will. But it might last,
> and higher education would then become dramatically
> different from what it has been in the past.[32]
> (Emphasis added.)

The specific characteristics and nature of the reform called for in postsecondary education is unclear. Educators, scholars, students, politicians, business leaders, and citizens--each group has its own set of ideas. There does seem to be a general consensus among these

groups, with varying interpretations, on the issues of equality of access, quality of results, and individual achievements. The nontraditional movement encompasses all of these issues, and much of the reform it has engendered has been in these areas.

> Difficulties arising from nontraditional education
> result not from the basic concept of alternative
> approaches to education but the manner in which
> the innovations are implemented.

As has been previously noted in this report, the COPA project has found no significant opposition to the concept of nontraditional education. The review of nontraditional institutions and programs for purposes of accreditation did not reveal basic resistance to the movement. Where problems were found they were usually related to implementation processes and procedures. The national survey revealed strong support for the concept of nontraditional education by 94.5 percent of the 1,500 respondents.

Regardless of the reasons for support of the concept of nontraditional education, and there are many, it is significant that there appears to be broad-based agreement that the concept is good. It is also significant to note that where difficulties or problems exist it is because of inadequately developed procedures. This finding directly relates to the weaknesses identified earlier in chapter 2. It is essential that the nontraditionalists do all that is necessary to assure the programs developed are of quality. Unquestionable quality of programs offered will do more than anything else to allay fears, misconceptions, and resistance where they may exist.

> Many conventional institutions are developing "innova-
> tive or nontraditional" programs for adults to compen-
> sate for the decline in the 18-21 year old student
> enrollments--without proper institutional or faculty
> commitment to alternative approaches to education and
> without adequate instructional resources and support
> services.

This segment of President King's statement touches on several important aspects of the nontraditional movement that are related to the findings of the COPA project. First, the adaptation of many of the characteristics and structures of the nontraditional movement by the conventional institution in order to serve the adult student better has taken place. While it is all but impossible to determine accurately the number of traditional institutions that have developed alternative, nontraditional approaches to postsecondary education, the data from the national survey of the project is at least enlightening. Of the 1,062 administrators who participated in the survey, 829 or 78 percent indicated that their institutions offered nontraditional programs. The volume of nontraditional programs offered by these institutions was significant and was reported as follows:

Number of Institutions	Percent of Institution's Total Educational Program That Is Nontraditional
614	10
141	25
40	50
13	75
21	100
829	

The second observation addresses the motives behind the move of traditional institutions into alternative forms of education. While a

declining market of 18- to 21-year-olds, financial exigencies, and excess faculty are motivating factors for some institutions, it should be noted that many of the institutions are currently offering nontraditional education because of a strong institution commitment to public service. Not since the influx of older students on the GI Bill after World War II have traditional institutions exhibited such interest in serving the adult student. However, the significant point to be made is the need for a clear institutional commitment to serve the nontraditional student in appropriate ways with alternative forms of education of quality. Such a commitment includes an appropriate institutional purpose, consensus of constituent groups--governing board, faculty, students, sponsoring organization--and adequate resource allocation. A problem of the nontraditional movement has been the quick expansion of well intended institutions into such programs without fully developing programs and procedures, and without sufficient personnel adequately versed in the unconventional methods and modes to be used. A significant problem has developed in this area because of the entrepreneurial individual or organization usually external to the institution who has taken advantage of the movement to "sell" cosmetic procedures for developing, packaging, implementing, assessing, and evaluating nontraditional education.

> Innovative programs raise basic academic questions
> concerning the purposes of higher education, expected
> outcomes for degree programs, the meaning of quality
> in postsecondary education, and the adequacy of
> current approaches to accreditation. These questions
> apply to conventional programs as well as the non-
> traditional ones.

Who is to decide the purposes of American postsecondary education? There is no simple division of opinion among groups rightly concerned with the issue--the opinions and groups are many and complex.

Education has long been defined and understood to be the process by which an individual is developed as a person by the fostering. to varying degrees, of growth or expansion of knowledge, wisdom, desirable qualities of mind and character, physical health, and general competency, usually through a formal course of study and instruction (a variation on unabridged Webster, 3rd edition). <u>Nontraditional</u> education implies a departure, deviation, or variation from that which has become the tradition in education. What then is the best description for nontraditional postsecondary education in the United States today? Is it a departure from process, or a variation of process? Is it a departure from the goals and objectives for education, or a variation of those goals and objectives? Is it a departure from the expected outcomes of an education, or is it a variation of the expected outcomes of an education?

The answers to these questions have significance in understanding the current nontraditional education movement. If it is viewed as a departure from the basic purposes of education, then we have a dichotomy developing in American postsecondary education. If it is viewed as a variation of the basic purposes of postsecondary education, then we have an entirely different situation. The findings of this project support the view that nontraditional education is basically a variation of the traditional processes. purposes, and outcomes of postsecondary education. This view does not force a separation of nontraditional educational ventures from traditional. Rather, it encourages a

unification within a framework conducive to reform of the basic processes,
purposes, and expected outcomes for all of postsecondary education. In
the nontraditional education movement, there is a shift of valence or
emphasis in the essential elements--process, purpose, outcomes--which
has the potential to influence all of postsecondary education.

Accrediting associations must also make a valence or emphasis shift
from the current process model, discussed earlier, to include assessment
of educational outcomes as a major emphasis in the evaluation of post-
secondary education for purposes of accreditation.

In the national survey educators were asked, "What do you think the
response of traditional institutions will be as they face the decline of
the 18 to 24 year old population in the 1980s and the emergence of non-
traditional higher education, particularly that part focused on older
part-time students?" From a preset list of options the items were
selected and ranked as follows:

    1st--Develop more non-residential programs
    2nd--Offer more non-credit continuing education programs
    3rd--Recognize more experiential programs
    4th--Assure quality through exit graduation standards
            rather than admission standards
    5th--Use adjunct, temporary faculty more often
    6th--Make greater use of multi-media instructional pro-
            cedures for independent remote study
    7th--Move to state degree requirements in terms of student
            performances and products
    8th--Reassert the value of traditional, full-time campus
            based study
    9th--Reassert selective admission standards.

It is significant to note that the items selected most frequently,
first through seventh, generally are associated with the current non-
traditional education movement. The items ranked eighth and ninth are
generally considered characteristics of the most traditional institutions,

and they not only were ranked lowest, but had the lowest frequency

selection. This data portends a significant assimilation of nontradi-

tional practices into traditional American postsecondary institutions

in the eighties. The research of this study, the review of current

literature, and the findings of other related studies indicate that

this assimilation has already begun.

> There should not be two sets of accreditation
> standards--one based on input measures for con-
> ventional programs and another, more rigorous
> output-oriented set for nontraditional programs.
> A common set of accreditation guidelines should
> be developed and should apply to both conventional
> and unconventional programs.

Should there be separate accreditation standards for nontraditional

education? This is the most critical question before the COPA project.

Our straightforward answer to the question is no, there should not be

separate standards. The findings of this study clearly indicate that

accreditation standards must develop from a single mode that will produce

a conceptual framework that will accommodate all of postsecondary educa-

tion. However, the achievement of this ideal will not be a simple

matter. As Lewis Mayhew has said, "The question, bluntly put, is

whether they [regional accrediting associations] can devise ways of

accrediting that will on the one hand encourage innovation but at the

same time maintain traditional standards of excellence."[33] The answer

to Mayhew is an unqualified yes. The regional accrediting associations

can, will, and are developing effective means for the qualitative

assessment of nontraditional education. Their participation in this

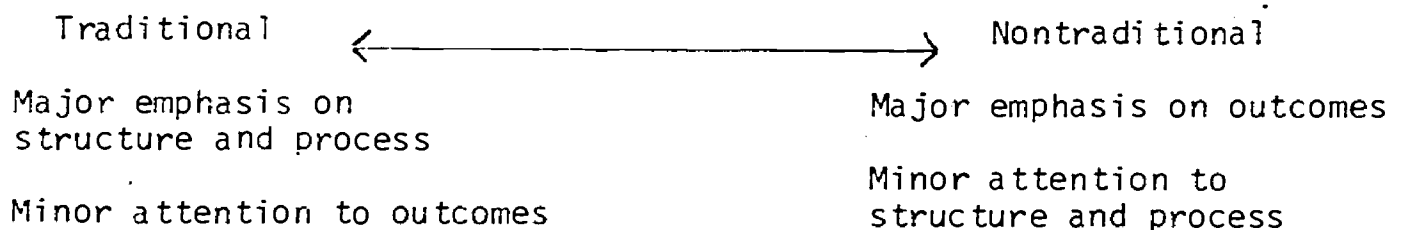project is strong evidence of their commitment to appropriate evaluation

for standards of excellence in all forms of postsecondary education.
The findings of the study indicate positive movement by the accrediting
agencies in support of educational innovations.

The operational mode for the accrediting associations should be
in keeping with the operational mode of American postsecondary educa-
tion. As the operational mode of the institutions changes, that of
accrediting associations will change. Earlier in this report we pre-
sented and discussed some of these changes and trends. Perhaps it
would be worthwhile to restate briefly a basic premise from this study
concerning the influences of nontraditional education on postsecondary
education today.

American postsecondary education, though complex and multi-
dimensional, may be viewed as a continuum with the traditional institu-
tions and programs on one end and the nontraditional institutions and
programs on the opposite end. Institutions predominantly traditional
in characteristics emphasize structure and process with some attention
given to educational outcomes. Institutions predominantly nontradi-
tional in characteristics emphasize educational outcomes with some
attention to structure and process. (See Figure 3, repeated below.)

Figure 3

Postsecondary Education Continuum

Traditional ←————————————————————→ Nontraditional

Major emphasis on
structure and process

Major emphasis on outcomes

Minor attention to outcomes

Minor attention to
structure and process

The process-oriented model of evaluation generally used by accrediting associations should be restructured into a process-performance model to accommodate all postsecondary education institutions regardless of the variation in operational modes or number of traditional or nontraditional characteristics. The development of such a model is supported by the results of the questionnaire in which educators were surveyed concerning the role and functions of accrediting associations.

In the national survey respondents reacted to items concerning the role of regional accreditation in the evaluation of nontraditional education. The first of these items was a list of a variety of educational practices that deviate from the conventional. The respondents were asked to select and rank the practices that they thought would most affect the basic policies and practices of the regional accrediting commissions. The selections were ranked as follows:

        1st--Awarding credit for prior and experiential learning
        2nd--Significant majority of the teaching faculty are adjunct
                appointees
        3rd--Little or no residency requirements for degree candidates
        4th--Centers for instruction far removed from the campus
        5th--Courses and/or degrees offered by an accredited institution
                through a contractual relationship with another institu-
                tion or an unaccredited organization or agency
        6th--Individualized degree expectations or requirements
                usually formulated by contracts
        7th--Stating degree requirements in terms of achievements
                rather than time or credit hours
        8th--Heavy reliance on multi-media instruction for remote-,
                independent study
        9th--Individualized or self-paced instruction
        10th--Emphasis on part-time older students.

The significance of this data is at least threefold. First, it is consistent with comparable data from the survey where respondents identified basic concerns about nontraditional education. Second, it

is significant in that it identifies, from the perspective of a broadly representative group, issues in nontraditional educational practices that the group considers important for accrediting officials. Third, the issues selected are consistent with most of those found in the research and review of the current li.crature in the field related to nontraditional education and accreditation.

The second survey item concerning the role of regional accreditation in the evaluation of nontraditional education dealt with the selection and ranking of a set of basic changes that accreditation should make in order to deal fairly and effectively in evaluating nontraditional education. The selections were ranked as follows:

  1st--Focus more on educational results and less on structure
       and process
  2nd--Become more concerned about assuring reasonable compar-
       ability in degree programs among institutions (that
       is, assure that given degrees in given fields have
       some common meaning in terms of student achievements
       when offered in different institutions)
  3rd--Achieve a consensus on basic principles or standards
       which should characterize institutional structures
       and processes
  4th--Find direct ways to examine student performances and
       products
  5th--Use special evaluators to examine indepth the insti-
       tution's provisions for quality assurance in addition
       to visiting teams
  6th--Re-emphasize program accreditation in contrast to
       institutional-wide accreditation
  7th--Refuse to deal with some curricular and institutional
       deviation as too extreme to be recognized by an
       accrediting association.

It is significant to note that of the items most frequently selected the first, second, and fourth deal directly with a shift of focus from structure and process to educational outcomes and student achievements in accreditation. Of equal importance is the low ranking

of the idea that accreditation should refuse to deal with extreme c icu-

lar and institutional departures from the conventional. This ranking

combined with the almost equally low ranking of the concept of program

accreditation in contrast to institutional-wide accreditation indicates

a strong feeling that regional accreditation should deal with all forms

of nontraditional education and should continue in the historical mode

of accrediting the institution as a whole.

The third, and a most important, survey item concerned ranking the

functions of voluntary, regional, institutional accreditation considered

to be critical. The selections were ranked as follows:

    1st--Promote institutional integrity and improvement
    2nd--Assure that respective degrees represent certain
            minimal standards
    3rd--Encourage sound innovative and imaginative approaches
            to producing quality instruction
    4th--Protect the "consumer interest" of students and the
            general public
    5th--Maintain the independence of the academy and protect
            academic freedom
    6th--Help to improve the image of higher education to the
            general public
    7th--Protect the historical prerogatives of faculty in
            curricular and instructional modes
    8th--Protect the investment of established institutions
            from the incursion of new ones in search of markets
    9th--Be an advocate for institutions to their sponsors
            whether religious, private, non-religious, or
            municipal, state, and federal governments.

The high ran. ng and frequency of selection for promotion of insti-

tutional integrity and improvement as a critical function for regional

accreditation was not surprising and is significant in that it confirms

the established purposes of accreditation as it is now practiced. Of

greater significance is the indication that accrediting agencies should

assure that degrees represent certain minimum standards and this concern

is reflected in the findings of the other research activities of the project.

The third-ranked and third most frequently selected function was to encourage sound innovative and imaginative approaches for producing quality instruction by accredited institutions. This was somewhat surprising and seems to indicate a new emphasis for accreditation. As it was discussed earlier in this report, accreditation, historically, has not taken a leadership role in institutional change or innovation.

The fourth-ranked function, with a signficant drop in the frequency of selection from that of the first three functions, was that of consumer protection. This is a signficant finding in that accreditation has been reluctant to assume a significant role in consumer protection apart from those factors involved in the assurance of minimum educational standards. This finding also seems to indicate a need for a shift of emphasis by accreditation in the future to assume a greater responsibility in the consumer interest area.

A final observation concerning the implications of the responses to this item relates to the significance of those functions which were the least selected and lowest ranked. These responses generally support the belief held by accrediting bodies that the boundary maintenance issues per se should not be a responsibility of the accrediting commissions.

