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ABSTRACT

This publication contains 54 papers on self-study and improvement in institutions of higher education, particularly those institutions associated with the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. The papers are grouped under 10 topic headings. These chapters include: (1) four papers on seeking initial affiliation, candidacy, and accreditation with the commission; (2) nine papers on the role and the responsibilities of the self-study coordinator; (3) six papers on the special challenges and opportunities presented by self-study and evaluation; (4) fourteen papers on the assessment of student academic achievement; (5) six papers on general education and faculty development evaluation; (6) two papers on organization and management issues; (7) three papers on educational planning; (8) five papers on collaborative programs; (9) four papers on technology issues; and (10) one paper on the effectiveness of peer review. (MDM)

A COLLECTION OF PAPERS ON SELF-STUDY AND INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

1994

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Prepared for the program of the
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North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

COMMISSION ON INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

159 North Dearborn Street
Chicago, Illinois 60601

(312) 263-0456 (800) 621-7440

FAX: (312) 263-7462

1994

The papers included in this collection offer the viewpoints of their authors. The Commission highly recommends them for study and for the advice they contain, but none represent official Commission directions, rules, or policies.

Contents

Foreword

The Commission has again invited speakers for the Annual Meeting of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education to provide written materials related to their oral presentations. These papers are presented in *A Collection of Papers on Self-Study and Institutional Improvement, 1994.*

This tenth publication of our Annual Meeting papers continues to meet the standard of excellence set in previous editions, with contributions from representatives from a broad spectrum of institutions of many types and degree levels and institutions at varied stages in their development. The writers show impressive understanding of critical issues facing their campuses, and they are generous in sharing what they have learned. The comments and views of the authors represent a wide range of opinions guaranteed to be stimulating and helpful to those engaged in institutional self-study and evaluation and those with general concerns about institutional improvement. I am impressed once again by the commitment of representatives of our member institutions to the work of the Commission, as exemplified by these papers.

Chapter I, Seeking Initial Affiliation with the Commission, describes experiences of representatives of institutions moving from candidacy to accreditation. Chapter II offers a significant number of papers on The Role and Responsibilities of the Self-Study Coordinator from a wide variety of institutions. Chapter III focuses on special challenges and opportunities—the special emphasis option, the importance of editing the self-study, the self-study as an electronic document, and the mandated focused evaluation.

Chapter IV includes an array of papers on successful strategies for the assessment of student academic achievement in a variety of institutional settings. The papers in Chapter V address general education/faculty development and evaluation.

Chapters VI, VII, VIII, and IX focus on organization/management, planning, collaborations, and technology. Chapter X addresses the effectiveness of peer review, reporting the results of the assessment of the effectiveness of regional accreditation in the New England region.

As I read these papers, I was struck by the creative and effective efforts of individuals from so many institutions to use institutional self-study, evaluation, and assessment as a way to bring about genuine improvement in their institutions. You will find these papers varied and

substantive, timely and instructive. This 1994 *Collection of Papers* demonstrates again why the *Collection* has become an invaluable resource to all who are engaged in institutional evaluation. What is most satisfying about these contributions is that they come from the Commission's membership and are based on direct experience in self-study and institutional improvement. These papers reinforce the characterization of the Commission as an "uncommon alliance" in which the representatives of our member institutions are significant teachers of the evaluation/accreditation process.

Because we have learned that previous collections have been useful to those not attending the Annual Meeting as a significant supplement to Commission's official publications on self-study and evaluation, the Commission will make this volume available by mail so long as the supply lasts. We invite those of you who use this collection as a part of your self-study and institutional improvement efforts to send us your comments about its value to you, and we welcome your suggestions for future topics for the publication and the Annual Meeting program.

Patricia A. Thrash
Executive Director
NCA Commission on Institutions of Higher Education

March 1, 1994

Chapter I

Seeking Initial Affiliation with the Commission

Considering Affiliation– A Case Study

Wayne Busch
Cindi Thiede

South Central Technical College is a newly merged two-campus college in southern Minnesota. Historically the technical colleges in Minnesota have been accredited by the State Board of Technical Colleges. A few of the colleges have sought and received NCA accreditation. Three years ago the State Board urged all technical colleges in the state to pursue affiliation with the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

This decision prompted all of the non-affiliated colleges to examine the impact regional accreditation would have on their college.

Preliminary Planning

The first step in the process for our college was to send a number of people to a state-wide meeting sponsored by the State Board and presented by NCA Deputy Director Steven Crow. This session was of benefit, as it gave us some idea as to what to expect as we started. We also had some representatives attend the NCA Annual Meeting in Chicago. The greater the number of people you involve early in the process, the better the decision you can make.

Our next step was to develop an NCA steering committee. Originally we had a committee on each campus and one overall committee. Very early in the process we went to one committee for the college. Our committee was designed to be a cross-functional team representing as many parts of the college as possible.

Our next step was to select an NCA coordinator and a technical writer. The NCA coordinator position was determined to be a half-time position and the position was posted internally. I am currently a Farm Management instructor and was selected as coordinator. My teaching position responsibilities were reduced to allow me time for NCA. The technical writer position was based on an hourly wage with an anticipated number of hours.

Staff Involvement

We felt it was of critical importance that every person on the staff was aware of the process of accreditation as well as the implications of accreditation. I first made a presentation to the President's and Deans' Council. During this presentation we discussed at length all of the aspects of accreditation. During the meeting we outlined what we felt were the most important issues for all of the staff to discuss. These concerns may be somewhat unique to our college but may be similar to other technical colleges. A list of these concerns is included at the end of this paper.

Following that session, I made individual presentations to each of the Divisions. This allowed the staff time to discuss the project at length and individually address the concerns of that division.

Background

Our college has a state-mandated mission delineation agreement that specifies that all general education credits, leading to an A.A.S. degree, be delivered by a community college or university. Because of this policy, our staff has not been as involved in general education as we should be.

Our state license program for teaching staff has placed emphasis on industry experience and not academic credentials. Because of this practice, we have some instructors who do not have college degrees.

Our state has legislated that a super board will be developed to administer all technical colleges, community colleges, and state universities. This means that we are no longer affiliated with the local school district and will be affiliated with other institutions of higher education.

Staff Acceptance

Following the division meetings each member of the staff was given the opportunity to vote on a decision to seek accreditation with NCA. The final vote was an overwhelming 98% acceptance of the idea.

This did not mean that all of the concerns and fears had been eliminated, but it did mean that the decision had been made and the process would proceed.

Summary

Our college faces a number of challenges as we seek accreditation. Our goal however is clear. With a number of dedicated staff members we are doing what needs to be done to push us

forward into the arena of higher education. I do believe that the process and the journey will ultimately be as important as the outcome.

Major Concerns

1. By 1995 the State Board of Technical Education no longer wants to be the accrediting body for technical colleges.

2. Federal Financial Aid Programs (i.e., Pell, SEOG, Stafford, Veterans) are not available to non-accredited schools.

3. Every institution involved in the Mega-Merger is either accredited by NCA or is seeking accreditation.

4. Students from accredited institutions tend to have greater acceptance of their credits in a transfer situation.

5. The NCA self-study process gives the college an opportunity for self-evaluation and self-improvement.

6. Seeking initial accreditation will cost our college about $80,000. This includes staff salaries, printing, travel, hosting the on-site team, and membership dues.

7. In the process of accreditation a number of individuals will be asked to be involved in committee work to complete the self-study.

8. NCA expects that as an institution we are able to demonstrate a commitment to excellence in teaching and learning.

9. Most institutions of higher education assume that instructors hold a degree that is one step higher than the level they are teaching.

10. NCA expects that an assessment is done on each student. This includes not only entry level assessment but assessment during and at the completion of the course of study. This assessment would cover technical knowledge and skills as well as general education.

11. Most institutions of higher education assume that for an A.A.S. degree 1/3 of the credits will be general education, and in a diploma program nine or twelve credits will be general education.

12. NCA expects that the institution has in place a process for decision making, evaluation, and planning.

Wayne Busch is NCA Coordinator at South Central Technical College, Albert Lea, MN.