> Accrediting agencies and academic institutions should cease the debate concerning whether traditional pro-grams are "better" than nontraditional ones or vice versa and strive to develop quality educational pro-grams that respond to individuals' needs--realizing that traditional and nontraditional programs are not

mutually exclusive and the best programs for many
students ar. a blend of the two. The individual
seeking the educational services will choose the
approach--traditional or nontraditional--which is
best suited for his or her needs and learning
style. Therefore, these approaches are alterna-
tives, as seen from the perspective of the student.

All of the various components and constituent groups in American
postsecondary education, regardless of form, structure, or mode of
delivery, need to come together with a consensus of purpose for serving
their various clienteles with quality education. The development of
so many nontraditional educational programs in a relatively short time
by a significant number of institutions can be viewed as an attempt to
provide greater access to more effective learning for all students of
all ages in postsecondary education. Perhaps this goal should become
a common focus for all postsecondary educational institutions.

In summary, the significant findings of the COPA project are these:

- The nontraditional education movement is a positive and
  creative force in American postsecondary education pro-
  viding added stimulus for needed reform and is specifi-
  cally focused on the issues of equality of access, quality
  of results, and individual achievements.

- Nontraditional, alternative learning, as a concept, is
  achieving acceptance among the constituent groups of
  American postsecondary education.

- Primary problems with nontraditional education forms are
  internal and related to inadequacy of processes and pro-
  cedures in implementation.

- An increasing number of traditional institutions are
  adapting and integrating the characteristics of the non-
  traditional movement into their own programs.

- A commitment to nontraditional education by the institution
  is essential for the development of acceptable programs--
  this includes the proper relationship to purpose, faculty
  support, and allocation of institutional resources.

- The critical questions about the purposes of postsecondary education in relation to curricula and degree expectations and assessment of educational outcomes have been raised as a result of the nontraditional ventures.

- Nontraditional education his been identified as a shift of valence rather than a split within postsecondary education.

- Institutional accreditation should operate within a single mode that will accommodate all of postsecondary education, recognizing both process and performance components in the evaluation of institutions.

- Institutional accreditation should consider and determine its appropriate role in such matters as institutional integrity and consumer protection.

- Traditionalists and nontraditionalists should close ranks and work together as equal partners in American postsecondary education to identify problems and find solutions.

Speculating on the future of American postsecondary education into the year 2000, Samuel B. Gould emphasized the need for internal cohesiveness:

> Higher education in the next quarter century may develop like a child growing up over whom we, as parents, have had responsibility but no control. . . .But the future of higher education also has the possibility of being based on firm convictions as to what it should be and how the achievements of clearly stated goals may be reached. And these should be goals and actions that originate in a unified sense of purpose within the academic world, stimulated by mutual respect, by a similar respect for external forces, and by mutual concern for the individual learner at any postsecondary level. Furthermore, they should be goals and actions that have their birth in internal initiatives, initiatives that represent more than reactions to temporal crises or pressures. What we need most, if we are to be strong in our educational position, is the courage to close ranks and take charge.[34]

CHAPTER 4

RECOMMENDATIONS

        My strong conviction is that the increasing
interest in nontraditional education can, if handled
in a disciplined way, do much to improve higher edu-
cation. It can make us reconsider our purposes and
seek for better ways of achieving educational results.
It can bring new and desirable flexibility. Handled
in a faddish or sloppy way, it will further erode
standards and solid accomplishments in higher edu-
cation. This places a heavy responsibility on regional
accrediting agencies to steer colleges and universities
in the former rather than the latter direction.

                        Statement by
                        Manning M. Pattillo, Jr.
                        President, Oglethorpe University

Introduction

    The American postsecondary education system's basic process for

establishing and maintaining educational standards is voluntary, non-

governmental accreditation. The present system of accreditation--the

regional institution-based associations, national special-purpose

associations, and specialized programmatic agencies--is represented

nationally by the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation. The various

associations that are the constituent members of COPA are united by a

common commitment: to improve postsecondary education through evaluation

for purposes of accreditation. The evolution of this voluntary system

of accreditation has parallelled the evolution of the system of post-secondary education. Until a decade or so ago, the American education system, though diverse in many ways, was relatively homogeneous in such basic characteristics as structure, faculties, students, programs, modes of instruction, admission and graduation requirements, and credentials awarded.

With the advent of the nontraditional movement in the late 1960s, a further diversification and a basic reform of postsecondary education began. Today, the nature, structure, and basic characteristics of institutions and the students they serve are significantly different and far more hetero-geneous than at any other time in history. The implications of these basic changes in the postsecondary education system for voluntary accredi-tation are significant, placing heavy responsibility on the accrediting associations to evaluate and assure educational quality in a system under-going great change.

While primary focus of this project has been on the evaluation and accreditation of nontraditional education, our research and study have made it very clear that a review of nontraditional education cannot and should not be made separate and apart from the basic system of postsecond-ary education in general. Also, a review of the accreditation activities of nontraditional education cannot be made without a review of the whole process of accreditation for postsecondary education.

A series of recommendations have grown out of the major findings of the study. These recommendations are intended to focus attention and to encourage action by the postsecondary education community, including the nontraditionalists, the accrediting associations, and the Council on

Postsecondary Accreditation, to accomplish reforms to provide access to new and existing programs of quality according to the legitimate educational needs of today's society.

Though responsibility for the dissemination and utilization of the findings of the project rests with the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation and its governing board, four specific audiences have been addressed in General Recommendations for:

- Postsecondary Education in the United States
- Traditional and Nontraditional Educators
- Accrediting Associations
- The Council on Postsecondary Accreditation

General Recommendations for
Postsecondary Education in the United States

RECOMMENDATION ONE

That the institution-based, voluntary nongovernmental organizations, associations, and agencies formally address the current thrust for constructive change in postsecondary education to achieve the following goals:

1. Give Definition and Direction for Reform in Postsecondary Education

    a. To define more clearly the nature of the change needed,

    b. To develop a clear set of achievable goals for change,

    c. To provide coordination for and direction to constructive change,

    d. To identify and define roles and responsibilities in accomplishing change for the various components of postsecondary education, including the organizations and agencies themselves, the individual institutions and their faculties and staffs, government and other representatives of the public, and

      e. To designate an organization or agency (such as the American Council on Education) to coordinate these activities and to codify, define, and expedite appropriate change.

2. Recognize the Nontraditional Education Movement

      a. As an example of constructive reform in postsecondary education that has contributed signficantly to the issues of quality of access and individual achievements.

      b. As an intrinsic element in postsecondary education with a decade of developments and achievements that can be adapted to the traditional institutions, and

      c. As a catalyst from within postsecondary education to stimulate further constructive change of postsecondary education.

RECOMMENDATION TWO

That institutions of postsecondary education review their purposes and functions to provide more effective learning that is flexible and rigorous and focuses on educational achievement.

RECOMMENDATION THREE

That postsecondary educational institutions that develop nontraditional educational programs assume the responsibility to do so with quality. That they not begin nontraditional programs until they have achieved (1) administration and faculty commitment to alternative approaches to education that are appropriate to the institution's purpose and mission, (2) appropriate authorization from governing and faculty approval bodies, (3) a fully developed curriculum, and (4) adequate educational and financial resources for successful implementation.

RECOMMENDATION FOUR

That major research efforts be undertaken by representative and responsible

institutions, agencies, and organizations of postsecondary education to

develop a variety of reliable measures and techniques for the assessment of

educational accomplishments (outcomes) for adaptation and use by post-

secondary institutions.

General Recommendations for Nontraditional Education

RECOMMENDATION FIVE

That educators work cooperatively to integrate the nontraditional move-

ment into the mainstream of conventional institutions and programs

in order to:

1. Facilitate constructive changes and innovations for all
   postsecondary educational institutions,

2. Improve the perceptions of traditionalists who are skeptical
   of nontraditional programs.

3. Secure legitimization and assistance through the normal
   academic processes of the institution for quality assurance
   of programs and credentials offered.

4. Assist in achieving an internal cohesiveness and consistency
   in programs and credentials offered by postsecondary edu-
   cational institutions, and

5. Eliminate the dichotomy within American postsecondary
   education between the traditional and nontraditional.

RECOMMENDATION SIX

That nontraditional institutions and nontraditionalists operating

within conventional institutions exercise great caution in the estab-

lishment of external relationships (e.g., for the procurement of services

and programs; recruitment of students; use of faculty, facilities, and

other learning resources; and the delivery of programs) with contracting institutions, agencies, organizations, and individuals, to insure that their practices are ethical and acceptable. That the integrity of the institution or program be unquestionable. That the entrepreneur with charlatan characteristics (whether institution, agency, or individual) where personal profit is a primary goal not be accepted or tolerated.

RECOMMENDATION SEVEN

That nontraditional institutions and programs be carefully developed with processes adequate for successful implementation of programs representative of and acceptable to postsecondary education in general. That processes include an appropriate system for the assurance of quality in programs and for the assessment of individual educational outcomes.

RECOMMENDATION EIGHT

That the essential components and elements characteristic of a post-secondary educational institution or program be appropriately developed and implemented to support the programs offered and the credentials awarded. That structure and function of the institution and/or program be appropriate to the level of the credential to be awarded. That normal expectations for certificate and diploma, undergraduate, and graduate credentials be observed. That the taxonomy of institutional and program characteristics (essential elements and components) and the report of the Task Force on Educational Credit and Credentials of the American Council on Education be used.

General Recommendations for Accrediting Associations

RECOMMENDATION NINE

That voluntary, nongovernmental accreditation expands its basic concept to include educational accomplishment and performance (outcomes) in its process in response to the current thrust in postsecondary education that focuses more on the effectiveness of the education offered and less on the form, structure, and delivery employed. That there be a consistent philosophy of accreditation that is conceptual in nature and that recognizes and accommodates traditional and nontraditional postsecondary education within a common framework for assessing quality.

RECOMMENDATION TEN

That the format and process for evaluation of institutions and programs normally used by institutional and program accreditation be changed from a process orientation to a process-performance evaluation system. Such a modification requires the following:

1. That current standards of criteria and procedures for accreditation be reviewed to determine if there is a significant presumption of traditionality;

2. That standards of criteria and procedures be modified where necessary to recognize the valence of an institution, toward the traditional or nontraditional, in the accreditation process;

3. That procedures for accreditation be used to evaluate effectively an institution or program's educational process, emphasizing the direct assessment of learning outcomes and student performance for educational attainments; and

4. That special training and orientation on the evaluation of outcome-procedures be provided for individuals who participate in on-site evaluation committees for accrediting associations.

RECOMMENDATION ELEVEN

That the accrediting association responsible for the evaluation of an

institution or program require that the institution or program place

major emphasis on learning to demonstrate that it:

1. Has clear educational goals and objectives that are suf-
   ficiently explicit to be assessable and that presuppose
   in their realization the learning necessary for successful
   performance in the fields for which students are being
   educated.

2. Maintains a system of educational delivery that embraces
   and affords the opportunity for learning;

3. Applies performance criteria that, if met, would reasonably
   assure graduates of competence in the area for which they are
   being prepared; and

4. Employs effective instruments to as⁻ ss student attainments
   which would be acceptable if independently examined by
   recognized scholars.

RECOMMENDATION TWELVE

That the institution and the appropriate accrediting agency assure

that the educational process is appropriately structured to provide

the necessary learning experience commensurate with the credential to

be awarded. That specific degree designations have both explicit and

implicit requirements and expectations, verified and validated in the

accreditation process, of the educational experience and institutional

processes.*

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*The research reports of the project on certificate, undergraduate,
and graduate education and the report of the Task Force on Creden-
tialing Educational Accomplishment of the American Council on
Education provide useful information in support of this recom-
mendations.

RECOMMENDATION THIRTEEN

That accrediting associations incorporate specific information on the evaluation of nontraditional education and outcomes assessment into their orientation and training programs for on-site evaluators, review committee members, and commission members involved in the accreditation decision-making process. That care be taken to insure that the individuals and institutions concerned are fully informed of the procedures and criteria to be used in the evaluation when unconventional and innovative review techniques are employed by the accrediting associations.

RECOMMENDATION FOURTEEN

That policies and procedures of institutional accrediting associations be comprehensive in scope so as to incorporate into the initial and subsequent evaluations all components of a postsecondary educational institution, including non-campus-based forms of study; contractual arrangements with other institutions, agencies, or organizations; and experiential education. That the appropriate institutional accrediting associations and state agencies cooperate when institutional operations are interregional.

RECOMMENDATION FIFTEEN

That specialized, accrediting associations review their standards and procedures for accreditation to see that alternative approaches to traditional specialized education, where appropriate, are encouraged.

RECOMMENDATION SIXTEEN

That accrediting associations clearly assert to their constituents and
the public that the central purposes of accreditation in postsecondary
education are to provide institutiunal improvement and to assure
educational quality through evaluation. That accrediting associations
clearly assert that they do not have jurisdiction over issues of terri-
torial protection and boundary maintenance among institutions.

RECOMMENDATION SEVENTEEN

That new or expanded roles for accrediting associations be carefully
reviewed in light of the nontraditional movement, which has implications
regarding innovation, consumer protection, enforcement of government
regulations, and social responsibilities. That accrediting associa-
tions assume only those roles that are appropriate to accreditation and
for which accreditation has unique responsibilities, clearly defining
and articulating those roles to the constituent groups of postsecondary
education and to the public.

<u>General Recommendations for the
Council on Postsecondary Accreditation</u>

RECOMMENDATION EIGHTEEN

That, in recognition of the evolutionary status of the nontraditional
education movement and in recognition of the impact and influence of
the movement on American postsecondary education and its system of
accreditation, the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation establish

an on-going Task Force on the Accreditation of Nontraditional Education:

1. To monitor the nontraditional education movement to identify trends and new developments;

2. To assess the relationship and relevance of the trends and new developments for accreditation;

3. To recommend appropriate courses of action for the various accrediting commissions and COPA, based on changes that occur in the nontraditional education movement that have implications for accreditation;

4. To review and recommend changes on a continuing basis to the COPA policy on the "Evaluation and Accreditation of Nontraditional Education;"

5. To assist COPA in the implications of the recommendations of the Project on Nontraditional Education.

Further, that the task force be representative of the constituent membership of COPA and postsecondary education and include at least the following nine representatives:

Regional institutional associations	- TWO
National institutional associations	- ONE
Specialized associations	- TWO
Postsecondary institutional associations	- ONE
Nontraditional institutions or programs	- TWO
State postsecondary education bodies	- ONE

RECOMMENDATION NINETEEN

That the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation, as the national coordinating organization for nongovernmental accreditation, determine the role and function of voluntary accreditation in the movement for constructive change and reform that is taking place in American postsecondary education. That COPA assist, as appropriate, the institution-based, voluntary, nongovernmental organizations, associations, and agencies in the implementation of RECOMMENDATION ONE.