Cindi Thiede is Executive Director of Planning, Marketing, Research, and Resource Development at South Central Technical College, Albert Lea, MN.

The Changing Candidacy Program

June Prince

In his book, *How to Manage Change Effectively*, Donald Kirkpatrick points out that the word *change* strikes fear into some and to others it brings a ray of hope. For Ouachita Technical College, the changes in the candidacy program did both. Although it was a scary thought that the Commission had "raised the floor" for admission to membership, we realized that increased expectations for quality and integrity would lead to further improvements in institutional effectiveness and increase our readiness to seek initial accreditation.

College Background

Ouachita Technical College (OTC) is a public, community-based technical college authorized to offer Associate of Applied Science degrees. First established in 1972 as a state vocational technical school, the institution in July 1991 was one of ten vocational technical schools designated as technical colleges and transferred from the State Board of Vocational Education to the State Board of Higher Education (ADHE).

OTC began the process of seeking initial candidacy with NCA during the summer of 1992, planning for an April 1993 team visit. Under this timeline, the self-study would take place under the old candidacy program which differentiated between Criteria for Candidacy and Criteria for Accreditation. However, as the self-study process evolved, the steering committee determined that further self-analysis was necessary and that the visit should be postponed until September 1993. The new timeline meant OTC would be evaluated under the revised Candidacy Program which eliminates a separate set of criteria for candidacy and instead measures institutions applying for candidacy against the Criteria for Accreditation.

Impact of Revisions

As we began to examine the revisions in the General Institutional Requirements and the Criteria, an underlying theme of each change emerged—the Commission's emphasis in

Criterion One on higher education as opposed to postsecondary education. This renewed focus further underscores the importance of an appropriate mission and its role as the impetus from which all improvements arise.

As an institution beginning to make the transition from postsecondary vocational education to higher education, we felt it imperative to become increasingly dynamic in implementing needed improvements and in embracing concepts and philosophies common to the higher education community. That assumption was corroborated by the visiting team members as they conducted their on-site evaluation. The team explored these particular areas: constituent support for institutional mission, existence of participatory governance, faculty involvement in curricula reform, incorporation of general education into technical curricula, opportunity for professional development, support for academic freedom, methods of assessment, support for and evidence of student learning, support by the community, and adequacy of resources.

The list of formally-approved indicators provided by the Commission as typical areas formulating "patterns of evidence" proved instrumental in conducting a self-study relevant to our institution's growth. Although we were aware that not every indicator was critical for our institution and that the list was not exhaustive, it helped us identify issues and concerns appropriate to higher education institutions. Additionally, we felt that addressing patterns of evidence provided for an equitable evaluation, in that we were allowed the opportunity to make institutional improvements based upon our particular needs rather than upon comparisons with institutions that were at different levels of maturity and development.

Helpful Hints

The following had a significant impact on the success of our initial candidacy attempt:

- We realized that North Central is not an exclusive "club" that seeks to keep new members out, but rather is an organization that wants us to succeed. Valuable advice, assistance, and guidance were provided by NCA and the Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE).

- We utilized the revised GIRs and Criteria as the framework to ensure an intensive self-examination that would lead to increased institutional effectiveness, not as requirements that must be met to please the Commission.

- We took a lesson from the campaign strategy of President Bill Clinton by remembering: "It's the MISSION, stupid."

- The self-study process utilized extensive involvement of the total College community. All Board members and virtually every full-time employee participated on study committees. While it is true that we are a small institution and NEEDED everyone's participation, larger institutions would be wise to involve representatives of all constituencies and keep EVERYONE informed.

- Recommendations provided by ADHE and former NCA consultant-evaluators and the dedication and flexibility of the Board, administration, faculty, staff, and students enhanced our effective transition from a vocational-technical school to a technical college.

Other considerations and/or tips include:

- Make sure the Self-Study Report is an evaluative document, not a descriptive one.
- Carefully review all NCA materials; follow the guidelines and expectations they set out; and be well-versed in the sequence of events that make up the accreditation process.
- Planning is very important. It is especially important for candidates and potential candidates to have a specific plan of action and timetable for achieving accreditation.

Conclusion

For Ouachita Technical College, a subsequent benefit to this initial step in the accreditation process, in addition to the obvious value derived, was the implementation of an ongoing process of assessment and planning. A cycle of self-examination and planning has been set into motion that will stimulate continuous institutional improvement.

We feel quite gratified with the results of our initial candidacy attempt. The visiting team deemed our Self-Study Report "exemplary." Although it was not always smooth nor anxiety-free, we felt the self-study was a success. In hindsight, the process was almost fun—almost.

Reference

North Central Association of Colleges and Schools–Commission on Institutions of Higher Education. 1993. *A Handbook of Accreditation, 1993-1994—Working Draft.* Chicago: North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education.

June F. Prince is Self-Study Coordinator at Ouachita Technical College, Malvern, AR.

Transition and Achievement of NCA Candidacy Status: Experience of a Single Purpose College

Sharon Pontious
Verna Hendricks-Ferguson
Nancy Kuhrik

The Jewish Hospital College of Nursing and Allied Health has been in transition for five years. This transition involved two hospital-based schools, known for the excellence of their graduates—the Jewish Hospital School of Nursing, which offered a Diploma Nursing program, and the Jewish Hospital School of Medical Technology, which offered a certificate program for seven affiliating Missouri colleges and universities. Current health care and education trends along with society's demand for graduates from accredited, degree-conferring programs led to the transition of these schools to a single-purpose, private, non-profit institution of higher education.

The transition process the College used led to the attainment of Missouri Coordinating Board approval, Missouri State Board of Nursing initial accreditation, continuing accreditation from the Committee on Allied Health Education and Accreditation (CAHEA), and candidacy status from the North Central Association's Commission on Institutions of Higher Education. The administration and faculty will share the process they followed, as well as tips and cautions learned from their experience, to assist other colleges through their transition.

Initial Steps

The first step was to convince the Administration and Board of the sponsoring institution that transition to a specific type of institution of higher education was essential. Determining the type of higher education institution to be formed required identifying a variation of one of the following choices:

- merger with a larger public or private college or university;

- consortium with other like institutions in the region;
- establishment of an independent full service college or an independent, special purpose college with an affiliation with one or more colleges/universities that would provide the general education courses.

The College received approval from the hospital board to restructure the school in 1989.

The next step was to implement a needs analysis and, concurrently, to explore the variety of educational models to be adopted by the new institution. This College simultaneously investigated theoretical and empirical literature and data available while also implementing a community needs assessment. To determine each constituent's perspective of the knowledge, skills, and other outcomes required by graduates and the type of educational programs needed, the needs assessment surveyed a variety of community populations including: community/employers, current and prospective students, high school counselors and teachers, and alumni and registered nurses. Data obtained from the literature, available data and the diverse community groups provided valuable information for recruitment and program planning, and supported the decision to transition to a single-or special-purpose, nonprofit, private college. The College investigated three different variations of special purpose colleges and six potential educational models. Administrators and faculty visited five special purpose nursing colleges, attended workshops, and scrutinized literature on present and future health-care trends and allied health and nursing education trends on the local, state, and national levels. A unanimous decision was made to develop a special-purpose college as a department of the Jewish Hospital with a multiple entry and exit educational model for nursing and medical technology programs.

The last initial step was to obtain consultants from each of the essential program and institutional accrediting agencies. This College invited consultants from the State Board of Nursing, North Central Association (NCA), and National League for Nursing (NLN) to meet with the faculty, college administration, and hospital administration. An expert on Medicare regulations was available at The Jewish Hospital. The challenge was to meet all accreditation criteria and requirements of a business-oriented health care system while developing the College's organizational structure and bylaws and determining the College board composition.

The Self-Study Process

The College recognized a key component of successfully attaining NCA candidacy status was the involvement and ownership by the entire college faculty in the Self-Study process. The Self-Study process was initiated in Spring 1991 with the appointment of the following Transition Task Forces: Accreditation, Administration, Curriculum, Facilities, Faculty, Needs Assessment, Student Services, University Affiliation, and Evaluation. Faculty, hospital, and community representatives were appointed to individual Task Forces according to their areas of expertise and interest. Each Task Force was charged with the responsibility for developing the appropriate procedures, policies, and curriculum for the new College as well as for writing related sections of the accreditation reports.