RECOMMENDATION TWENTY

That the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation and its constituent members work cooperatively through the accreditation process toward the achievement of continuity and a cohesiveness of purpose, role, function, and basic structure of American postsecondary education. (NOTE: This recommendation relates directly to the identification and maintenance of the basic characteristics, components, and essential elements of accreditable institutions and programs of postsecondary education. The taxonomy developed in this project and the various research reports provide useful resource materials for this activity.)

RECOMMENDATION TWENTY-ONE

That the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation encourage its member accrediting associations to revise their procedures to include a process-performance evaluation system that places emphasis on the assessment of educational accomplishments for accreditation purposes.

RECOMMENDATION TWENTY-TWO

That the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation initiate and maintain formal relationships with appropriate federal, state, and nongovernmental accrediting agencies to identify and define the interrelated roles and functions of the triad in the recognition, licensing, certifying, and accrediting processes.

RECOMMENDATION TWENTY-THREE

That the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation work cooperatively with the American Council on Education and the other institution-based

organizations to identify and define educational credentials and degrees in order to clarify their purpose, structure, and meaning and to insure the appropriate use of nomenclature by accredited institutions and programs.

RECOMMENDATION TWENTY-FOUR

That the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation, in cooperation with other appropriate agencies, develop ways and means to increase public confidence in the nongovernmental process of self-regulation as an effective means for improving education and assessing institutional and program quality, whether traditional or nontraditional.

RECOMMENDATION TWENTY-FIVE

That the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation formally endorse the concept of quality nontraditional education as a vehicle of constructive change in American postsecondary education that can assist in extending access to postsecondary education to all citizens of the United States who desire-learning throughout life.

Proposed Policy Statement on the
Accreditation of Nontraditional Education

The Council on Postsecondary Accreditation through its executive board and constituent members should develop and issue a policy statement concerning the accreditation of nontraditional education. The purposes of such a policy statement would be (1) to assure that each COPA-recognized accrediting agency has incorporated into its operating procedures an appropriate accommodation of nontraditional education, and (2) to assure a rigorous, but reasonable and uniform, approach to the evaluation of nontraditional education for purposes of accreditation.

In the development of the policy statement the COPA Board should give careful consideration to the following concepts, issues, and elements for inclusion in the statement:

Concepts

The Council on Postsecondary Accreditation is dedicated to the belief that the process of institutional self-regulation and peer review through nongovernmental accreditation promotes the improvement of postsecondary education and provides for a reasonable assurance of quality in postsecondary education. COPA asserts that accreditation should be carried out within a common framework for assessing and assuring quality that recognizes all forms of postsecondary education.

The Council on Postsecondary Accreditation should recognize and endorse the nontraditional education movement as a needed and constructive change within postsecondary education when properly implemented with quality, a movement that greatly expands access to postsecondary education for the

citizens of the United States, especially adults, who desire learning throughout life.

The Council on Postsecondary Accreditation is dedicated to the principle that the accrediting model, now primarily a "process model," should be restructured to include the assessment of educational outcomes or performance. COPA should accept the responsibility to encourage and assist its constituent members in the evaluation of educational quality through the measurement of educational outcomes. The appraisal of educational outcomes in postsecondary education will require that the COPA-recognized accrediting agencies expand their standards or criteria and procedures to recognize educational accomplishments in the process of evaluation for purposes of accreditation.

The Council on Postsecondary Accreditation should assert that for nongovernmental accreditation to maintain its value for and credibility with the public as a means for educational improvement and as a measure of institutional and program quality, whether traditional or nontraditional, the COPA-recognized accrediting agencies must assure that their standards or criteria and evaluation procedures are comprehensive in nature and include all forms of postsecondary education, regardless of delivery system or location (e.g., all non-campus-based forms of study such as contractual relationships with other institutions, agencies, or organizations; experiential learning; external degrees; and off-campus programs including military base education).

Issues

The Council on Postsecondary Accreditation is dedicated to the principle that educational credentials convey important information

abcu; learning accomplishments and therefore, the accrediting agencies
recognized by COPA have the responsibility to assure in their review
and evaluation of institutions and programs, traditional or nontradi-
tional, that the educational process is appropriately structured to
provide the learning experience commensurate with whatever credential
is to be awarded.

The Council on Postsecondary Accreditation should assert that the
recognition of experiential learning for appropriate academic credit is
a proper function for an accredited institution of postsecondary educa-
tion. When awarding credit for prior learning based on the experience
of the student, the institution should have appropriate and effective
policies and procedures, which have been validated by the appropriate
accrediting agency, for the documentation and assessment of such learning.
The evaluation procedures should include such factors as the relationship
of the learning values from the experience to the student's current
educational goals and the amount of credit to be allowed.

The Council on Postsecondary Accreditation expects the accrediting
agencies it recognizes to include in their accrediting process, procedures
for the systematic and regular review and evaluation of all off-campus
learning opportunities offered by accredited institutions. Where insti-
tutional educational operations are interregional, cooperation with other
appropriate accrediting agencies should be mandatory. Quality assurance
of postsecondary educational programs offered on military installations
is the joint responsibility not only of the institutions and accrediting
agencies involved but also of the military services involved. It is
essential that COPA-recognized agencies include the review of any military

base education programs, in the evaluation of institutions for accreditation purposes.

The Council on Postsecondary Accreditation should assert the right and responsibility of its recognized accrediting agencies to prohibit an accredited institution or program from lending the prestige or authority of its accreditation to courses, programs, and degrees offered under contract with organizations not accredited. When an accredited institution contracts for educational programs and services, all courses offered and credentials awarded must remain under the sole and direct control of the accredited institution and must be consistent with the institution's purpose. Appropriate institutional policies and procedures must be developed to insure acceptable practice in the recruitment and counseling of students' admissions; instruction (including qualification of faculty); evaluation of student progress; record-keeping; the setting and collecting of tuition and fees: the granting of credit for advanced standing based on transfer; experience or prior learning; nature and location of courses; the provision of instructional learning resources; field experiences; and the awarding of educational credentials. COPA-recognized accrediting agencies should include in the review and evaluation process for accredited institutions and programs validation procedures to assure the quality of courses and program offered through contract relationships and to attest to the control by the accredited institution.

Elements

The Council on Postsecondary Accreditation should urge that its recognized specialized accrediting agencies give particular attention

to their standards or criteria for accreditation to assure that alternative approaches in specialized learning are encouraged where appropriate and that the accreditation process used is designed to assure quality of the education offered and the learning achieved (outcomes).

The Council on Postsecondary Accreditation is dedicated to the principle that the function of institutional accreditation is the accrediting of an institution as a whole. COPA should assert that its recognized institutional accrediting agencies have the responsibility to include all educational components and operations of a postsecondary education institution in their initial and subsequent evaluations and reviews for accreditation purposes.

The Council on Postsecondary Accreditation should urge that its recognized accrediting agencies, specialized and institutional, incorporate specific information and guidelines on the evaluation of nontraditional education into the training and orientation for on-site evaluators, review committee members, and accrediting commission members involved in the decision-making process for accreditation.

The Council on Postsecondary Accreditation should insure, through its regular process for review and recognition of accrediting agencies for membership, that the policy is implemented successfully.

Other Recommendations

Eight significant research reports have been produced as a result of the various activities of the project. Each of these reports contains information on the research findings in the specific area assigned. For a full review of the findings and recommendations of the COPA Project on the Accreditation of Nontraditional Education all of these reports should be read.

Each report stands independently and represents the work of its author or authors. Conclusions and recommendations contained in the reports are based on the research and analysis of the various parts of the study and represent the judgment of the authors.

The eight reports are as follows:

Report No. 1   Nontraditional Certificate Programs (John Harris and Philip McCullough)

Report No. 2   Salient Points from "A Study of the Acceptability and Negotiability of External Degrees" (Prepared by John Harris)

Report No. 3   Institutional Accreditation and Nontraditional Undergraduate Educational Institutions and Programs (John Harris)

Report No. 4   Problems and Principles in the Recognition of Accreditation of Graduate Programs (Paul Dressel)

Report No. 5   Critical characteristics of an Accreditable Institution, Basic Purposes of Accreditation, and Nontraditional Forms of Most Concern (John Harris)

Report No. 6   A Review of Nontraditional Graduate Degrees (with particular emphasis on the problems of accreditation) (Paul Dressel)

Report No. 7   A Taxonomy for the Classification and Determination of the Nontraditional Nature of Postsecondary Educational Institutions: Essential Components,

Elements, and Criteria for Evaluation
(Philip McCullough and Grover Andrews)

Report No. 8   Analysis of the National Survey on Accreditation
and Nontraditional Education (John Harris and
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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

A SEQUENTIAL EVALUATION MODEL

FOR INSTITUTIONS WITH OFF-CAMPUS PROGRAMS

A Paper Prepared

for the

Project of the

Council on Postsecondary Accreditation

to

Develop Evaluative Criteria and Procedures

for the

Accreditation of Nontraditional Education

by
Patricia A. Thrash
North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

September 30, 1978

A SEQUENTIAL EVALUATION MODEL
FOR INSTITUTIONS WITH OFF-CAMPUS PROGRAMS*

This paper indicates the approach of the North Central Association's Commission on Institutions of Higher Education to the evaluation of institutions with off-campus programs and describes the experiences of Commission staff members in the development of sequential evaluations for institutions with off-campus programs. As a result of these evaluation experiences a sequential evaluation model has been produced which may be useful in designing future sequential evaluations. Examples of materials developed for the evaluation of a number of institutions with off-campus programs are included as appendices to this paper.

I.   The Commission's statement on institutions with off-campus programs

The Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools has in recent years evaluated a number of institutions with off-campus programs. Out of that experience and as a result of a comprehensive survey of off-campus programs offered by postsecondary institutions accredited by the North Central Association, the Commission developed a Statement on Off-Campus Programs which was endorsed by its Executive Board on July 24, 1978. This statement is included as Appendix A.

The statement rejects suggestions made by some that the accrediting associations should impose "tighter controls" and adopt extensive and restrictive additional regulations governing off-campus programs in accredited institutions and confirms the position of the Commission, based on its experience in the evaluation of institutions with off-campus programs, that the policies and procedures already in place in the work of the Commission represent ways in which off-campus programs of poor quality are discouraged without restricting the continued existence and growth of good quality programs. Included in these policies and procedures are the following:

1.   The regular examination of off-campus programs as a part of our comprehensive evaluations of all institutions accredited by us. In recent years such examinations have taken our visiting teams throughout the United States, as visits have been made to many off-campus sites.

2. Insistence, through one of our criteria of eligibility, that an
    institution meet all the legal requirements imposed for offering
    courses and credits in each state in which it operates.

3. Cooperation among the several regional accrediting associations, so
    that off-campus sites located outside the home region of an
    institution are examined by teams including evaluators from several
    regions. In recent years we have, following this policy, had on
    North Central teams evaluators from all the other regions.

4. Regarding the establishment of programs of off-campus instruction as
    an indication of possible substantive change within an institution.
    Under our substantive change policy, such a change is a signal for a
    comprehensive examination of the institution, which must be
    completed, with action approving the change, before the change can be
    instituted.

5. Requiring more frequent evaluations of institutions experiencing
    rapid change. Our experience is that many off-campus programs,
    particularly those conducted far from the home campus, experience
    many and frequent changes as institutions seek new ways to monitor
    and guarantee educational quality. In some cases we have provided
    partial or complete institutional evaluations in successive years for
    institutions exhibiting such rapidity of change as a result of their
    off-campus operations.

6. Improvement of regular reporting by institutions to the Commission
    offices. Our institutional annual reports now ask that institutions
    conducting off-campus activities outside their home states provide
    the Commission with a list of all out-of-state sites. Staff
    monitoring of these reports is a way of our being continually
    apprised of changes and developments within the institutions.

7. The Commission has recommended to institutions at their request
    persons to provide consulting assistance in the development and
    evaluation of off-campus programs. While such consultation is apart
    from the regular evaluative processes of the Commission, it is a
    valuable service to our affiliated institutions, and the reports of
    the Commission-recommended consultants are available to our visiting
    teams.

II. <u>Commission staff experiences in the development of sequential evaluations</u>

The Commission has demonstrated its ability to develop appropriate procedures for the evaluation of "nontraditional" institutions. These efforts have been reported periodically in the <u>NCA Today</u> and the <u>North Central Association Quarterly</u>, with special attention given to Commission procedures for the evaluation of nontraditional graduate programs, competency-based curricula, external degree programs, and off-campus programs, including military base programs. (1)

As Commission staff coordinated the evaluations of an increasing number of nontraditional institutions we found that, because these institutions were doing new things and were changing rapidly, they required special and intensive scrutiny. A primary concern was to determine whether the nontraditional institution or the institution with nontraditional programs had clear and publicly stated purposes appropriate to a postsecondary institution and the resources to accomplish those purposes. The Commission focused on educational outcomes as well as institutional resources and processes in making this determination.

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H. Victor Baldi, "External Degree Programs: In Search of New Definitions for Quality," <u>North Central Association Quarterly</u> (Vol. 51, No. 2, Fall 1976), pages 275-279.

Patricia A. Thrash, "Nontraditional Institutions and Programs: A Challenge for the Accreditation Process," <u>North Central Association Quarterly</u> (Vol. 49, No. 3, Winter 1975), pages 321-333. (This includes attachments of the FRACHE Interim Statement on Accreditation and Non-Traditional Study and the FRACHE Interim Guidelines on Contractual Relationships with Non-Regionally Accredited Organizations.)

Patricia A. Thrash, "Evaluation of Nontraditional Learning Forms: The Extended Campus Program," <u>North Central Association Quarterly</u> (Vol. 51, No. 1, Fall 1976), pages 280-287.

Patricia A. Thrash, "<u>Perspective</u>: Older Students Find Buyer's Market in Universities," <u>NCA Today</u> (Vol. 21, No. 3, June 1977), page 5.

Patricia A. Thrash, "The Eureka! Factor: An Inquiry Into Educational Alternatives," <u>North Central Association Quarterly</u> (Vol. 52, No. 4, Spring), pages 455-463.

The Commission staff discovered in its initial attempts to develop effective evaluation processes for nontraditional institutions that special efforts were required beyond those ordinarily applied in the traditional or standard evaluation. It was useful to have a clear understanding with the institution concerning the nature, design, and content of the institution's self-study report; the purposes and expected outcomes of the evaluation; and desired evaluator competencies.

We also discovered that the standard on-site evaluation format of a team of persons visiting an institution for a single period of three days was not an adequate format for the evaluation of an institution which offered its programs at a number of geographically dispersed sites, some outside the state of the institution's original jurisdiction. Consequently, we experimented with the development of sequential evaluation designs for a number of institutions.

The standard evaluation design may be characterized as summative; that is, a concentrated effort is made by a team during a single on-site visit for a limited period of time to examine an institution and to develop a report which summarizes the team's perception of the institution at that point in time. The sequential evaluation design may be characterized as formative; it is a format which permits the examination of an institution by the total team and various sub-teams through a series of visits over a period of months for the purpose of validating the institution's development and its responses to earlier team suggestions and, in the case of institutions with off-campus programs, for determining whether those programs are appropriate to the mission of the institution and are programs of quality. Out of this formative interaction between the institution and the evaluation team, through a series of visits over a period of time, a summative determination is ultimately made out the accreditability of the institution.

Sequential evaluation designs were used in the evaluation of a variety of nontraditional institutions: Antioch College, the Union for Experimenting Colleges and Universities (University Without Walls and Union Graduate School), and Metropolitan State University. In the evaluation of institutions with off-campus programs outside the North Central region--Columbia College (Missouri) and Webster College, for example--sequential evaluation designs were found to be particularly appropriate. Because of the need for comparable information from the sites visited, the Commission staff also found it useful to develop special instruments to assist the team in gathering common data across sites.

In the paragraphs to follow I will offer a personal account of my experience as a Commission staff member in developing a series of sequential evaluations.

A number of evaluators and institutional representatives have assisted in these developmental efforts to formulate an effective sequential evaluation design and instruments for use in the evaluation of institutions with off-campus programs in other accrediting regions. Evaluators William Hazard and Barbara Mickey assisted in the design of the first instrument, which contained procedures for site reviews and a questionnaire to be applied in an evaluation focused on the off-campus sites of Columbia College, Missouri, in Fall 1976. The instrument was used by two-person sub-teams (one NCA member plus one member from another region) to gain consistent information across sites. When the focused evaluation was completed, the two NCA core team members prepared an assessment of the process with suggestions for subsequent evaluations of off-campus programs.

The next experience was with a comprehensive evaluation of Webster College, Missouri, including its extended campus programs in the Southern Association's region, October 1977 - January 1978. Meetings were scheduled in the Evanston office of the Commission and at the institution, so that Webster's President Leigh Gerdine and Vice-President Joseph Kelly and team chairperson Donald Roush could work closely with the Commission staff person in the formulation of a sequential evaluation design that included an initial visit by the total team to Webster's main campus, a series of visits by two-person sub-teams to selected sites in the two accrediting regions where Webster offered programs, and a final visit by the total team to the home campus.

The instrument developed earlier for Columbia College was adapted for the evaluation of Webster's extended campus sites. However, after testing the new instrument, the Basic Site Data Form, at off-campus sites near the home campus during the initial visit, team members and institutional representatives agreed that the instrument should be redesigned so that instead of providing a set of questions to guide the team members in their interviews, it would contain essential information and analysis on common, agreed-upon dimensions prepared by site officials and presented to the team before the site visit. This information was to supplement the materials provided in the institution's self-study report about overall organization, academic offerings, and quality control in its off-campus sites. The task of the team would then be to validate both the information and the analysis provided by the site staff, to seek additional information if it was needed, and to write a report along several critical summary dimensions agreed upon earlier (quality of work offered, relation of program to college degree requirements, general administration and quality control, and comparability of work on campus and at extended campus sites). Team member Catherine Warrick assisted the Commission staff person in a swift revision of the instrument during the initial visit to the home campus.

The revised Basic Site Data Forms were used for the subsequent site visits. Draft reports of the initial visit to the home campus and the visits to off-campus sites were distributed to the team members, President Gerdine, and the Commission office for review before the final visit to the home campus. Both institutional representatives and team members agreed that the revised instrument was much more effective: (1) it provided a modified self-study and assessment experience for the site personnel; and (2) it freed team members from data-gathering of a detailed, informational nature, allowing them more time to validate the information and assessments provided by site personnel and to make judgments about the overall quality of the programs at the site.

Therefore, for the comprehensive evaluation of Columbia College, Missouri, including its extended campus sites, in Spring 1978, the Commission staff worked with President Bruce Kelly and team chairperson Wilson Thiede in the development of a sequential evaluation design and instruments which would incorporate all that had been learned earlier. Because of the effectiveness of that process, President Bruce Kelly has agreed to the publication of the materials developed for that evaluation--the Institutional Summary Sheet and Evaluation Schedule, the Evaluation Design for Columbia College (Missouri), Procedures for the Evaluation of Extended Studies Division Sites of Columbia College (Missouri), and the Basic Site Data Forms--as appendices to this report. (Appendices B-E)

Central Michigan University, Mount Pleasant, Michigan, is currently adapting the sequential evaluation model for its evaluation scheduled during 1978-79. Central Michigan University representatives have also formulated a series of questions to assist evaluators in their validation of the information provided in the Basic Site Data Forms. These questions are included as Appendix F.

III. A sequential evaluation model

Out of these and other experiences with sequential evaluations, the Commission staff has developed a sequential evaluation model which may be useful in the design of sequential evaluations for other institutions. The purpose of this section of the report is to provide a brief description of a sequential evaluation model, including instruments developed for the evaluation of institutions with off-campus programs, and to summarize steps in the development and implementation of the evaluation design.

Description. A sequential evaluation model is a format designed to provide an effective formative evaluation of an institution with off-campus programs in terms of its purposes, processes, resources, and outcomes on the central campus and, through the application of instruments designed to validate pre-selected common elements at the off-campus sites, to make a determination concerning the adequacy and quality of these sites which are included in the institution's accreditation.

Steps in the application of the model to the development and implementation of the evaluation design. The steps in the development and implementation of the model can be divided into three stages: preparations for the sequential evaluation visit, conduct of the evaluation visit, and the preparation of the team report of the evaluation.

A. Preparation for the evaluation visit. Institutional representatives and Commission staff meet to develop a formal agreement regarding the purposes of the evaluation, expected outcomes, desired evaluator competencies, and the evaluation fee. Essential tasks to be completed as a result of this meeting are:

1. Review of the institution's self-study report (to determine its adequacy for the sequential evaluation process).

2. Development of the sequential evaluation design (usually in three phases; the total team meets at the home campus at the beginning and conclusion of the process, while sub-teams visit the off-campus sites during the middle phase of the process).

3. Selection of off-campus sites to be visited (a cross-section of sites, at least two in each accrediting region, which represent both the variety of programs offered and the stages of development of the sites).

4. Development of Basic Site Data Forms to be used in the evaluation
of off-campus sites (to provide information on common, agreed-upon
dimensions across sites to be validated by sub-teams of the total
team during their visits to the off-campus sites).

Although it is not essential to the sequential evaluation process,
Commission staff and institutional representatives have found it useful
to develop a statement which accurately describes the current status of
the institution, including its off-campus programs, with the Commission.
To this statement may be attached a list of the off-campus sites
(location, programs, approximate number of classes and number of
students, dates the program is offered). The statement can then be
reproduced on Commission letterhead for distribution both by the
Commission and the institution in response to queries about the
institution and its off-campus program The current statement developed
for Webster College is included as Appendix G.

B. The sequential evaluation visit. A typical sequential evaluation
visit is scheduled in three phases, with a time frame that permits the
development and review of draft reports of each phase of the visit by the
team members, institutional representatives, and Commission staff before
the final phase of the visit. Sufficient time is also built into the
process for the review of the final report and the development of an
official institutional response to the report by the institutional
representatives.

Phase One: The initial visit to the home campus is made by the
total team. The purpose of the initial phase is to provide an
orientation to the sequential evaluation process, to evaluate the
programs on the main campus, and to test the Basic Site Data Forms
at nearby extended-campus sites. At this time the team determines
whether revision should be made in the site instrument. The Exit
Interview provides a opportunity for team members and
institutional representatives to discuss findings, ask questions,
and suggest next steps. Following the visit, the team prepares a
draft report of Initial Impressions, Tentative Findings, and
Suggestions for Remaining Phases of the Visit.

Phase Two: Site visits are made by two-person teams from the total team to selected extended campus sites in each of the accrediting regions in which the College offers its programs. Team members receive the Basic Site Data Forms designed to insure comparability of information before the visits. Following the visits the teams prepare brief reports according to an agreed-upon format. The Basic Site Data Forms serve as attachments to the site reports of the team.

Phase three: The total team reconvenes at the home campus for a final visit to confirm findings and to draft the final report. The team, institutional representatives, and the Commission staff person have received the tentative reports from Phase One and Phase Two in advance of the Phase Three visit. The team's accrediting recommendation is given at the Exit Interview, which is Commission procedure for all institutional evaluations.

C. Preparation of the team report of the evaluation. Following the visit, the team chairperson prepares the draft report of the evaluation. After corrections of errors of fact are made by the institutional representatives, the chairperson prepares the final report of the visit. Because of the unusual nature of the evaluation, the introduction to the report should clearly indicate the purpose and design of the visit. The report usually has three parts: (1) a summative report which presents the team's overall assessment of the ins.tution, including its off-campus programs, a summary of strengths and concerns, and the team's accrediting recommendation with the reasons for the recommendation; (2) the reports of the off-campus site visits, with the Basic Site Data Forms as attachments; and (3) appendices consisting of the materials prepared for the visit: Institutional Summary Sheet (a summary of essential information relating to the visit), Evaluation Design for the Sequential Evaluation and Procedures for the Evaluation of Extended Campus Sites and the Basic Site Data Forms.

team report prepared in this manner is a useful and comprehensive record of the sequential evaluation visit. It also provides essential information to the Review Committee members of the Commission whose task it is to consider the team report and recommendations, along with the institution's response, and to offer a judgment to the Executive Board of the Commission that the team's recommendation be accepted or revised before the final accrediting action is taken.

IV. Observations on the sequential evaluation process

Out of my experience in the development of sequential evaluation designs for a number of institutions, I have suggested a sequential evaluation model as an effective mechanism for the evaluation of an institution with off-campus programs in geographically-dispersed sites. However, those who consider adapting the sequential evaluation model to their own institutional evaluation should be aware of the special demands that the model places upon both the institution and its accrediting commission.

The development of a sequential evaluation requires serious attention by the institution and the commission to a wide variety of details for the coordination of the visit. Factors which must be considered include: development of agreements about the nature of the visit, the evaluation design, the instruments, and the logisitics of the evaluation; preparation and dissemination of materials related to the visit; selection of a team of experienced evaluators who have skills and competencies appropriate to the institution and who are open to the evaluation of different forms of learning;

communication with other regional executives for the selection of evaluators from those regions to serve as members of the evaluation team; notification to appropriate state agency officials of visits to sites in their states. The time necessitated for these preparations is cons. erable. The administrative costs of these preparations are substantial, as is the cost of deploying a team to a number of sites for a number of days.

The team chairperson must be willing to make an extensive professional commitment to a lengthy and demanding evaluation process, engaging in the initial planning of the visit with institutional representatives and commission staff, coordinating the team through the various phases of the visit, and developing a comprehensive and exacting report that is useful to both the institution and the commission. Significant commitment is also required of the evaluation team members who must devote six to ten days to on-site visits during the evaluation period, and who must contribute to the development of the site visit reports.

Allowance must be made in the time period of the sequential evaluation visit for adequate review of the team reports of the various site visits, for review of the final team report, and for the preparation of the institution's response to the report. Finally, special efforts are required to make Commissioners who serve on review committees and Executive Board members who make the final accrediting decision aware of the special purpose and unusual nature of a sequential evaluation visit.

Having offered these caveats, I would like to emphasize my personal conviction that the special efforts required are justified. There is a clearer understanding on the part of the institution and the commission of the purposes of accreditation and the outcomes of the evaluation process. Those evaluators who have participated in a sequential visit agree that the process stretches their abilities and brings them new insights into the accountability of evaluators. While the sequential evaluation model is not appropriate for every institution or for every evaluation, all institutions would benefit from an evaluation process in which institutional representatives and commission staff members work together from the outset to determine the purposes, procedures, and desired outcomes of the visit.

Patricia A. Thrash
September 29, 1978

APPENDIX A

Section A   Statement on Off-Campus Programs

Section B   Columbia College Institutional Summary Sheet and
             Evaluation Schedule

Section C   Evaluation Design for Columbia College (Missouri)

Section D   Procedures for the Evaluation of Extended Studies
             Division Sites of Columbia College (Missouri)

Section E   Columbia College (Missouri) Basic Site Data Forms

Section F   Central Michigan University Questions (to assist
             evaluators in the validation of the information
             provided in the Basic Site Data Forms)

Section G   Statement on the Accreditation Status of Webster
             College (with attached list of the extended studies
             sites at which Webster College currently offers
             programs)

SECTION A

STATEMENT ON OFF-CAMPUS PROGRAMS

Endorsed by the Executive Board
of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education,
North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

Recent years have seen an increase in concern about programs offered off-campus by institutions of higher education. Much of this concern has been directed to alleged lack of educational quality in such programs. Such allegations have usually been supported by only isolated examples, but conclusions have been drawn -- or at least implied -- about all programs offered away from the campus environment. Suggestions have been made that the accrediting associations should impose "tighter controls" and adopt extensive and restrictive regulations governing off-campus programs in accredited institutions.

The Commission staff has recently completed a comprehensive survey of off-campus programs offered by postsecondary institutions accredited by the North Central Association. An examination of this survey shows:

1. A large number of students served by off-campus programs are associated with long-established extension and continuing education activities of major universities.

2. Substantial numbers of students in off-campus programs are campus-based students participating in programs operated by their home institutions (such as study abroad programs and similar educational programs directed toward broadening the educational oopportunities of "conventional" students).

3. The bulk of the remaining off-campus programs are conducted on military bases primarily for military personnel.

It is clear that these programs have played -- and in our opinion should continue to play -- an important role in extending and enlarging educational opportunity for many persons.

Off-campus programs are examined in the course of North Central's comprehensive evaluation of institutions for initial or continued accreditation. The results of a number of such examinations show that, in general, the off-campus programs of accredited institutions are of at least acceptable educational quality, and some are of excellent quality.

We know, from our examinations, that some off-campus programs of accredited institutions have failed to provide educational work of the desired quality. But a comprehensive view of all off-campus programs shows that those that are of poor quality are a small minority. When our examinations have discovered such programs, the institutions have uniformly sought to make improvements with the assistance, advice, and

continued evaluation of the Commi   . When needed improvements have
not been possible the programs have been closed.

In light of these facts, it seems to us short-sighted at best to seek
to impose heavily restrictive regu. lens that would make it difficult
to offer off-campus programs. Such regulations would place a burden on
all off-campus programs, the many good ones and the few poor ones
alike. The cost of such restrictions would be a diminishing of the
educational opportunities provided by off-campus programs, because they
would make offering such programs unattractive. This would be a heavy
cost to society, the development of which needs additional educational
opportunities for individuals to improve themselves by learning new
skills, increasing specialized knowledge, and -- perhaps most of all --
by raising their levels of general education. It is obvious that indi-
viduals, interested in and concerned about their educations, would also
lose from unnecessary restrictions on educational opportunity.