The Accreditation Task Force was identified as an integral resource for all College task forces. The aim of this task force was to become knowledgeable about NCA requirements and criteria as well as different approaches to the Self-Study process. Each member of this task force was also a member of one other College Task Force to facilitate knowledge sharing. This goal was partially fulfilled by requesting consultation with other like colleges that recently underwent transition successfully. Copies of various Self-Study Reports were requested and used as examples for faculty review and study.

The role of Self-Study Coordinator was assumed by the co-chairmen of the Accreditation Task Force. This role was defined by the College faculty as being the coordinator, organizer, guider, director, editor. This avoided duplication and omission of information while documenting achievement of the requirements and criteria. The task of writing the report was the faculty's.

It was important that the Self-Study Coordinator possess effective communication skills and leadership qualities including, but not limited to, the ability to organize, prioritize, and meet deadlines. Additionally, the Self-Study Coordinator needed to be self-directed, motivated, and have the desire to undertake such a responsibility. Although those in this role have a great deal of responsibility, it was essential they receive guidance, support, and assistance of the dean and the faculty.

A faculty workshop with the Commission consultant was scheduled in January 1992, and included a comprehensive review of the NCA accreditation process (from completion of the Preliminary Information Form through attainment of full accreditation). Having total faculty present was very important because it validated the need for total faculty commitment. The Commission Consultant also met with the administration and legal counsel from the hospital to clarify specific issues. In summer 1993, the Commission Consultant again met with the College and Hospital administration and faculty to clarify specific issues relating to structure and governance. After this meeting, the hospital's bylaws were changed to clearly delegate all College operations to the College Board.

Another vital initial phase was familiarizing faculty with the North Central Association Commission and higher education expectations. Several College faculty (including the Self-Study Coordinators) and administrators together attended the Annual NCA Meeting. This experience provided the opportunity to experience the milieu and excitement of a national higher education conference. The camaraderie of the representatives associated with colleges/universities who were at different stages of the accreditation process proved to be a motivating and energizing experience as well as provided the opportunity to network and collaborate with members of the Commission and colleagues from higher education, both within and outside of our professional discipline. Information received from the Annual Meeting was shared verbally and in writing with faculty.

Writing of the Report

Because several accreditation reports were due within a short time frame (Missouri Coordinating Board, State Board of Nursing, and NCA), we found it beneficial to assign various

parts of the report to respective task forces. Each member of the Accreditation Task Force served on one other task force to maintain consistency and to focus on writing to the requirements and criteria of each accrediting agency.

The development of a detailed outline of the Self-Study Report provided structure and ensures completeness. The Self-Study Fair at the NCA Annual Meeting provided colleges with a variety of Self-Study Reports that are organized in slightly different ways. We recommend that before selecting an organizational format that the five Criteria for Accreditation, as indicated in the *Handbook of Accreditation, 1993-1994—Working Draft*, be reviewed and studied in their entirety. The college needs to be sure patterns of evidence are included under each criterion as indicators that the criteria are all being met. All institutions have areas of weakness, and it is important that these areas are clearly identified and that specific measures for their improvement are stated and concrete and realistic timelines listed.

The Task Forces were requested to turn in both a hard copy and a computer disc to avoid duplication of effort and to facilitate editing. Initially, timelines were broad and allowed opportunity for the Accreditation Task Force to give feedback to individual task forces and to make revisions as necessary. Additionally, time was allowed for typing, editing, printing, and mailing the report to the NCA Commission office by the appropriate deadline.

Preparing for the Team Visit

Four months before the Team Visit, a draft of the completed Self-Study Report was mailed to the College's Commission staff liaison who reviewed it and made suggestions for revision. After revisions were made, six-eight weeks before the visiting te am arrived, the completed Self-Study was sent to each team member and to the Commission office. Sufficient time was allowed to take into account potential postal delays, including holidays and weekends, to avoid getting the report in late. In addition to having a receipt from the postal authorities indicating appropriate delivery, a follow-up phone call was made to the Commission to determine its safe and timely arrival.

Approximately four weeks prior to the Candidacy Visit, a "Mock Visit" was held. A faculty member from a like institution that had recently successfully attained candidacy status served as the "Mock Team Visitor." A question-and-answer period followed. All faculty members had individual copies of the completed NCA Self-Study Report. Two days before the team visit, a room with appropriate resources (including a computer, printer, paper, pencils, copies of the Report, supportive College documents, coffee and snacks) was set up for team members. During the visit, the President and Dean's secretary was available to the team members. Each visitor also was assigned a person to guide them around the Medical Complex. These preparations proved invaluable during the visit.

Summary

The process one college used in attaining regional candidacy while undergoing transition from hospital-based certificate programs to a special-purpose, non-profit, independent

college was described. General challenges along with tips and cautions were presented. Specific tips and cautions encountered by this college during its transition process will be discussed in the presentation, especially regarding authority to confer degrees; structure and governance; mission, purposes, and program goals and outcomes; obtaining financial aid; implementing the Self-Study process; surviving the team visit; and successful meeting with the Board of Commissioners.

Sharon Pontious is President and Dean of the Jewish Hospital College of Nursing and Allied Health in St. Louis, MO.

Verna Hendricks-Ferguson and Nancy Kuhrik are Co-Chairs of the Accreditation Task Force at Jewish College of Nursing and Allied Health, St. Louis, MO.

From Candidacy to Accreditation: Assuring Continued Excellence

William Guerriero

Introduction

After a two-year candidacy and many years of preparation, Great Lakes Junior College received its Statement of Affiliation Status reflecting initial accreditation in February 1993. The presenter, who coordinated the self-studies for candidacy and initial accreditation, will discuss the institution's experience leading to the achievement of this goal. In addition, participants will have the opportunity to discuss the College's case history and look for similarities to their own experiences.

Background Information

Great Lakes Junior College is an independent, non-profit institution with locations in five mid-Michigan cities: Saginaw, Midland, Caro, Bay City, and Bad Axe. The College grants associate degrees and certificates in business-related curricula, as well as in allied health, nursing, and electronics technology. The total headcount in Fall 1993 was just under 2,000 students.

The College was founded in 1907 as a proprietary business school. In the early 1950s it was reorganized as a non-profit institution, and in 1971, it earned national accreditation from the Association of Independent Colleges and Schools. The next major change came in 1984, when the College was authorized by the State of Michigan to grant associate degrees. That same year, the institution embarked upon a ten-year strategic plan that included the goal of affiliation with the North Central Association's Commission on Institutions of Higher Education.

The decision to affiliate with NCA was inextricably bound to the institution's 1984 degree-granting initiative. In fact, the Michigan State Board of Education authorized the College to grant associate degrees with the understanding that the institution would seek and obtain regional accreditation. Affiliation with NCA was considered by both the Board of Education and the Institution to be a means of assuring continued self-study and improvement.

Developing a Regional Accreditation Master Plan

In addition to providing for expansions of facilities and curricula, the strategic plan consisted of four phases relating to accreditation:

1. Determining the institution's compliance with the General Institutional Requirements (GIRs);
2. Establishing relationships with the Commission staff and submitting the Preliminary Information Form;
3. Sustaining the candidacy period; and
4. Achieving initial accreditation.

The goal of achieving initial accreditation was always characterized as critical to the advancement of the College. It provided an "institutional mind-set" that pervaded all communications with internal and external constituencies, as well as all contacts with Commission staff, visiting teams, and review committees. Most importantly, it allowed for the development of the self-studies for candidacy and for initial accreditation around the theme that progress toward affiliation was the planned, natural course of events at the College.

Examining the Institution's Motives

Despite the ten-year plan, which provided key administrators with ample incentive for accomplishing the daunting tasks associated with affiliation, some questions about the institution's motives did arise. It was felt that open, honest discussions were appropriate whenever faculty, staff, students, or external groups questioned the need for affiliation with NCA. The three themes that predominated such discussions were (1) the need to change from national to regional accreditation, (2) the need for public recognition of the institution's quality and integrity, and (3) the effect of regional accreditation on the transferability of credit.

The first theme, the need to change from national to regional accreditation, led to a discussion of the most basic reasons for institutional involvement in the accreditation process. The administration explained the role of the GIRs and the Criteria in providing a framework for institutional self-assessment and improvement and illustrated the differences between the approach taken by NCA as compared to the prior accrediting body. The evolving mission of the College also provided an impetus to depart from its national accrediting association, which primarily served proprietary schools emphasizing business curricula.

The public perception of a regionally-accredited institution is one of high educational standards and long-term stability. In discussions about this topic, the institution was able to acknowledge its motivation to improve its image through affiliation with NCA. This acknowledgment also provided an opportunity to demonstrate the ongoing responsibilities of the College in fulfilling the public's expectations.

Public perception was also an issue in discussions about transferability of credit. College administrators and students were aware that some area colleges and universities would not evaluate GLJC credits for transfer, since the College was not regionally accredited. The College was assured by most of these institutions that as soon as affiliation status was secured, a list of transfer equivalencies would be issued. The College went to great lengths to explain to staff, faculty, and students that NCA affiliation was not a guarantee of transferability; however, some doors that had previously been locked would now be opened.

The Candidacy Period

In *A Handbook of Accreditation*, institutions seeking initial affiliation with the Commission are informed that they may apply either for candidacy or for accreditation (1992-93, page 9). This decision, as well as countless others in the accreditation process, is best made with the consultation of the Commission staff member assigned to the institution. The staff member has the expertise to assist the institution as it evaluates the advisability of seeking candidacy versus accreditation and, if candidacy is chosen, the length of the candidacy period.

Although Great Lakes Junior College had been in existence for more than 80 years and had been nationally accredited for almost 20 years, it chose to seek affiliation first as a candidate and then, after two years of candidacy, to apply for initial accreditation. The candidacy period provided a unique opportunity for the institution to learn more about the regional accreditation process and to familiarize itself with the resources available from Commission staff, publications, consultant-evaluators, and other affiliated institutions.

The candidacy period also provided time for the College to do critical follow-up on the recommendations of the visiting team and the review committee.

Initial Accreditation

In seeking initial accreditation after two years of candidacy, the College recognized the need to identify the similarities and differences between the two processes. Within a relatively short period of time, the institution would be preparing two self-studies and would be hosting two site visits by two teams of consultant-evaluators.

In preparing the second self-study the College sought to improve upon the report for candidacy while retaining its most desirable features. A special section in the second report focused on developments since the completion of the first self-study. Great care also was taken to address all concerns that were identified by the first visiting team, the review committee, and by the institution itself. Continuity was further preserved by utilizing the same Self-Study Coordinator for both documents.

The Commission's practice of sending one team for the candidacy visit and a different team for the initial accreditation visit was of particular interest to the College, since it represented a departure from the policies of the Association of Independent Colleges and Schools. While the second visiting team is most assuredly furnished with all the documentation from the prior

visit, the interpretation and utilization of this information by the second visiting team is difficult to predict. Again, the institution should rely on its Commission staff liaison to assist in the selection of consultant-evaluators and to explain Commission procedures for assuring continuity between successive site visits.

Conclusion

Like most things in the life of an educational institution, the results of the accreditation process are directly proportional to the efforts invested in it. If accreditation is viewed as a basis for institutional development, then the activities associated with it are well-received by faculty, staff, and students. The College is anticipating many significant benefits from its affiliation with NCA; and thus far, the experience has been extremely positive.

William Guerriero is President of Great Lakes Junior College in Saginaw, MI.

Chapter II

The Role and Responsibilities of the Self-Study Coordinator

A College-Wide Participative Self-Study

Yolanda M. Anderson
Beth Price

Central Arizona College (CAC) is a two-year comprehensive public community college that offers educational programs in academic and vocational fields of study. The College's primary service area is Pinal County and part of Gila County, which are located in the pathway of growth between Phoenix and Tucson. CAC is a four-campus district covering 5,324 square miles and it served 4,853 students in Fall 1993.

College-wide participation for the North Central Association self-study began in 1990. President John J. Klein appointed to the Institutional Planning Council faculty, staff, and administrators who were thinkers and planners and who by nature of their positions knew the College and the history of its culture. Those key players also had talents for organizing, fact-finding, and writing. The Council set goals and met regularly during the first year. Participation was not confined to members of the Council, but committee chairs called on the expertise of people throughout the organization from all campuses, from the community, and from students.

The first year became the first part of a three-part process. Data on the campus were initially only available on the most essential elements required from the State—numbers of students and financial information. An initial set of goals and objectives was accepted by the institution to maintain direction until goals and objectives could be developed through the "grass roots" process. Data had to be collected from all areas on campus, studied, and reported. The second phase was preparation of the study and the third phase was the visit by the NCA team. The process reached into every part of the institution and everyone was involved in some way. Each person celebrated receiving in October 1992 the team recommendation for continued accreditation with the next comprehensive evaluation in ten years because each had a direct part in the achievement

Part 1. In the Beginning...Collection of Information for the Self-Study Report

Key ocuments to the institution required more than a year to review. Committees rewrote parts of the mission and philosophy statements. From the discussions the committee became

aware of the need for a values statement. In addition to those statements reflecting the College's present status, the President provided a vision statement incorporating what we expect of the future. The discussions from review and development of the revised documents formed the basis for "grass roots" formation of a set of new goals for the institution.

The collection of information included a variety of approaches. The committee referred to the process as external and internal scanning. Because of lack of human resources, a consultant was hired to prepare a report on scanning of the external environment for county, state, and national trends in populations by ethnicity and age, employment, and high school attendance and graduation.

Comprehensive internal scanning included a wide range of areas that included the following:

1. **Instructional Area Questionnaire.** This 50-item college-designed instrument surveyed the perception of full- and part-time employees in the areas of curriculum, personnel, administration, communications, and facilities and supplies. Individual responses used a Likert scale of strongly agree, agree, no opinion, disagree, and strongly disagree.

2. **Operational Area Survey.** The 308-item instrument was developed by the IPC Sub-Committee on Program and Services Assessment and was mailed to 550 employees, including 247 full-time and 303 part-time faculty. Perceptions were requested in 51 non-instructional administrative and support areas for six criteria of "importance," "amount of contact," "overall satisfaction," "effectiveness," "efficiency," and "cooperativeness." A five-point Likert scale, including No Opinion/ Not Applicable, obtained agree/disagree responses, and three open-ended questions solicited free responses.

3. **Student Opinion Survey.** The American College Testing instrument was administered to which 30 questions were added. Items ranking above 74.5% in importance or satisfaction were identified as strengths and those below as weaknesses. The instrument went to 256 students in English 100, English 102, and selected technical courses. The campus group variables were for each campus with the Signal Peak Campus identified by commuters and residential housing students. The five sections of the instrument are reasons for attending CAC, overall satisfaction, items related to academic, community, multicultural, student services, and local items.

4. **Face Validity Exercises.** Focus groups were formed at the Aravaipa and Apache Junction campuses and four at the larger Signal Peak Campus (SPC Classified, SPC Faculty, District Administration and District Administrative Support Staff). Each group was asked to cite what it thought were the strengths and weaknesses in the following subjects: physical, program, financial, human, climate/culture, and image. No commentary or discussion was allowed and each strength or weakness had to have been reported at least once by each focus group to be reported on the frequency list.

5. **Values Assessment Report.** An institutional inventory developed by The Johnson Foundation that focused on ideas and opinions was distributed to all employees. The 66-item survey employed use of a Likert-scale. Information from the scales for diversity, community, accessibility, teaching excellence, academic standards, and innovation were used to develop basic values. Since the instrument was originally developed as an indicator of performance, some assumptions were made to address institutional values. Although not a "perfect" instrument, valuable insights helped in the development of the values statement.

6. **Survey of Graduates from 1988 and 1989.** Results of a short survey of graduates in the transfer and occupational programs also revealed strengths and weaknesses based on experiences after graduation.

7. **Community Survey.** In 1987-88 a comprehensive needs assessment survey was conducted by SRI Gallup College Market Research. Groups surveyed included high school counselors and students, high school teachers and parents, community residents, county employers, and winter visitors. Reported strengths and weaknesses were analyzed with other data.