We believe that most persons seeking additional education are committed
to obtaining the best education available to them. Thus, we think that
the best means to diminish the already small number of poor quality
programs is to increase the number of good quality programs. The
growth of off-campus programs -- which seek to serve persons who for
many reasons cannot be served on campuses -- shows that there is a need
for such programs. We urge our institutions to recognize this need and
to seek to meet it within the scope of their various missions. The
need is for programs of high quality provided by institutions of sub-
stantial educational resources.

We believe that the policies and procedures already in place in the
work of this Commission represent ways in which off-campus programs of
poor quality are discouraged without restricting the continued exis-
tence and growth of good quality programs. These policies and proce-
dures seem to us consistent with those recently recommended by the
executives of the regional accrediting associations. Included in these
policies and procedures are the following:

1. The regular examination of off-campus programs as a part of our
    comprehensive evaluations of all institutions accredited by us. In
    recent years such examinations have taken our visiting teams
    throughout the United States, as visits have been made to many off-
    campus sites.

2. Insistence, through one of our criteria of eligibility, that an
    institution meet all the legal requirements imposed for offering
    courses and credits in each state in which it operates.

?. Cooperation among the several regional accrediting associations, so that off-campus sites located outside the home region of an institution are examined by teams including evaluators from several regions. In recent years we have, following this policy, had on North Central teams evaluators from all of the other regions.

·. Regarding the establishment of a program of off-campus education as an indication of possible substantive change within an institution. Under our substantive change policy, such a change is a signal for a comprehensive examination of the institution, which must be completed, with action approving the change, before the change can be instituted.

5. Requiring more frequent evaluations of institutions experiencing rapid change. Our experience is that many off-campus programs, particularly those conducted far from the home campus, experience many and frequent changes as institutions seek new ways to monitor and guarantee educational quality. In some cases we have provided partial or complete institutional evaluations in successive years for institutions exhibiting such rapidity of change as a result of their off-campus operations.

6. Improvement of regular reporting by institutions to the Commission offices. Our institutional annual reports now ask that institutions conducting off-campus activities outside their home states provide the Commission with a list of all out-of-state sites. Staff monitoring of these reports is a way of our being continually apprised of changes and developments within the institutions.

7. The Commission has recommended to institutions at their request persons to provide consulting assistance in the development and evaluation of off-campus programs. While such consultation is apart from the regular evaluative processes of the Commission, it is a valuable service to our affiliated institutions, and the reports of the Commission recommended consultants are available to our visiting teams.

We are skeptical that an elaborate procedure requiring special and lengthy prior approvals for off-campus programs would be effective in reducing programs of poor quality. We are certain that such a procedure would inhibit institutions concerned with high educational quality in expanding or initiating off-campus programs. Experience shows clearly that regulations do not prevent abuses: those determined to abuse find ways to circumvent or ignore regulations. Prevention of abuse in education lies in developing within each institution a concern for quality and an awareness of the continuous attention needed to attain high quality. We believe that our program of self-study, which provides the opportunity and incentive for each institution to evaluate f, contributes greatly to developing such concern and awareness.

And we believe that our monitoring of institutions provides a rea-
sonable chance that those few cases in which poor quality has been al-
lowed to exist will be discovered and that corrective action will be
initiated.

Our activities are of course confined to institutions that have volun-
tarily sought affiliation with this Commission. Many documented cases
of programs of poor quality have involved unaccredited institutions
which no accrediting association can influence. We believe that each
of the states should have in place appropriate statutes and regulations
providing a basic level of protection to its citizens against educa-
tional abuse. We stand ready to assist any state considering the adop-
tion of such statutes and regulations. In a number of states in the
North Central region cooperation between the state agencies and our
staff has assisted the work of both in protecting the public interest
and promoting educational quality. Such cooperation is not only effec-
tive, but also is provided at minimum cost to the public.

We urge our institutions to give careful thought to the need and demand
for off-campus programs and to seek to maintain high quality in such
programs. We encourage all who believe that they know of programs of
poor quality to communicate that concern to our staff, who can initiate
examination and corrective action if it is warranted. Our concern is
for high educational quality, which can best be attained not by prior
restraint, but by encouraging institutions of integrity to create and
improve programs in an atmosphere of freedom and support.

July 24, 1978

NORTH CENTRAL ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS
Commission on Institutions of Higher Education
INSTITUTIONAL SUMMARY SHEET

INSTITUTION: COLUMBIA COLLEGE
                       Columbia, MO 65201

EXECUTIVE OFFICER: Dr. Bruce Kelly, President (314) 449-0531

STATE COORDINATING/
GOVERNING OR OTHER
RELATED AGENCY: not applicable

INSTITUTIONAL SUMMARY: Private, coeducational institution, accredited at the
                        bachelor's degree level, offering liberal arts,
                        general, and teacher preparatory programs
                        Enrollment: 1,134 at Columbia campus
                                     1,800 at Extended Studies Division sites

TYPE OF EVALUATION: a comprehensive evaluation of Columbia College,
                        including its Extended Studies Division, for continued
                        accreditation at the bachelor's degree level

EVALUATION FEE: cost + $1,000   NCA STAFF: Dr. Patricia Thrash
                                                          (800) 323-6528
EVALUATION PERIOD: Spring 1978   (312) 864-0740

REPORT DUE: within six weeks after evaluation   LENGTH OF VISIT:
                                                 sequential--see attached
                                                 evaluation schedule
DATE OF VISIT:

   Phase I: April 2-6, 1978

   The initial visit to the Columbia, Missouri, Campus by the total team.
   The team will evaluate the programs on the main campus and will test the
   Basic Site Data Forms developed for the Extended Studies Division at sites
   within two hours of the campus:

        -the Columbia civilian site
        -Fort Leonard Wood, MO, military site
        -St. Louis military sites

   Phase Two: April, May, 1978

   Site visits will be made by two-person teams to selected Extended Studies
   Division sites in each of the accrediting regions in which Columbia offers
   its ESD programs: North Central, Southern, Western, Northwest, and Middle
   States. (See attached evaluation schedule for list of sites to be visited)

   Phase Three: June 1-2, 1978

   The total team will reconvene at Columbia College, Missouri, for its final
   visit for the purpose of confirming findings and drafting the final report.

   Commission Action: July 22-23, 1978

              -see other side for evaluation team members-

EVALUATION TEAM MEMBERS FROM THE NORTH CENTRAL ASSOCIATION:

CHAIRPERSON:
Dr. Wilson B. Thiede
Provost for University Outreach
University of Wisconsin System
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608/263-6860
Administration/Continuing Education

Dr. John E. Cantelon
Provost & Academic Vice President
Central Michigan University
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859
517/774-3931
Administration/Philosophy

Dr. Earl A. Roth
Dean, College of Business
Eastern Michigan University
Ypsilanti, MI 48197
313/487-4141
Administration/Business

Dr. Catherine M. Warrick
Dean of the Center for
Experimental Studies
Metropolitan State College
1006 11th Street
Denver, CO 80204
303/629-3018
Administration/English and
Linguistics/Higher Education

EVALUATION TEAM MEMBERS FROM THE OTHER ACCREDITING REGIONS:

NORTHWEST ASSOCIATION
Ms. Susan Burcaw
Director of Continuing Education
University of Idaho
Moscow, ID 83343
208/885-6486
Administration/Educational
  Administration

WESTERN ASSOCIATION
Dr. John O'Connell
Dean
Western State University
College of Law of Orange County
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Fullerton, CA 92631
714/738-1000
Government/Politics/Law

MIDDLE STATES ASSOCIATION
Dr. William L. Crump, Dean
School of Business & Public Management
University of the District of Columbia-
  Mount Vernon Campus
1331 H Street
Washington, D. C. 20005
202/727-2235
Business/Management
Please use home address:
4242 East West Highway, Apt. 1115
Chevy Chase, MD 20015
203/656-5123

SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION
Dr. Jerry Padgett
Dean, School of Business Administration
Winthrop College
Rock Hill, SC 29733
803/323-2211
Economics

OBSERVER OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS:

Mr. Joe Hardman
College Eligibility Section
Division of Eligibility and Agency Evaluation
Bureau of Higher Education
U. S. Office of Education
Washington, D. C. 20202
202/245-2944

(In addition, Columbia officials may invite a representative of the Missouri Department of Higher Education to participate as an observer of the evaluation process.)

Attachment

EVALUATION SCHEDULE FOR COLUMBIA COLLEGE (MISSOURI)

SPRING 1978

PHASE I: APRIL 2-6, 1978

INITIAL VISIT TO COLUMBIA, MISSOURI, CAMPUS AND NEARBY EXTENDED CAMPUS SITES

Sunday, April 2

+team arrives; orientation session Sunday evening

Monday, April 3

+team meets with president and officers

    -evaluation of Columbia, MO, campus
    -team meets, evening

Tuesday, April 4

+various team members disperse to extended campus sites

    -four to St. Louis
        --two to Lambert Field, MO   Roth (CH), Crump
        --two to Granite City, IL   Cantelon (CH), Burcaw

    -two to Fort Leonard Wood, MO   Warrick (CH), O'Connell
      --military program (progress
        since last visit)

    -others to Columbia Civilian   Thiede (CH), Padgett
      Program on Campus (progress
      since last visit)

Wednesday, April 5

+team reconvenes at Columbia, MO

    -draft reports of site visits
    -suggest revisions in site instrument
    -prepare summary of findings

Thursday. April 6

+Exit Interview

    -Initial Impressions/Tentative Findings, and Suggestions
     for Remaining Phases of the Visit

+Prepare report on site (or immediately thereafter)

9/27/78   -more-

PHASE II: APRIL, MAY, 1978--VISITS TO SELECTED EXTENDED CAMPUS SITES

General format will be two-person teams to two-three sites in each geographical region for two-three nights.

(Military programs available April 10-29; Civilian programs available April 10-15, May 8-31)

LOCATION	SITE TEAM	DATE OF VISIT
NORTH CENTRAL SITES		
+Denver, CO, Civilian Program	Roth (CH), Padgett	April 17
+Kansas City National Guard Armory -active duty off-base	Warrick (CH), Thiede	May 9-10
+Kansas City Civilian Program	Warrick (CH), Thiede	May 9-10
NORTHWEST SITES		
+Seattle Civilian Program (revisit)	Cantelon (CH), Burcaw	April 30-May 1
+Fort Lewis, WA (active duty/on-base)	Cantelon (CH), Burcaw	May 2
+Fort Lawton, WA (active duty/on-base) -sub-post of Ft. Lewis	Cantelon (CH), Burcaw	May 1
WESTERN SITES		

+San Francisco-3 military sites
-all active duty/on-base
  1) Treasure Island; 2) Petaluma;
  3) Oakland Army Base
	Warrick (CH), O'Connell	April 17-19

MIDDLE STATES SITES		
+Hyattsville, MD (military) -active duty/off-base	Roth (CH), Crump	May 1
+Hancock Field, NY (military) -active duty/on-base	Roth (CH), Crump	May 2
SOUTHERN STATES SITES		
+Miami, FL, Military Base -active duty/off-base	Thiede (CH), Padgett	April 24
+Orlando Naval Training Center, FL -active duty/on-base (large; other institutions there)	Thiede (CH), Padgett	April 25

PHASE III: June 1-2, 1978--FINAL VISIT TO COLUMBIA COLLEGE, MO, CAMPUS

+Total team reconvenes for final visit
   -confirm findings
   -draft final report

+Exit Interview
   -accrediting recommendation

COMMISSION ACTION: JULY 22-23, 1978

NCA

North Central Association
of Colleges and Schools
Commission on Institutions
of Higher Education

1221 University Avenue
Boulder, Colorado 80302
303 449 7110
800 525 0840

820 Davis Street
Evanston, Illinois 60201
312 864 0140
800 323 6528

EVALUATION DESIGN FOR COLUMBIA COLLEGE (MISSOURI)

Spring 1978

The elements of this evaluation design result from a number of discussions between Columbia College officials and Commission staff.

Purpose of the evaluation. This is an evaluation of the total institution, including the Extended Studies Division, for continued accreditation at the bachelor's degree level. Because the evaluation encompasses the total institution in terms of its progress since the time of the last evaluation, the team will be concerned about the following elements:

- that the institution has a clearly-defined mission which is appropriate to the educational tasks it is performing;

- that the institution has the resources to carry out the mission which it has defined for itself, including its mission of offering programs at extended campus sites;

- that the institution has responded to concerns identified by evaluation teams which visited the institution in 1973, 1976, and 1977;

- that appropriate assessment procedures are in place and that, in the evaluation of the Extended Studies Division programs, these elements are particularly important.

    -- quality of work offered;
    -- relation of program to Columbia College degree requirements;
    -- general administration and quality control;
    -- comparability of work on campus and at extended sites.

Evaluation team competencies. Evaluation team members will be selected from the North Central Association region and the other accrediting regions in which ESD programs are offered - Southern, Western, Northwest, and Middle States Competencies of team members should include the following:

- ability to assess undergraduate programs both on campus and at ESD sites and to make comparisons concerning the quality of on campus and off campus programs;

- knowledge concerning both the traditional liberal arts institution and the emerging institution with extended campus programs;

- knowledge about governance, fiscal planning, budgeting, decision-making, and competency-assessment (including the validation of experiential learning).

Evaluation fee. The fee for the evaluation visit will be actual costs plus $1,000. Patricia Thrash will invite the various regional officers to suggest evaluators to serve on the team. These evaluators will be paid directly by the North Central Association according to its fee standards for evaluators.

Evaluation visit design. This is a comprehensive evaluation, sequential in nature, of Columbia College, including its Extended Studies Division. The visit is divided into three phases:

Phase One: the initial visit to the Columbia, Missouri, campus by the total team on April 3-7, 1978. The team will evaluate the programs on the main campus and will test the Basic Site Data Forms developed for the Extended Studies Division at sites within two hours of the campus:

   -the Columbia civilian site
   -Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, military site
   -St. Louis military sites

At this time the team will determine whether revision should be made in the site instrument. The Exit Interview will provide an opportunity for the team members and institutional representatives to discuss findings, ask questions, and suggest next steps. Following the visit, the team will prepare a draft report of Initial Impressions. Tentative Findings, and Suggestions for Remaining Phases of the Visit.

Phase Two: April, May, 1978

(Military programs available A. 10-29; Civilian programs available April 10-15, May 8-31)

Site visits will be made by two-person teams to selected ESD sites in each of the accrediting regions in which Columbia offers its ESD programs: North Central, Southern, Western, Northwest, and Middle States. Basic Site Data Forms have been designed to insure comparabilit of information. Team members will receive the Basic Site Data Forms prepared by the sites before the visits. Following the visits the teams will prepare brief reports according to an agreed-upon format. The Basic Site Data Forms will serve as attachments to the site reports.