8. **Assessment of Human Resources.** Instructional and non-instructional program reviews occurred over the two-year period that assessed what was happening in each of the areas. Procedures were also reviewed and changed.

9. **Assessment of Financial Resources.** A comprehensive cost effectiveness report by programs and functional areas by the Business Office gave Full Time Student Equivalent dollars for comparisons. Costs included on- and off-campus and open-entry, open-exit programs.

10. **Assessment of Plant/Facilities** A complete room-by-room report was compiled for each campus. Square footages and any improvements required were noted and scheduled for attention.

11. **Comparative Advantage Report.** Students have the choice of attending three state universities, other community colleges, and proprietary schools. The advantages and disadvantages of those competing institutions were investigated.

Internal and external strengths and challenges were gathered from each of the above documents into one document that was reviewed. The task at this point seemed overwhelming to bring all results into a manageable focus. However, the Council challenged itself to overcome the barriers and develop some assumptions from which strategic goals could be formed. The results of some assumptions were not within the control of the College. Others could be anticipated such as population growth.

At this point in our progress, a "two for one" emerged. The NCA visit was one year away. The documentation of our progress into the NCA Self-Study Report had to be written and the Institutional Planning Council had to continue deliberations to form the new strategic goals for the institution.

Part 2. Preparation of the NCA Self-Study Report

In December 1991, Cecilia López, NCA staff liaison, visited with the newly formed NCA Steering Committee chaired by Yolanda M. Anderson, Assistant to the President. Assistance from the staff liaison was valuable in the direction of the Subcommittees, in helping to focus on results, and in preparing for the NCA team visit. Subcommittees were based on Criteria One through Four that were in existence at that time.

The NCA Steering Committee began its work by reviewing recent Self-Study Reports from other colleges and choosing the formats that had the "best fit" for our institution. Previous Self-Study Reports from CAC provided some historical information and areas that needed to be addressed. Responses to the previous reports from NCA teams revealed other areas to be addressed.

The Steering Committee realized the coordination of the task before them and began wisely with choice of a format in which reports were to be submitted that would keep rewriting to a minimum. Layout of the table of contents, typefaces, dividers, and paper were determined by consensus. Requests for bids were sent to interested parties. The schedule for submission of first drafts was distributed.

Meetings at this point increased to once every two weeks and drafts as submitted were reviewed by the Steering Committee members. The work was intensive, but committee members realized that the information gathered in the previous year provided the framework for each of the sections.

In late spring the NCA General Institutional Requirements and Basic Institutional Data Forms were distributed to be completed and included in the Appendix of the Self-Study Report. Some data had not been collected by the institution and compilation of statistics over a period of years was time-consuming.

By May 1992, some areas still had not completed their assignments and the writing team had to assist. The President and Vice Presidents spent many hours reviewing the "final" drafts. In June, the first section went to the printer. We tested the typeface and headings to check that the printer's concept of what we requested and our concept of what we wanted were identical. Adjustments had to be made. Proofreading occurred during July, the final document was presented to the Governing Board at the August meeting and the required number of books were forwarded to the North Central Association for perusal by the NCA team members who would visit in October.

Part 3–Visit by the NCA Team

With the assistance of our NCA liaison, a team room was selected in December of 1991. Documents used in preparation of the Self-Study Report were collected in that room. During August and September, all documents were cataloged and put in order for use by the team. The Governing Board Room was reserved as a quiet place for the team to operate during their visit.

The Chair of the NCA Self-Study assumed the responsibility for making airport transportation arrangements and hotel reservations, arranging for meals, and scheduling meetings with members of the Governing Board, staff at three campuses, students, and community members. Teams of individuals spent Saturdays inspecting every physical area of the campus and worked with maintenance to complete the beautification started at the beginning of the process in 1991.

Since the involvement was from the "grass roots," employees throughout the college were aware of information from their areas and general activities that had occurred over the two years. When the team members announced that they were recommending continued accreditation with the next comprehensive evaluation in ten years at an exit session at the end of their visit, the wave of "the moment of pride and fulfillment" swept the audience. Individuals had worked together to achieve the "impossible." CAC still faces a return visit in 1995 for completion of "student achievement measurements," but the processes for that visit are already in place.

Yolanda M. Anderson is Assistant to the President and Chair of the NCA Self-Study Steering Committee at Central Arizona College, Coolidge, AZ.

Beth Price is Director of Institutional Research and Grants, Central Arizona College, Coolidge, AZ.

The Two Elements that Made All the Difference

Katherine Kemling

A cardinal truth held by those engaged in self-study is that no two institutions are alike, and therefore, what works for one institution does not necessarily work for another: there is no specific pattern that can be followed. Even so, because the General Institutional Requirements and Criteria for Accreditation are quite similar, if not the same for some years, general principles can apply. At least, those bits of insight gained through experience can be shared for adaptation, improvement, or amusement.

With the perspective gained by time, two elements stand out as most significant in completing the kind of self-study desired at Pikes Peak Community College. The first is full, mutual support for the process by the constituency and the president, an element that could easily have been taken for granted, overlooked, or dismissed. The second is identification and use of common threads of concern and direction that arose through the process of the self-study and that characterize the institution.

- **With respect for the self-study process held by the president and the college community, authority and importance accrued to the activities.**

  The president endorsed the choices of committee chairs, provided released time for faculty chairs, informed the leadership committee of the purposes of the self-study, wrote a challenge to the committee, and addressed the organizational meeting of the committee. Because of administrative commitment, the progress of the study was presented at every faculty meeting, President's Assembly, President's Cabinet meeting, Division Deans' meetings, and gatherings of the Advisory Council. Frequent articles in the College Newsletter provided updates to the larger public. For a year and a half, the entire college was kept aware that the NCA self-study process was happening.

  It was evident to all divisions and offices that "NCA" was a priority, and charts, graphs, statistics of all kinds, other reports, and research were made available to self-study committees. State, regional, and community resources were tapped, including recent and archival materials. Vice presidents, secretaries, faculty, deans, and directors alike were involved in research and writing. Sometimes interest flagged and weariness threatened,

but a presidential inquiry or word of encouragement sparked renewed efforts. The cooperation was gratifying.

An equally important result of commitment to the self-study process was the expectation of scrutiny. Even though there were some situations one might wish were different, they were revealed, admitted, and dealt with. It was deemed more valuable for the institution to become aware of its difficulties than to try to mask them. This was perhaps most surprising to some constituents who did not expect such thorough analysis or any admission of problems. It could have been difficult to maintain this stance had the study been conducted without the respect due accreditation procedures.

The most far-reaching effect of administrative valuing of the self-study process has already begun, but cannot soon be completed: the determination to follow up on the committee recommendations. That determination promises continued progress toward institutional improvement. Originally, the committees themselves planned to track the fulfillment of solutions. However, that is beyond the purview (as well as time and energy constraints) of the committee members. Departments themselves, led by the appropriate administrators, will pursue the recommendations.

- **The second element most significant in the final Self-Study Report was the desire to have the finished document be more than a collection of eleven different studies bound together under a common title.**

We felt that each committee report that was submitted carefully examined the specific, assigned topics. A synthesizing voice formed a comprehensive, unified report, but it was insufficient to reveal to the reviewer that this was a particular educational institution with its own personality. The unique character of the college was simply lost in the multiplicity of ideas and details.

The decision to reveal that character brought its own set of problems. It meant discovering for ourselves what made us the institution we had become, and what, indeed, that was. It meant attending to the major themes, the recurring cries and outcries, sighs and songs evident in the separate writings. It also meant being aware of the pressures and the situations to which the writings responded. Finally, it necessitated another decision: how best to rework the document(s) to accomplish the character disclosure (especially when we were already seven weeks behind schedule).

About eight major themes were identified as threads that continued throughout the committee analyses. Our writer introduced the themes in a preface, a kind of overture using a weather/climate metaphor which in itself fit the Rocky Mountain locale. The final, reworked draft of the self-study underscored the themes and reflected terminology from the preface, thus providing a more unified, as well as revealing, portrayal of the institution.

The Preface could not have had quite the same impact on reviewers as it had on the college community. At a faculty/staff meeting prior to the NCA visit, there was a final update on the self-study. After the routine progress report, our writer read the four-

paragraph preface aloud. Against a background of taped western music, he intoned the brief description with precisely the right mix of factual presentation, validation, and self-mockery. The crowd was moved and appreciative, the standing ovation reward enough for the extra two weeks' work.

These two elements, shared respect for the accreditation process and revealing the character of the college, do not mitigate either the value or necessity for all the other components involved in the self-study. Choosing the right committee chairs and members, their dedication, thorough planning and research, concern and concentration regarding what works at the college and what does not, accurate reporting, and questions about directions for the future, plus writing and consideration to layout and publication, etc., are, of course, fundamental to the comprehensive report. Experience from having been on self-study committees before, however, makes it clear that there must be mutual respect behind the process to ensure cooperation and priority status of the self-study. Committee chairs can become so involved in other responsibilities that deadlines are missed; computers can be dedicated to other research; the study can seem to be someone else's responsibility—like the coordinator's. These are not as likely to happen if the position of top administration is clearly supportive. And what we discovered is that, after all the information and statistics and analyses are completed, there may be nothing to show that the institution is greater than the sum of its parts. For us, including the personality of the college was important for our own identification and satisfaction. Thus beyond the basic, intelligently presented information and commentary, presidential and campus commitment plus character revelation of the institution were the two elements that made all the difference.

Katherine Kemling is Self-Study Coordinator at Pike's Peak Community College in Colorado Springs, CO.

Survival Hints for the Newly-Appointed Self-Study Coordinator

Marilyn Nelsen Carroll

"Girding the Loins"

Take a deep breath and say to yourself, "This is an honor." Repeat, "This is an honor. I have been selected for this task, because I am the best person for the job." Periodically repeat this to yourself as you work on the self-study, because it is true. No sane college president will appoint an incompetent person to head the self-study process. Accreditation and re-accreditation are simply too important to be assigned to an incompetent and/or unreliable person. There will be times when being the Self-Study Coordinator will definitely not seem to be much of an honor, but it really is a sign of institutional recognition.

Plan to attend as many of the North Central Association's Annual Meetings as possible prior to the date of your institution's site visit. Attend the Self-Study Coordinator workshops each year and as many other sessions as you can manage. Be certain that you visit the "Resource Room" and that you spend some time reading the self-studies of other institutions. Will you then know the "right" or "best" way to do a self-study? That is about as probable as seeing a unicorn walking across your campus tomorrow. There is no "right" or "best" way to do the self-study. What you will gain from the Annual Meetings is confidence that you can do this, too, and you will gain useful information about how to go about doing it. Perhaps some of the following comments will also be helpful to you.

The Self-Study Steering Committee

There is no ideal size for the committee. Some institutions have very large committees that represent all constituencies and often each steering-committee member heads another committee. Others such as Rockhurst College use small steering committees. We decided to have a committee consisting of only five individuals (I now suspect that three would have been adequate!) and to use other already existing committees, departments, and offices to do considerable portions of the work. Rockhurst College already had an extensive committee

structure (All faculty members serve on at least two committees!), and we did not want to add to its complexity any more than was absolutely necessary.

At Rockhurst College, the self-study process has always been "faculty owned." The coordinator is always a faculty member and, traditionally, most members of the steering committee have come from the faculty. This time our original committee consisted of four active faculty members and a professor *emeritus* who is now serving as a counselor. One faculty member was replaced late in the process by an assistant dean.

It is important that steering committee members be conscientious and able to write well. This is not always easy to determine in advance. In our case, the Self-Study Coordinator had significant input into the selection of steering committee members. Prospective members were *asked* to serve rather than being appointed as they are to other committees. They were asked by the Self-Study Coordinator rather than by the President or a dean, so that they would feel free to refuse. We were attempting to get committee members who were willing to serve on the committee without undue administrative pressure and thus could be expected to be conscientious. Unfortunately, it proved all too easy for prospective members to refuse and the task of filling the membership was much more difficult than had been anticipated!

Steering committee members were selected a year prior to beginning work, in order that they could arrange their schedules and devote the necessary time to the self-study. Despite our efforts, we still found ourselves with two (out of five!) members who did not devote themselves sufficiently to the self-study process, continually missed deadlines, and did not write well. One of these individuals was eventually replaced on the committee. (If this happens to you, replace the individual *as soon* as it becomes obvious that s/he is not productive. We accepted excuses for lack of and inadequate performance too long.)

Goals of the Self-Study Process

Yes, of course, you want your institution to be accredited or reaccredited. However, this should not be your only purpose or goal. If it is, you are simply jumping through a hoop—an expensive, time-consuming hoop at that! This is an opportunity to contribute positively to the institution by reviewing its strengths and weaknesses and by developing/implementing ways of improving. And do not forget, the consultant-evaluators can aid in this process. They are called *consultant*-evaluators for a reason.

The specific goals of the self-study process will vary with the needs of the institution. Rockhurst College used the process as an opportunity to review its mission statement and to begin developing a formal assessment program. The College was already engaged in revising the core curriculum and the self-study also became part of this endeavor.

The Self-Study Time Schedule

The North Central Association asks all Self-Study Coordinators to submit their planned time schedules for preparation of the self-study document. If at all possible, allow at least one and

one half to two years for the self-study process. Build as much "extra" time into the schedule as possible, so that you will not develop an ulcer or have to work around-the-clock when the deadlines are not met (and some of them certainly will not be!).

Gathering the Data

If most of the data that you will need is located in a particular office or is all on the computer, you are most fortunate. We were not so fortunate, but we did find that our Registrar's Office had a mountain of data that was easily accessed. Four years prior to the NCA re-accreditation visit, an Office of Institutional Research was established. It is inadequately funded and greatly understaffed. Nonetheless, the director collects a variety of data and publishes it annually in a "Planning Guide and Fact Book." This book proved exceptionally useful to the Steering Committee.

At Rockhurst College, all departments, programs, offices, and committees write annual reports. In addition to the information that was ordinarily included, the Steering Committee asked those writing reports to summarize changes since the last self-study, to discuss overall strengths and weaknesses, etc.

A major problem facing our Steering Committee was the lack of an overall assessment plan and the lack of either a repository for or a list of the assessment data that was available. Locating these data was a major chore that ultimately fell on the shoulders of the Self-Study Coordinator. If you are in this situation, you may want to consider delegating this task to a committee member as his/her major or only responsibility. It should be noted that Rockhurst College had an astounding amount of data that we were able to use for assessment purposes, although the data had not typically been gathered for that reason. Our major problem was learning what data existed and where the data were kept. You may find that this is true of your institution also.

At many institutions, the Steering Committee generates data by doing surveys, arranging for standardized tests to be given, etc. Our Steering Committee made it clear at the beginning that it would not do this (I encourage you to do likewise. You definitely have enough work to do without adding this task.). We urged that an Assessment Committee be formed to aid the faculty in accepting the necessity of assessment and in developing a feasible assessment plan. We even had hoped that such a committee would do some assessment. Such a committee was formed and it did succeed in getting the faculty to approve an assessment plan, but the committee did not actually do any assessment.

Communicate! Communicate! Communicate!

During the entire process, communicate with everyone—constantly! Be certain that the entire college community is aware that the self-study process is taking place and of the importance of it to the institution. Encourage the college president, deans, and other administrators to mention it frequently at faculty and staff meetings. This aids in reinforcing

the importance of the process to the institution and may result in more cooperation for you and your committee.

As you prepare early drafts of chapters, circulate them immediately to all individuals who have special interest in or knowledge of the material. This will result in valuable feedback but, equally importantly, it is a reminder that the entire institution is involved in the self-study process. (Similarly, the completed draft and the final version of the Report should be available for everyone on campus for review and comment, if they so choose—which they should be encouraged to do.)

Organizing the Self-Study Document

There is no one correct way to organize your self-study. Perhaps, one of the easiest is to organize it around the North Central Association's Criteria, but this is not necessary as long as you address each of the Criteria in the document.

Although the North Central Association requests an outline of the document along with your time schedule, keep in mind that you are not "locked into" this. As you get farther into the self-study process, you may find that you must make some changes in the organization of the document.