Sites to be visited will be determined by team chairperson Wilson Thiede and Patricia Thrash, in consultation with President Bruce Kelly. (Avoid 1st and last weeks of minimester)

Phase Three: May or June, 1978

The total team will reconvene at Columbia College, Missouri, for its final visit for the purpose of confirming findings and drafting the final report. The team, institutional representatives, and Patricia Thrash of the Commission staff will have received the tentative reports from Phase One and Phase Two in advance of the Phase Three visit. The team's accrediting recommendation will be given at the Exit Interview. Following the Exit Interview, the chairperson and the team will prepare the draft report. After corrections of errors of fact by the institutional representatives, the team chairperson will prepare the final report of the visit.

Commission action. Commission accrediting action is anticipated at the Summer Meeting of the Commission scheduled for July 22-23, 1978, at the O'Hare Hilton in Chicago.

Participation in the process. In addition to the evaluation team members, Columbia officials will invite a representative of the Missouri Department of Higher Education and Mr. Joe Hardman of the USOE/DEAE Bureau of Higher Education, College Eligibility Section, to participate as observers of the evaluation process.

Materials for the evaluation team. See attached list of materials sent to the evaluation team by the Commission and the institution.

Patricia A. Thrash
Associate Director
(Evanston)

September 27, 1978 (Revised)

Attachment

NORTH CENTRAL ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS
Commission on Institutions of Higher Education
820 Davis Street   Evanston, IL   60201   (312) 864-0740   (800) 323-6528

MATERIALS FOR THE COLUMBIA COLLEGE (MISSOURI) EVALUATION TEAM

March 2, 1978

MATERIALS PREPARED FOR THE SPRING 1978 EVALUATION OF COLUMBIA COLLEGE

1. Institutional Summary Sheet with attached Evaluation Schedule (attached to letter)
2. Notes of a Meeting with Columbia College (Missouri) Representatives, January 12, 1978
3. Evaluation Design for Columbia College (Missouri)
4. Procedures for Evaluation of Extended Studies Division Sites of Columbia College (Missouri)
5. Columbia College (Missouri) Basic Site Data Forms

GENERAL MATERIALS PROVIDED BY THE COMMISSION OFFICES.

MATERIALS TO CHAIRPERSON ONLY:
1. Team Chairperson's Evaluation of Associate Members
2. Nominations for Consultant-Evaluator Associate Program

MATERIALS TO ENTIRE TEAM:
1. Request for Travel Reimbursement forms (5)
2. Handbook on Accreditation
3. Changes Affecting the Accredited or Candidate Status of an Institution, draft statement of July 1977 (to replace material on substantive change currently on page 38 of the Handbook on Accreditation)
4. Draft Statement on Affiliation of Institutions with the Commission, September 10, 1977
5. Comments and Suggestions for Subsequent NCA Review of Columbia College ESD Programs, paper prepared by William Hazard and Barbara Mickey
6. Comments on NCA Evaluation Procedures for Non-traditional, Geographically-Dispersed College Programs, paper prepared by William Hazard and Barbara Mickey
7. Patricia A. Thrash, "Nontraditional Institutions and Programs: A Challenge for the Accreditation Process," NCA Quarterly, Vol. 49, No. 3, Winter 1975, pages 321-329
8. Patricia A. Thrash, "Evaluation of Nontraditional Learning Forms: The Extended Campus Program," NCA Quarterly, Vol. 51, No. 2, Fall 1976, pages 280-28
9. Terrence J. MacTaggart, "New Consumers in Higher Education: Extended Programs for Military Students," NCA Quarterly, Vol. 51, No. 2, Fall 1976, pages 288-295
10. H. Victor Baldi, "External Degree Programs: In Search of New Definitions for Quality," NCA Quarterly, Vol. 51, No. 2, Fall 1976, pages 275-279

-more-

MATERIALS FROM THE INSTITUTIONS FILE IN THE COMMISSION OFFICES:

1. History Sheet
2. Institutional Annual
3. Accreditation Status (....mbia College (Missouri) with attached list of Extended Studies Division Sites
4. Columbia College Extended Studies Weekly Report dated February 25, 1978 (sent as an example of the weekly reports made to the Commission offices)
5. Report of a Visit dated May 2-4, 1973; Institutional Responses dated June 8, June 14, June 29; Recommendation/Action Sheet from Summer Meeting 1973; related Action Letter dated July 30, 1973
6. Report of a Consultant Visit by George Rainsford dated December 9-11, 1974
7. Report of a Consultant Visit by Robert Ray dated October 13-15, 1975
8. Report of a Consultant Visit by George Rainsford dated January 11-13, 1976
9. Report of a Visit dated January 26-28, 1976; Institutional Response dated April 1, 1976; Recommendation/Action Sheet from Annual Meeting 1976; related Action Letter dated April 9, 1976
10. Report of an Evaluation Focused on the Extended Studies Division dated July, 1976-February, 1977; Supplement to Report from William Hazard dated April 9, 1977; Institutional Response dated April 1, 1977; related Action Letter dated April 18, 1977 with attached Report of Review Committee from Annual Meeting 1977

MATERIALS PREPARED BY COLUMBIA COLLEGE FOR THE EVALUATION
(mailed from the Commission offices at the request of the institution)

1. Self-Study Report/Abstract
2. ' ic Institutional Data Forms
3. - .utional Catalog
4. _xt :.ded Studies Division Degree Completion : lletin, Columbia College, 1977-78
5. Faculty and Student Handbooks

3/2/73

NCA

North Central Association
of Colleges and Schools
Commission on Institutions
of Higher Education

1221 University Avenue
Boulder, Colorado 80302
303 449 7110
800 525-0840

820 Davis Street
Evanston, Illinois 60201
312 864-0740
800 323 6528

PROCEDURES FOR EVALUATION OF EXTENDED STUDIES DIVISION SITES

OF COLUMBIA COLLEGE (MISSOURI)

These procedures are designed so that the information about the
sites to be visited is supplied by Columbia College for the site
team in advance of the visit. Instead of using an instrument at
the site, the team will validate the information provided by the
institution in the Basic Site Data Forms and will prepare a
report covering specified areas. The use of a standard format
for the site team report, with the Basic Site Data Forms as an
attachment, will provide comparable data for the sites visited.

Evaluation of Extended Studies Division site programs of Columbia College

These elements are important in evaluation of the extended site programs:

1. quality of work offered

2. relation of program to Columbia College degree requirements

3. general administration and quality control

4. comparability of work on campus and at extended campus sites.

Columbia officials are asked to supply information on the Basic Site Data Forms (attached). These forms are designed to give the institution an opportunity to provide basic data and program assessment for the team in advance of the site visit. Assessment of the information provided is essential, as are plans for responding to concerns identified. Here are examples of evidence which might be offered under each of the headings indicated:

1. quality of work offered:

    +syllabi
    +tests
    +grade distribution
    +faculty evaluation by students
    +student projects, reports

2. relation of program to Columbia College degree requirements:

    +final transcripts (samples) (home site)
    +summary of GPA's on graduates
    +transfer credit and experiential learning credit given
     (range and per cent; mean)

3. general administration and quality control:

    +profile of students admitted/graduated (single term)
    +profile of faculty
    +student products
    +facilities/learning resources
    +per cent of students admitted who leave program or are dismissed;
     per cent who complete program; samples of good and poor student
     products (papers, tests, etc.).

4. evidence that the program as it operates at the site provides an adequate education and is comparable to the program offered on the Columbia campus.

    This is the "bottom line" assessment to be offered by the institution and to be validated by the site team.

Responsibilities of the on-site evaluation team

The charge to the evaluation team visiting the Extended Studies Division of Columbia College is to evaluate the quality of work offered, to determine the relation of the program to Columbia College degree requirements, to assess general administration and quality control procedures, and to judge whether the program as it operates at the site is adequate and is comparable to the programs offered on the Columbia campus.

The evaluation team has three basic tasks. The first is to verify the data and to validate the assessment provided by site personnel on the Basic Site Data Forms through meetings with the site program coordinator, faculty members, and students. The second task is to collect independent data on the elements previously cited (quality of work offered, relation of program to Columbia College degree requirements, general administration and quality control, and adequacy/comparability of the program). The third task is to evaluate the information and to write a report of the on-site visit in brief narrative form, using the following format:

1. introduction: brief description of site visited and procedures followed

2. quality of work offered (validation and assessment of course, student, faculty data)

3. relation of program to Columbia College degree requirements (validation and assessment of course, student, and faculty data)

4. general administration and quality control (validation and assessment of data from site program coordinator, faculty)

5. statement of the team's judgment whether the program as it operates at the site provides an adequate education and is comparable to the program offered on the Columbia campus

6. attachment of the Basic Site Data Forms as an appendix to the report

The cover sheet of the report should read as follows:

Report of a Visit to

(name, location of site)

An Extended Studies Division Site of Columbia College (Missouri)

on

(dates of visit)

by

A North Central Association Evaluation Team

(list chairperson and team member(s)--
name, title, institution)

Institutional materials for the evaluation visit

1. these materials which team members will receive should be reviewed before the initial visit to Columbia College (Phase One)

    +Columbia College Self-Study Report/Abstract
    +Basi Institutional Data Forms
    +Institutional Catalogs
    +Faculty and Student Handbooks

2. these materials should be available to the appropriate team members either during the Phase I visit or well in advance of the visit to the site:

    +Basic Site Data Forms
    +course descriptions, course outlines, and competencies for courses available on the evening of the site visit

3. these materials should be available on site:

    +all faculty files (including vitae
    +sample transcripts for graduates of the last year or two
    +sample tests, quizzes, etc. used by faculty
    +sample "work products" of students

Procedures for the visit

1. The site team chairperson should make final arrangements for the team visit with President Bruce Kelly. Dr. Kelly or his designate will coordinate arrangements with the chairperson and team member(s).

2. Team members should plan to arrive at the site by noon of the day when evening classes are to be visited. Departure plans can be made for late morning or noon of the day following the visit.

3. The site team chairperson should forward copies of the report of the site visit to (1) President Kelly, (2) Dr. Thiede, and (3) Dr. Thrash for review. Correction of errors of fact should be sent to the site team c irperson and to Dr. Thiede, who has the responsibility for correcting er.ors of fact for the final total team report.

4. Columbia College officials and all members of the team who made the initial visit to the Columbia campus on April 3-7, 1978, are to receive copies of the Initial Team Report and copies of the reports of each site visit in advance of the final team meeting on the Columbia campus.

Revised 9/27/78

NCA

**North Central Association
of Colleges and Schools
Commission on Institutions
of Higher Education**

1221 University Avenue
Boulder, Colorado 80302
303 449 7110
800 525 0840

820 Davis Street
Evanston Illinois 60201
312 564 740
800 323 6528

COLUMPIA COLLEGE (MISSOURI)

BASIC SITE DATA FORMS

THE FORMS ATTACHED ARE DESIGNED TO GIVE THE INSTITUTION AN OPPORTUNITY TO PROVIDE BASIC DATA AND PROGRAM ASSESSMENT FOR THE TEAM IN ADVANCE OF THE SITE VISIT.

THE DATA FORMS ARE ORGANIZED AS FOLLOWS:

PART ONE: COURSE DATA

PART TWO: DATA FROM THE SITE PROGRAM COORDINATOR

PART THREE: DATA FROM FACULTY MEMBERS (THIS SHEET SHOULD BE REPRODUCED SO THAT EACH FACULTY MEMBER FILLS OUT A SHEET)

PART FOUR: STUDENT DATA

BASIC SITE DATA

A. Site location (indicate name, address, military or civilian site):

B. Names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the following persons:

1. Site coordinator:

2. Education service officer:

Evaluation team members: Date of visit:

PART ONE: BASIC COURSE DATA

A. Basic course d ... Provide the following information for all courses offered this term:*

Course number	Title	Instructor's name	Time course meets	Date course begins	Date course ends	Number enrolled

B. Description of classroom facilities. Provide brief description of location, physical characteristics, adequacy of space, equipment, facilities, library resources, etc.:

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*As an attachment, please provide a listing of all courses offered at this site by term since the establishment of the program and the total number of students enrolled for each term.

3/2/78

Basic Site Data Forms - Page Three

PART TWO: DATA FROM SITE PROGRAM COORDINATOR

A.   What are your principal duties?

B.   What role or responsibility do you have in:

  1.   Organizing and scheduling courses on your site?

  2.   Monitoring, assessing, or evaluating instruction?

  3.   Advising students?

  4.   Working with base education officer?

C.   Describe the nature and frequency of your communications with Columbia
     College officials at the home campus, commenting specifically on:

  1.   Written reports to Extended Studies Division:

  2.   Training programs for faculty:

  3.   Other:

D.   From your perspective, what are the program's greatest...

  1.   Strengths?

  2.   Needs?

E.   What are your plans to respond to the needs you have identified?

PART THREE: DATA FROM FACULTY MEMBERS

<u>PLEASE DUPLICATE THIS SHEET AT THE SITE SO THAT EACH INSTRUCTOR TEACHING THIS TERM MAY PROVIDE THE INFORMATION REQUESTED ON BOTH SIDES.</u>

Name:

Academic Field:

1. Prior relevant experience:

2. Prior relevant training and date of training:

3. Evidence of scholarly activity:

4. How do you remain current with the theory and practice in your field?

5. Instructional styles, modes, or methods used in the course:

6. Is the ESD program in the process of developing and implementing competencies for this course? Yes_____No_____ If yes, describe their utility and adequacy.

7. What kinds of evaluation of student progress are the basis for assigning grades in your classes? (e.g., quiz, test, papers, etc.)

8. Comment on how you feel about the responsibility of screening students in and out of the program by your grading policies?

9. Materials (text, supplemental, etc.) used or available to students?

10. Describe the nature and frequency of your communications with the site coordinator and Columbia College officials:

11. How do you deal with class absences and missed class ork?

12. From your perspective, what quality control procedures are used in the program?

13. Describe the utility of faculty meetings and/or workshops which you attend:

14. Describe ways in which your classroom performance is evaluated. Do these techniques provide, in your judgment, an accurate and helpful appraisal of your performance?

15. From your perspective, what are the program's greatest...

    a. Strengths?

    b. Needs for further development?

16. Additional comments:

CONTINUING STUDENTS				
NEWLY ADMITTED STUDENTS				
TOTAL ENROLLMENT				
NUMBER OF STUDENTS				
IN GOOD STANDING				
ON WARNING				
ON PROBATION				
WITHDRAWN				
SUSPENDED				
NUMBER OF STUDENTS GRADUATED				
GRADE DISTRIBUTION OF GRADUATES (see attached sheet)				
MEAN NUMBER OF CREDITS TRANSFERRED BY EACH GRADUATE				
MEAN NUMBER OF PROVISIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION CREDITS TRANSFERRED BY EACH GRADUATE				
MEAN NUMBER OF EXPERIENTIAL CREDITS OF GRADUATES				19.
MEAN NUMBER OF COLUMBIA CREDITS OF GRADUATES				

CENTRAL MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY QUESTIONS

A series of questions prepared by the institution for the sequential evaluation of Central Michigan University in 1978-79 to assist evaluators in their validation of the information provided in the Basic Site Data Forms.