Writing the Self-Study

Since you are a newly-appointed Self-Study Coordinator, writing the self-study document is probably not your major concern at the moment. However, if the steering committee intends to have other individuals (i.e., department heads, program directors, etc.) provide data by writing preliminary drafts of various sections as opposed to sending the raw data, you will want to make these requests (with specific deadlines) as soon as possible. You may also find it useful to request that they write "too much" rather than "not enough." Eliminating information is always easier than adding it.

At every point, encourage those who are submitting data or writing drafts to evaluate their programs and, perhaps, the institution as a whole. No program and no institution is without areas of weakness and/or concern. The purpose of the self-study is to highlight not only the institution's strengths but also its weaknesses, so that they may be corrected. It is always preferable to point out areas of weakness yourself rather than to have the visiting team discover them.

Be Flexible!

In all probability, you will have to revise your plan—perhaps more than once! Some people will not meet your deadlines, possibly not even your "positively the final" deadline. Your time schedule will be revised. You may well find that some committee members are not able

to understand statistics and others cannot write a coherent paragraph. You will survive—but flexibility and a good sense of humor definitely help.

NOW TELL YOURSELF ONCE AGAIN:

IT IS AN HONOR TO BE THE SELF-STUDY COORDINATOR!

Marilyn Nelsen Carroll is Associate Professor of Sociology and Chair, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences, Rockhurst College, Kansas City, MO.

Congratulations! You're Our Self-Study Coordinator! Why Me! What Do I Do Now?

Albert Lynd

The Self-Study Coordinator is responsible for organizing the institution's self-study efforts. These efforts include preparing the Prospectus, deciding what information must be gathered and how it will be gathered, analyzing the information, and preparing the actual self-study document. In other words the Self-Study Coordinator develops the self-study timetable from start to finish. The job carries considerable responsibility and takes a lot of work. However, you will learn much about your institution and gain insights into the abilities, attitudes, and commitments of your faculty, staff, and administration. Also, you will learn quickly that you cannot do a self-study alone.

Who will help me?

Every successful Self-Study Coordinator has a good self-study steering committee. Therefore select your committee wisely and carefully. Not every faculty member or administrator should, could, or would serve on the committee. However, every relevant campus constituency should be or should feel represented. A Self-Study Coordinator should have the key decision in determining the size and composition of the committee. You select the committee, with input from around the campus, because you will work closely with each person. Thus, you need people who work well with you.

In selecting the committee keep several factors in mind: length of service at the institution (include long timer and short timer), individual work loads, accreditation experience—or lack of experience), willingness to commit to the process and to the work, and the expertise and experience you need. You must ask for a commitment from each and every person on the committee. Finally, you must articulate the guidelines within which the committee will function—what it can and cannot do and what you will do as the leader of the self-study process.

What will we do?

The first and one of the most important functions is to understand clearly and how the committee will work—as a committee of the whole or as various subcommittees. The committee as a whole is best because communication is easier and everyone understands the entire process and when everything is happening. Scheduling is also essential in that everyone needs to attend every meeting. Therefore, setting meeting dates becomes an important start-up activity and is related to member commitment. Members must attend. If this becomes a problem, ask the individual to request a replacement. It is as simple as that, because each member represents a certain campus component and the self-study process will not work if certain campus segments are not informed.

The first real task is developing the Prospectus—the "how will we do this" guide. This will allow the self-study to flow and everyone will know what is next on the agenda.

Who needs to know what and when?

In a word, Communication. Decide how and when the institution is informed about the progress of the self-study process. Everyone needs to be informed about what is going on. Lack of or lapses in communication are often fatal to a self-study process. Not everyone may like what they hear, but all information must be available.

What are we looking for?

This is the data/information gathering plan. Surveys—students, faculty, staff; written reports for the academic, student services, and administration areas; faculty senate and student government; data from the institutional research office—are good sources.

What do we tell and how?

This is a return to communications—telling the results of the study. Keep the campus informed—at college, department, and unit meetings; at discussions with faculty and student senates; at university wide meetings—all contribute to an atmosphere of trust and confidence. Also, always keep the president and vice-presidents informed throughout the process. Never let them hear something other than from the coordinator.

Are we ready to write?

One person should write and the others read.

Albert Lynd is Associate Vice President at the University of Central Oklahoma, Edmond, OK.

Using the Self-Study and Institutional Assessment to Facilitate Positive Institutional Change

David E. Leas
Fred Lillibridge

Introduction

In 1990, New Mexico State University at Alamogordo commenced a three-year self-study process that culminated, in March 1993, with a very successful accreditation visit by a team from the North Central Association. At the inception of the process, the college had no institutional assessment plan, no comprehensive strategic plan, and no personnel trained in assessment techniques and strategies. Thus, the self-study, the assessment plan, and the strategic planning processes had to evolve in unison. From the outset of the project it was decided to use the self-study and assessment processes as means to bring about positive institutional change. Some of the lessons learned from this process might be of value to institutions facing similar developmental situations.

The self-study process at NMSU-Alamogordo was launched by the Provost with the appointment of a Self-Study Coordinator and the establishment of three committees. A Self-Study Steering Committee was formed to advise the coordinator and to oversee the self-study process. A Mission and Purposes Review Committee was chaired by an experienced and dedicated senior faculty member. An Institutional Assessment Committee, comprised of faculty and staff volunteers, was appointed to complete a literature review, compile existing institutional assessment activities, and prepare an initial proposal for an institutional assessment strategy. Approximately half-way through the three-year process, an Institutional Assessment Coordinator was employed by the college.

The Self-Study Coordinator

A key appointment in the success of the project is that of the Self-Study Coordinator. The coordinator can do many things to facilitate positive institutional change as a result of the self-

study and assessment processes. The coordinator must exhibit a positive attitude throughout the process. The expectation of positive change resulting from the process should be an important feature of all presentations made by the coordinator.

The coordinator should be given adequate time to devote to coordination, meetings, research, and writing necessary for the project. We believe that release time equal to one-half time for one year is minimum for an institution of 2,000 students. The coordinator must spend a major portion of his or her time in communicating. The CEO should be advised daily of progress and potential problems. All employees should be updated frequently about the self-study process. Various written documents related to the project should be reviewed by many people. The community should be informed about the process at important milestones. The concept of positive change achieved as an outcome of information obtained from assessment activities should be a key feature of nearly all such communications.

The Self-Study Steering Committee

The role of the Self-Study Steering Committee is to define the framework of the institution's self-study process and to keep the process on track, in focus, and on schedule. By making institutional change part of the process design, the steering committee helps to ensure that assessment and strategic planning processes remain in focus. After framing the self-study process and setting it in motion, the steering committee acts as a sort of institutional conscience, advising the coordinator, following up on timelines, reviewing interim products, and frequently returning attention to institutional change as the logical product of the assessment and self-study processes.

It may be that, as the self-study process evolves, the committee discovers that its planning was not complete or that circumstances changed. The committee and the coordinator should be sufficiently flexible to adjust the self-study process, the assessment strategy, or the self-study document to accommodate such needs.

Mission and Purposes Review Committee

An effective statement of institutional mission and purposes is the cornerstone of the self-study process. In reviewing the existing mission and purposes statement, the committee should:

- look for changes in the institutional environment;
- obtain input from faculty, staff, students, and representatives from the community;
- coordinate with the institution's assessment coordinator/committee to ensure that each portion of the mission statement is framed in such a way as to lend itself to assessment activities; and
- ensure that each portion of the statement leads logically to positive institutional change.

Institutional Assessment Committee

Initially, this committee should complete a literature review and provide itself with sufficient training to become knowledgeable in the field of institutional assessment. Existing assessment efforts by faculty and staff should be compiled and sorted. By coordinating with the committee reviewing institutional mission and purposes, the assessment committee can identify those aspects of institutional mission that are being adequately assessed. The committee should provide periodic updates to faculty, staff, and other committees regarding their progress, findings, and recommendations.