I. <u>Site location</u>. Adequacy of the location: physical space, equipment, classroom facilities, library resources, etc.

II. <u>Courses</u>. Are the courses offered as indicated?

III. <u>Program Manager</u>. General observations or comments relative to program operations and quality control as well as program manager's familiarity with policies and procedures prescribed by the College.

IV. <u>Center representatives</u>. General observations relative to program operations and quality control and the center representative's familiarity with policies and procedures prescribed by the College.

V. <u>Academic advisers</u>. General observations relative to program operations and quality control and the adviser's familiarity with policies and procedures prescribed by the College.

VI. <u>Faculty members</u>. General observations on the adequacy of the faculty and their familiarity with policies and procedures prescribed by the College.

A. <u>Classroom observations</u>:

1. evidence of instructor's preparation for the class session observed.

2. instructional styles, modes, or methods observed.

3. quality of work offered.

4. instructor/student interaction.

5. books and other materials used by students during class.

VII. <u>Students</u>.

A. <u>Group interview data</u>:

1. Are the required and recommended materials for the course reasonably available to students?

2. What are the principal reasons for students' enrolling in this course?

3. What is student opinion about:

    a. the overall quality of the program offered by the College (strengths, concerns)
    b. the quality of instruction
    c. the quality and availability of academic advisement
    d. the procedures used by the College for end-of-course evaluations
    e. availability of books and other resources for students
    f. procedures for making up missed class sessions
    g. type and level of communications with the College, both on site and with the main campus
    h. responsiveness of the College in resolving any problems students may have encountered
    i. the effect, if any, of the scheduling format sequence on the student's ability to complete the requirements of the course
    j. availability of learning resources (library, etc.)

B. Classroom observations:

1. Student response, participation, and interaction in the class session.

2. Evidence of student preparation for the class session.

3. General observations and comments on the students and the class session(s) observed.

VIII. Records.

A. Are the records consistent and complete?

B. Are they kept in the manner prescribed by the policies and procedures of the college?

C. Are the records secure, and is confidentiality maintained?

D. Are the end-of-course evaluations prescribed by the college used

1. to provide the instructor with an evaluation and an opportunity to improve performance

2. to review and revise courses?

E. Examination of student work products

1. projects

2. reports

9/27/78

NCA

North Central Association
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Commission on Institutions
of Higher Education

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ACCREDITATION STATUS OF WEBSTER COLLEGE

This statement has been prepared by the Commission and the institution as a response to inquiries made of the office of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools regarding the accreditation status of Webster College, St. Louis, Missouri:

> Webster College is accredited at the master's degree level. The college offers baccalaureate and master's degrees. Baccalaureate degrees currently offered include the A.B., B.Mus., B.Mus.Ed., B.F.A.; master's degrees include the Master of Arts/Individualized (MA/I), the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT), the Master of Music (M.M.), and the Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) in Theatre Arts. The North Central Association of Colleges and Schools' Commission on Institutions of Higher Education is the regional accrediting commission responsible for postsecondary accreditation in a nineteen-state region, including Missouri, where Webster College is chartered as an institution of higher education.

> During the academic year 1977-78, a comprehensive evaluation of Webster College was scheduled to determine the college's readiness to move to a higher degree level. As a part of the comprehensive evaluation, which was sequential in nature, a select and representative sample of Webster's extended sites at which the college offers its master's level programs were included. A list of the extended sites at which Webster College currently offers the Master of Arts degree in Individualized Studies (MA/I) and Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) is attached.

> As a result of the evaluation, the Executive Board of the North Central Association's Commission on Institutions of Higher Education took the following action on April 11, 1978:

>> that accreditation be continued at the master's degree-granting level, with that accreditation to include the extended campus program;

>> that a comprehensive evaluation be scheduled in ten years, 1987-88.

> The action of the Board was based on the materials provided by the institution, the report and recommendation of the visitng team, and the recommendations of the Review Committee.

Additional inquiries may be directed to Dr. Patricia Thrash, Associate Director of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, 820 Davis Street, Evanston, Illinois 60201, or to the institution: Dr. Leigh Gerdine, President, Webster College, 470 East Lockwood, St. Louis, Missouri 63119, (314) 968-0500.

ERIC

Attachment

WEBSTER COLLEGE
470 East Lockwood/St. Louis, Mo. 63119/(314) 968-0500

WEBSTER COLLEGE EXTENDED CAMPUS PROGRAMS

MA/I Sites Within North Central Association

State	Location	Name
Missouri	470 E. Lockwood St. Louis, MO. 63119 James Groetsch, Adm. Assistant 968-0500, Ext. 416	Webster College On Campus
Missouri	326 N. Broadway St. Louis, Mo. 63102 Joseph F. Olszewski, Adm. Assistant 968-0500, Ext. 416	Webster College Downtown Campus
Missouri	Anheuser Busch 721 Pestalozzi St. Louis, MO. 63118 Joseph F. Olszewski, Adm. Assistant 968-0500, Ext. 416	Webster College - Anheuser Busch
Missouri	Jefferson Barracks 25 Sherman St. Louis, MO. 63125 Joseph F. Olszewski, Adm. Assistant 968-0500, Ext. 416	Webster College - Jefferson Barracks
Missouri	TSARCOM Attention: DESTS-RCT 4300 Goodfellow St. Louis, MO. 63120 Joseph F. Olszewski, Adm. Assistant 968-0500, Ext.416	Webster College - TSARCOM
Missouri	RC/PAC 9700 Page Ave. St. Louis, MO. 63132 Joseph F. Olszewski, Adm. Assistant 968-0500, Ext. 416	Webster College - RC/PAC
Missouri	Webster College Base Education Bldg. 104 - Room 102 Richards-Gebaur AFB, MO 64030 Leslie Levin, Coordinator 816-331-8177	Richards-Gebaur Air Force Base

Missouri	Webster College Office Building 499 Ft. Leonard Wood, MO 65473 Ron Stone - Coordinator 314-368-4909	Fort Leonard Wood
Arkansas	Education Services Office P. O. Box 1143 Jacksonville, Ark. 72076 Bert Love - Coordinator 501-988-5331	Little Rock Air Force Base
Colorado	Fitzsimons Army Medical Center Building 620 Denver, Colorado 80240 Mel Stokes, Coordinator 303-341-8977 Autovon No. 943-8977	Fitzsimons Army Medical Center
Colorado	Education Office 46 Aero Space Defense Wing, STOP 45 Peterson AFB, Colorado 80914 Barbara Barrett Holley, - Coordinator 303-574-7562	Peterson Air Force Base
Illinois	Army Education Center Bradley Loop Ft. Sheridan, Ill. 60037 Sandy Ramey - Coordinator 312-432-4940	(1) Great Lakes Naval Hosp. School (2) Fort Sheridan
Illinois	375 ABG-Education Office DPT/STOP 229 Scott AFB, Illinois 62225 Sue Richardson - Coordinator 618-746-4747	Scott Air Force Base
Kansas	Education Office 381 CSG/DPE McConnell AFB, Kansas 67221 Cathryn Carter - Coordinator 316-686-6841	McConnell Air Force Base
New Mexico	1606 Air Base Wing DPT Kirtland AFB, New Mexico 87117 Caroline Hansen - Coordinator 505/255-3645	Kirtland AFB
Oklahoma	Base Education Center/Stop 54 Altus AFB, Okla. 73521 Tamra Paolillo - Coordinator 405-477-0359 Autovon No. 866-6246	Altus Air Force Base

MAT Sites Within North Central Association

Missouri	12411 Wornall Road Kansas City, MO 64145 Marge Tansley, Director 816-942-4050	Webster College
Missouri	Pan Educational Institute 4327½ Troost Ave. Kansas City, Mo. 64110 Joan Williams. Director 816-531-6527	Webster College

MA/I Sites Within Southern Association

Louisiana	Education Office England AFB Alexandria, Louisiana 71301 Linda McKinney - Coordinator 318-443-5618, Ext. 5231	England Air Force Base
North Carolina	Education Services DPT Webster College Pope AFB, North Carolina 28308 Anit.. Randall - Coord. 919-497-2424 Autovon Nos. 486-4598 or 486-4679	Pope Air Force Base
South Carolina	Education Office 437 ABG./DPT Charleston AFB, S.C. 29404 Mary Ann Miller - Coordinator 803-744-6892	Charleston Naval Station
South Carolina	Education Office 437 ABG/DPT Charleston, AFB, S.C. 29404 Mary Ann Miller - Coordinator 803-744-8488	Charleston Air Force Base
South Carolina	Education Services Office 354 CSG/DPE Myrtle Beach AFB, S.C. 29577 Ann Scoggins - Coordinator 803-238-5831	Myrtle Beach Air Force Base
Texas	Webster College Office Building 129 NAS Corpus Christi, TX 78419 Marsha Reed - Coordinator 512-937-5775	(1) Corpus Christi Naval Air Station (2) Beeville Naval Air Station (3) Kingsville Naval Air Station

Texas	P.O. Box 6037 Ft. Bliss, Texas 79906 June Amundson - Coordinator 915-568-6426	Fort Bliss
Texas	Base Education Office Building 2248 Ft. Sam Houston, Texas 78234 Grace Howard - Coordinator 512-534-0671 (Brooks AFB) 512-226-3373 (Ft. Sam Houston)	(1) Brooks Air Force Base (2) Fort Sam Houston
Texas	Education Service Office 47th FTW/DPT (in Del Rio, Texas) Laughlin AFB, Texas 78840 Lisa Smith - Coordinator 512-298-3686 Autovon No. 732-2553	Laughlin Air Force Base

MA/I Sites Within Western Association

California	Webster College MCAS (H) Education Office Santa Ana, California 92710 Allen C. Meadors, Coordinator 714/552-0634	Marine Corps Air Station (Helicopter) Santa Ana

OTHER

Iceland	Navy Campus for Achievement Box 15 USNS FPO New York 09571 Patricia Sager - Coordinator Autovon No. 228-0127	Keflavik Naval Station
Switzerland	Dr. John Rider, Coordinator Centre International Reforne John Knox 27 Chemin des Crets de Pregny CH 1218 Grand-Saconnex/Geneva Switzerland Tel: 98-91-71	

Revised as of 6/23/78

ALTUS AIR FORCE BASE - #15
Tamra Paolillo - Fac. Advsr. & Coordinator
Tal Uden, Faculty Coordinator
Devone Baron, Secretary
Base Education Center/Stop 54
Altus AFB, OK 73521
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h: 305/477-1350
Autovon No. 866-6246

CHARLESTON AFB - #18, & NB - #17
Mary Ann Miller - Coordinator
Dr. Sheila Davis, Fac. Coordinator
Robert M. Knight, Faculty Advisor
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437 ABG/DPT
Charleston AFB, South Carolina 29404
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                       T & Th.12:30 - 4:30
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in Mosier, Faculty Advisor
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Glen Martin, Faculty Coordinator
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RC/PAC

APPENDIX B

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

COPA Study to Develop Evaluative Criteria
for the Accreditation of Nontraditional Education

Middle States Association of Colleges
 and Secondary Schools
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 Colleges and Schools
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Bob E. Childers
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Executive Director
National Association of Trade
  & Technical Schools
2021 L Street, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20036
(202)296-8892

ROSTER OF PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS

April 1, 1977

MIDDLE STATES ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS

CAMPUS-FREE COLLEGE   (Candidate)
Administrative Coordinator: Mark Cheren
Contact Person: Sue Sinnamon
1239 G Street, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20005

EMPIRE STATE COLLEGE   (Accredited)
President: James W. Hall
Saratoga Springs, New York 12866

ICS CENTER FOR DEGREE STUDIES   (Accredited)
Director: Charles E. Miller
Contact Person: Robert Donovan, Vice President, Education
Scranton, Pennsylvania 18515

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK COLLEGE AT BROCKPORT (Accredited)
President: Albert W. Brown
Contact Person: Peter N. Smits, Assistant to the President
Brockport, New York 14420

THOMAS A. EDISON COLLEGE   (Accredited)
President: James D. Brown, Jr.
Contact Person: Dennis Smith, Dir. of Institutional Research
Trenton, New Jersey 08638

UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK -
   REGENTS EXTERNAL DEGREE PROGRAM   (Accredited)
Director: Donald J. Nolan
Albany, New York 12230

NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES, INC.

ADL-MEI (Arthur D. Little Management Education   (Accredited)
        Institute)
President: Joseph J. Voci
Contact Person: Ken Rogers
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02140

BRIDGEPORT ENGINEERING INSTITUTE   (Accredited)
President: William J. Owens
Bridgeport, Connecticut 06606

FRANCONIA COLLEGE   (Accredited)
President: I. Ira Goldenberg
Contact Person: David Osher
Franconia, New Hampshire 03580

GODDARD COLLEGE   (Accredited)
Acting President: John Hall
Contact Person: Wilfred G. Hamlin, Self-Study Director
Plainfield, Vermont 05667

SIMON'S ROCK   (Accredited)
President: Samuel H. Magill
Great Barrington, Massachusetts 01230

THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF VERMONT   (Accredited)
President: Peter P. Smith
Montpelier, Vermont 05602

THE CONNECTICUT BOARD FOR STATE ACADEMIC AWARDS   (Candidate)
Executive Director: Bernard Shea
340 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06115

THE SCHOOL OF CONTINUING STUDIES   (Candidate)
Chief Administrator: Maynard C. Heckel
Contact Person: Lew Knight, Dir. of External Degree Programs
Durham, New Hampshire 03824

THE SCHOOL FOR INTERNATIONAL TRAINING   (Accredited)
Director: John A. Wallace
Brattleboro, Vermont 05301

(New England Association - continued)

THE VERMONT INSTITUTE OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT   (Candidate)
(VICI)
President: Steward LaCasce
South Burlington, Vermont 05401

Commission on Vocational, Technical, Career Institutions

WASHINGTON COUNTY VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL INSTITUTE   (Accredited)
Director: Peter G. Pierce
Calais, Maine 04619

NORTH CENTRAL ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS

ALVERNO COLLEGE   (Accredited)
President: Sister Joel Read
3401 So. 39th Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53215

CENTRAL MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY   (Accredited)
President: Harold Abel
Mount Pleasant, Michigan 48859

DePAUL UNIVERSITY   (Accredited)
President: Rev. John R. Cortelyou
Contact Person: Howard A. Sulkin, Vice Pres. for Planning
Chicago, Illinois 60604

METROPOLITAN STATE UNIVERSITY   (Accredited)
Acting President: Emily Hamnah
Contact Person: James Deegan
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

MUNDELEIN COLLEGE-   (Accredited)
President: Sister Susan Rink
Chicago, Illinois 60660

UNION FOR EXPERIMENTING COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES/   (Candidate)
UNIVERSITY WITHOUT WALLS AND UNION GRADUATE SCHOOL
President: King Cheek
Yellow Springs, Ohio 45387

(Northwest Association - continued)

WHITWORTH COLLEGE   (Accredited)
President: Edward B. Lindaman
Contact Person: Shirley Richner   or   Donald DeuPree
Spokane, Washington   99251

SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS, INC.

EAGLE UNIVERSITY -
(A Consortium of 10 Accredited Institutions)
Director: Steve Castleberry
Fort Campbell, Kentucky 42223

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY   (Accredited)
President: Harold Crosby
Miami, Florida 33199

MARS HILL COLLEGE   (Accredited)
President: Fred Bentley
Contact Person: Richard L. Hoffman, V. P. for Acad. Affairs
Mars Hill, North Carolina 28754

NOVA UNIVERSITY   (Accredited)
President: Abraham S. Fischler
Contact Person: Fred A. Nelson, V. P. for External Affairs
Ft. Lauderdale, Florida 33314

STATE TECHNICAL INSTITUTE AT MEMPHIS   (Accredited)
Director: Charles O. Whitehead
Memphis, Tennessee 38134

TARRANT COUNTY JUNIOR COLLEGE   (Accredited)
Chancellor: Joe B. Rushing
Contact Person: Jimmy Styles
Fort Worth, Texas 76102

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA - NEW COLLEGE   (Accredited)
President: F. David Mathews
Contact Person: Mack Portera, Div. of Continuing Education
University, Alabama 35486

(Southern Association - continued)

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA   (Accredited)
President: William Reese Smith
Contact Person: Kevin E. Kearney
Tampa, Florida 33620

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY   (Accredited)
Coordinator of Nontraditional Study: Nicholas Sharp
Richmond, Virginia 23284

WALDEN UNIVERSITY   (Applying)
President: Bernard Turner
Contact Person: Philip C. Chamberlain, V.P. for Acad. Affairs
Naples, Florida 33940

Commission on Occupational Education Institutions

COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF THE AIR FORCE   (Accredited)
President: Col. Lyle Kaapke
Lackland AFB, Texas 78236

THE PHOTOGRAPHY SCHOOL - A DEPARTMENT OF   (Accredited)
   THE NAVAL TECHNICAL TRAINING CENTER-
   CORRY STATION
Commandant: Capt. D. H. Rand
Contact Person: Lt. Lester L. Harris
Pensacola, Florida 32511

U. S. QUARTERMASTER SCHOOL   (Accredited)
Contact Person: Lt. Col. Robert G. Stewart,
   Director of Support Services - ATSM-OS
Fort Lee, Virginia 23801

WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

CHAPMAN COLLEGE   (Accredited)
President: G. T. Smith
Contact Person: Bert C. Williams, Dean
Orange, California 92666

(North Central Association - continued)

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO   (Accredited)
President: Richard R. Bond
Contact Person: Barbara Mickey, Vice Pres. for Development
Greeley, Colorado 80639

WEBSTER COLLEGE   (Accredited)
President: Leigh Gerdine
St. Louis, Missouri 63119

NORTHWEST ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

CITY COLLEGE   (Candidate)
President: Michael A. Pastore
Contact Person: Ronnie F. Woog, Dean of Academic Affairs
407 Lyon Building
Seattle, Washington 98104

THE EVERGREEN STATE COLLEGE   (Accredited)
President: Daniel J. Evans
Contact Person: Edward Kormondy
Olympia, Washington 98505

MARYLHURST EDUCATION CENTER   (Accredited)
Presdient: Sister Veronica Ann Baxter
Contact Person: Ludmilla Monson, Academic Vice President
Marylhurst, Oregon 97036

PROMETHEUS COLLEGE   (Candidate)
Interim President: Robert S. Farrelly
7606 Douglas West
Tacoma, Washington 98499

SIERRA NEVADE COLLEGE   (Accredited)
Administrative Director: Benjamin J. Solomon
Contact Person: L. E. Sherman, Academic Dean
800 Campbell Road
Incline Village, Nevada 89450

WHATCOM COMMUNITY COLLEGE   (Accredited)
President: William J. Laidlaw
Contact Person: Jane Merritt, Director of Instructional Services
5217 Northwest Road
Bellingham, Washington 98225

(Western Association - continued)

CONSORTIUM OF THE CALIFORNIA STATE
    UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGES   (Accredited)
Director: George McCabe
400 Golden Shore
Long Beach, California 90802

FIELDING INSTITUTE   (Applying)
President: Frederic Hudson
226 East de la Guerra
Santa Barbara, California 92101

GOLDEN GATE UNIVERSITY   (Accredited)
President: Otto Butz
536 Mission Street
San Francisco, California 94105

HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGY INSTITUTE   (Applying)
President: Don Polkinghorne
San Francisco, California 94103

JOHNSTON COLLEGE - UNIVERSITY OF THE REDLANDS   (Accredited)
Acting Chancellor: E. K. Williams
Redlands, California 92373

LA VERNE COLLEGE   (Accredited)
President: Armen Sarafian
La Verne, California 91750

RAND GRADUATE INSTITUTE   (Accredited)
Director: Charles Wolf, Jr.
1700 Main Street
Santa Monica, California 80406

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA CRUZ   (Accredited)
Chancellor: Robert L. Sinsheimer
Contact Person: Eugene Cota-Robles, Acad. Vice Chancellor
Santa Cruz, California 95064

UNIVERSITY OF THE PACIFIC   (Accredited)
President: Stanley E. McCaffrey
Contact Person: Michael Davis, Asst. to Acad. Vice Pres.
Stockton, California 95211

(Western Association - continued)

UNIVERSITY OF REDLANDS - ALFRED NORTH   (Accredited)
  WHITEHEAD COLLEGE
President: Eugene E. Dawson
Contact Person: Gary Swaim, Dean of Undergraduate Studies
Redlands, California 92373

WORLD COLLEGE WEST   (Candidate)
President: Richard M. Gray
P. O. Box 3060
San Rafael, Ca 'fornia 94902

WRIGHT INSTITUTE   (Accredited)
President: Nevitt Sanford
Contact Person: Marvin Freedman, Dean,
  School of Social-Clinical Psychology
2728 Durant Avenue
Berkeley, California 94704

Nontraditional programs within institutions

CALIFORNIA STATE COLLEGE, DOMINGUEZ HILLS   (Accredited)
President: Donald Gerth
Contact Person: Emory H. Holmes
Dominguez Hills, California 90747

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO   (Accredited)
Chancellor: William B. McElroy
Contact Person: Martin M. Chamberlain, Dean, Univ. Extension
La Jolla, California 92093

Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges

BARSTOW COLLEGE . (Accredited)
President: R. William Graham
2700 Barstow Road
Barstow, California 92311

NAIROBI COLLEGE   (Candidate)
President: Donald R. Smothers
635 Donohoe Street
East Palo Alto, California 94303

The Council On Postsecondary Accreditation

May 27, 1977

Dear

The Council on Postsecondary Accreditation and the Regional
Accrediting Commissions are cooperating in a national study
funded in part by The W. K. Kellogg Foundation to develop
evaluative criteria for the accreditation of nontraditional
education. Enclosed for your information is a brief description
of the study.

The Advisory Committee for the project has recommended that
your institution be included in the study. The purpose of this
letter is to acquaint you with the study and to invite you to
participate in the project.

Institutions included in the project will be expected to partici-
pate in the survey phase of the project and to make available the
following information:

1. Bulletins, catalogues, syllabi and other descriptive
   materials available on their institution or institu-
   tional programs;

2. Reports and materials prepared for state licensing and/or
   approval by other agencies;

3. Self-studies and other reports on the institution and
   programs they have prepared for accrediting agencies;

4. Evaluation Committee reports written by on-site visiting
   committees of accrediting commissions;

5. Names and addresses of administrative and faculty
   personnel utilized in the development, administration and
   implementation of the program;

6. A list (random sample to be drawn) of student names and
   addresses who have completed the institutional program;

7. Copies of evaluations of the programs or institution
    that have been conducted in the past three years.

A few of the institutions included in the study will be visited
during the project and some will be asked to participate in the
field testing of the materials developed as a result of the
project.

If you are willing to participate in the study, please forward
the materials mentioned earlier in this letter at your earliest
convenience. If you do not wish to participate in the project,
please let us know so that another institution may be selected
for the study.

                                Sincerely,

                                Grover J. Andrews
                                Project Director

Enclosure

The Council On Postsecondary Accreditation

July 20, 1977

PROJECT OFFICE
Study of Nontraditional
    Education
Southern Association of
    Colleges and Schools
795 Peachtree Street, N.E
Atlanta. Georgia 30308
(404) 875-8011

Dear

In checking through the materials you have sub-
mitted for the COPA Project, we have found that
the items checked below have not been received.
Institutions included in the project will be expected
to participate in the survey phase of the project
and to make available the following information if
applicable. If some of the materials are not applicable
or available, please let us know. If you have any
questions about this, please call me or Mrs. Jimmie
Harmon at the telephone listed for the Project Office.

If at all possible, we would like to have these by
August 8 at which time the project staff will begin
work on the analysis of the materials.

Materials Received			Not Appli- cable	Not Avail- able
Yes	No			
___	___	1. Bulletins, catalogues, syllabi and and other descriptive materials available on the institution or institutional program;	___	___
___	___	2. Reports and materials prepared for state licensing and/or approval by other agencies;	___	___
___	___	3. Self-studies and other reports on the institution and programs they have prepared for accrediting;	___	___
___	___	4. Evaluation Committee reports written by on-site visiting committees of Accrediting Commissions;	___	___

Materials Received

			Not Appli-cable	Not Avail-able
Yes	No			

_____ _____   5. Names and addresses of adminis- _____   _____
            trative and faculty personnel
            utilized in the development,
            administration and implementation
            cf the program;

_____ _____   6. A list (random sample to be drawn) _____   _____
            of student names and addresses who
            have completed the institutional
            program;

_____ _____   7. Copies of evaluations of the pro- _____   _____
            grams or institutions that have
            been conducted in the past three
            years.

Please be assured that all materials will be
used with the greatest confidentiality. Student
names are to be used for a random sample for survey
instruments and data gathered from these instruments
will not in any way be associated with the indivi-
dual student or institution.

                     Sincerely,

                     Grover J. Andrews
                     Project Director

INSTITUTE FOR
EDUCATIONAL
LEADERSHIP

THE
GEORGE
WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY

Suite 310
1001 Connecticut Avenue, N.W
Washington, D.C. 20036

Samuel Halperin
Director
(202) 833-7737

Education Policy
Fellowship Program
(202) 223-3415

Educational Staff Seminar
(202) 293-3166

The Associates Program
(202) 785-4901

Leadership Training Institute
(202) 833-9051

Postsecondary Education
Convening Authority
(202) 833-2745

Options on Education
over National
Public Radio
(202) 833-0171

"PECA SEMINAR ON THE COPA PROJECT"

A seminar sponsored by the Postsecondary Education Convening Authority to discuss the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation's project to develop evaluative criteria and procedures for the accreditation of nontraditional education.

The Cross Keys Inn
Columbia, Maryland
June 6-8, 1977

SEMINAR OBJECTIVES

1) To provide COPA and its project staff and advisory committee an opportunity to describe the project's goals, design, and implementation plans;

2) To provide the directors of related studies in progress the opportunity to inform the COPA project staff and advisory committee about their research efforts, and to explore ways in which the COPA project can best be articulated wih these studies;

3) To provide a forum for groups and organizations with a special interest in the COPA project to share their views with the COPA project staff and advisory committee.

The following schedule is designed to help us accomplish these objectives in an informal setting, allowing plenty of time for give and take:

SEMINAR AGENDA

Monday, June 6

5:00 p.m.   Informal Reception -- Room 148. Pick up conference packets, badges, and other materials.

6:15   Dinner -- Dining Room. We have a reserved section of the dining room for our group.

8:00	Opening Session - Introduction and Remarks Ken Fischer, PECA Director and Seminar Chairperson Ellicott Room
	"The COPA Project: Background" Ken Young, COPA President

Tuesday, June 7

9:00 a.m.	Morning Session - Ellicott Room "The COPA Project: April 77 - July 78" Grover Andrews, COPA Project Director
10:00	Break
10:15	Interview with Directors of Related Research Projects

Morris Keeton	Projects of the Council for the Advancement of Experiential Learning
Lee Medsker	A project of the Berkeley Center for Research and Development in Higher Education on the evaluation of nontraditional degree programs
Dick Peterson	An ETS study of the state-of-the-art of lifelong learning
Laure Sharp	A joint project of ACE and the Bureau of Social Science Research on the accepi ability and negotiability of external degrees
Jeannette Wheeler	A project of the American Institutes of Research on the relationship of student consumer protection strategies to external degree programs
Aubrey Forrest	The College Outcome Measures Project of ACT
Ken Fischer	Interviewer and PECA Director

12 noon	Lunch -- Dining Room
2:00 p.m.	Afternoon Session -- Ellicott Room Interviews with Representatives of Interest Groups

Henry Spille - American Council on Education's Office
on Educational Credit

David Sweet - American Association of State Colleges
and Universitities' Committee on Nontradition
Study

Bob Sexton - Coalition for Alternatives in Postsecondary
Education

Shirley Spragg-Council of Graduate Schools

Lou Rabineau - Education Commission of the States

Milton Stern - The National University Extension Association
Committee on Accreditation and Continuing
Education

Ron Pugsley - The U.S. Office of Education, Division of
Eligibility and Agency Evaluation

Patsy Thrash - Interviewer and COPA Project Staff Associate

5:00	Informal Reception -- Poolside
6:15	Dinner -- Poolside (PECA is host for this special meal)
8:00	Evening Session -- Ellicott Room "Synthesis in the Public Interest"

Ronald Gross, noted educational writer and editor --
High School, Higher/Wider Education, The Lifelong Learner --
will synthesize what's happened at the seminar up to this
point. He'll do so from the perspective of an informed
public citizen.

Wednesday, June 8

9:00	Morning Session -- Ellicott Room Response from the COPA Project Team: "What have we heard at this seminar?"

Grover Andrews	- Project Director
Kay Andersen	- Project Staff Associate
Patsy Thrash	- Project Staff Associate
Paul Dressel	- Project Research
John Harris	- Project Research

10:00	Break
10:15	Feedback from conferees and continued discussion
12 noon	Adjournment

PARTICIPANTS

"PECA SEMINAR ON THE COPA PROJECT"

Cross Keys Inn at Columbia, Maryland
June 6-8, 1977

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Accrediting Commission of Senior
    Colleges and Universities
Western Association of Schools and
    Colleges
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Middle States Association of
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                                    s

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