The role of the Institutional Assessment Committee in designing and implementing a process to facilitate positive change is crucial. When reviewing existing assessment projects, the committee can remind assessors to include change strategies as part of the reports related to each assessment project. They also may suggest specific change strategies that assessors may have overlooked. When providing written or other reports about the results of assessment activities, the committee should emphasize change processes resulting from particular assessment activities.

Coordinator of Institutional Assessment

A key supporting role is played by the Coordinator of Institutional Assessment. This coordinator, possessing expertise in assessment and information processing, can provide a number of services at various stages of the self-study process. The coordinator is also responsible for institutional research. Services provide by the coordinator may include the following:

- providing or facilitating training to faculty and staff about assessment activities and processes,
- supplying technical assistance for individuals and teams who are conducting assessment activities,
- completing or facilitating institution-wide assessment activities such as community surveys and student surveys,
- compiling assessment data on an institutional basis,
- facilitating assessment meetings,
- publishing institutional assessment and strategic planning documents, and
- helping to focus assessment and strategic planning activities on bringing about positive change in the institution.

Summary

Positive change is the logical outcome of a meaningful institutional self-study. The institutional assessment strategy provides the data on which the institution develops its strategic

plans and implements changes that, hopefully, are positive. When change strategies are omitted from the self-study and assessment processes, these processes become rather futile information-gathering and -filing exercises. By maintaining a focus on the concept of positive institutional change, the Self-Study Coordinator, the assessment coordinator, and the various key committees involved help to educate faculty and staff, frame the self-study and assessment processes in a useful light, and, in fact, facilitate positive institutional change.

Fred W. Lillibridge is Director of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Planning at New Mexico State University-Alamogordo, Alamogordo, NM.

David E. Leas is Campus Director at New Mexico State University-Grants, Grants, NM.

Linking the NCA Self-Study to an Annual Planning Process

Mary Odile Cahoon
Daniel H. Pilon

The newly-appointed Self-Study Coordinator is told that the self-study is to be useful to the College as well as to provide the material for the Self-Study Report due for the NCA comprehensive visit in 1995-96. S/he thinks "Oh, sure!" and settles down to outline the report and plans a dozen committees to help find and assemble the reams of data to fill in the outline.

However, there really is an easier way to do it. The key is to link the NCA self-study to an annual institutional strategic or long-range planning process. This is a particularly attractive approach for a couple of reasons. It not only offers the framework for examining the institution in the light of the five NCA Criteria for Accreditation and uses data already available but it also gives (or enhances) a structure for ongoing institutional-wide assessment and decision-making, based on continuing strengths and improving areas of weakness.

Strategic Planning

So rather than start with a discussion of the self-study, perhaps it is best to start with what needs to be included in an effective institutional planning process. Effective planning processes may differ in some ways from college to college but they all contain certain basic elements.

Planning processes are designed to draw upon the best human resources available across the campus. Effective planning processes are mission driven; they provide for a regular review of the appropriateness of the college's mission statement and the institution's status with respect to that mission. Effective planning processes look at the environment in which the college exists; they look at the college's current condition; they compare the environment and current condition to the institution's mission and try to identify significant strengths and weaknesses. Only then do good planning processes look to the future and to setting goals and developing objectives designed to build on strengths and overcome concerns. Finally, good planning processes tend to provide for regular (usually annual) updating. This allows

continuing refinement of goals and objectives in ligh. of progress that is being made and is discernible in the annual review of the college's condition.

If a planning process using these elements is already functioning, our Self-Study Coordinator may be half-way home. On the other hand, if there is no planning process, this may be the time to get started (and incidentally to provide an important, positive response to Criterion IV).

Who Does the Work

The same broad-based group charged with the planning process could effectively serve as the steering committee of the NCA self-study (or vice versa). To be effective, the strategic planning process of a college needs to recognize the president as the "chief planner" but should also include a broad-based group of administrators, faculty, and students to develop the strategic plan. If no planning process exists, the combined planning group/steering committee arrangement will help enhance the probability that the self-study will be recognized as a starting point and will serve as a springboard for the next round of a continuing planning effort. If a planning process does exist, the use of the process and those involved in it to do the self-study will further validate the important institutional role this process plays.

Just as an institutional planning committee can do double duty as a self-study steering committee, often, regular college committees can serve as self-study sub-committees. Not only will they know data that are available, but they also will be in a position to make recommendations and follow-up on accountability.

Timelines need to be established for the planning cycle as well as for the self-study and the generation/editing of the report. Linking the self-study with strategic planning will help to establish timelines for continuing work after the NCA visit. Evaluation and planning do not stop for eight to ten years following a successful comprehensive visit!

How the Process Works at St. Scholastica

The College of St. Scholastica planning process will be discussed briefly in order to illustrate how closely the planning process can parallel the self-study process. In fact, the College's planning process was the back-bone for the College's self-study in preparation for its recent decennial visit. The College of St. Scholastica annually revises its strategic plan (now 12 years old). *The Scholastica Direction*, through its Plenary Planning Commission (PPC), with five-year institutional goals being approved by the Board of Trustees. *The Scholastica Direction* consists of four sections:

1. The purpose, process, planning cycle, and overview of the planning document;

2. A review of the mission statement, commentary on the mission statement, and "Mission Statement -Lived Experience," listing college activities that put flesh on the more idealistic assertions of the mission statement; long-range planning

assumptions describing expected external future conditions over which the College has no control but that will have an impact on the College; institutional characteristics of the College, including societal context, relationships with external agencies, leadership/management, programs, students, student services, staffing/development, physical facilities, equipment, and fiscal resources; a listing of the major strengths and weaknesses of the College;

3. Five-year institutional goals with selected objectives: these include one goal directly tied to enhancing understanding of the College's mission, a series of operational goals, and a goal focused on capital development needs; these goals are set in response to the weaknesses identified in the previous section of the plan;

4. An appendix that usually contains illustrative graphs, particularly supporting statements in the second section.

The planning body, PPC, is composed of the president and administrative team, director of public relations, faculty representatives from each academic division, chair of the faculty assembly, and student representatives appointed by the Student Senate. PPC meets several times monthly throughout the academic year, reviewing and revising sections of the last volume of *The Scholastica Direction*, preparing for the new volume. Each year PPC requests some specific input from the total College community. This may be in the listing and/or prioritizing of strengths and weaknesses or it may be in suggesting revisions of the mission statement. Not only does this give valuable input to PPC but it also reminds the College community of the ongoing planning effort and gives it ownership in the plan.

NCA Self-Study Report

For those familiar with what is needed for the NCA self-study, there are some clear relationships between the process described and the development of a self-study. The plan for the study, including its purpose, process, and timelines, can be found in the first section of the planning document. In the Self-Study Report one would also include, in this section, a response to the last NCA report and significant changes since the last comprehensive visit. Material supporting the General Institutional Requirements (GIRs) could also be added to this first section.

Corresponding to the second section of the planning document is the substance of the first three evaluative criteria: examination of mission and purposes of the College, organization of resources, and assessment. Obviously, in many cases the review and evaluation of each of these areas will be in much greater depth than the regular annual review efforts and yet they will fit into and draw from the usual pattern of review. The use of College committees will facilitate this in-depth look.

Assessment of the academic achievement of students requires particular attention and should be handled fully; giving the assessment plan as well as data supports its successful implementation. Discussion of criterion four would be supported both by the description of the planning process and by the five-year goals and the means for assessing their accomplishment.

Criterion Five, on integrity, will need to be handled separately, but material should flow from the work on mission and the policies of governance, resources, and services. The discussion of the College in terms of these five criteria should be evaluative as well as descriptive. A summary in which the college requests the status sought and justifies any changes it wants in the Statement of Affiliation Status should follow the section on the five Criteria for Accreditation.

The appendices of the self-study could include documentation for the GIRs, if this was not included in the first section of the report; the Basic Institutional Data forms (BID); and any additional documentation that is either too essential to be left only for review in the team room and/or is too much to fit into the body of the Self-Study Report without breaking its flow.

If the College has a long-standing annual planning process, it has a wealth of data to document trends of change and effectiveness of planning in the College by reviewing the annual documents. If it does not have such a process, it could institute one as it does the current self-study and be well on its way to organizing and providing data for the next self-study. If a college without a planning process can develop one as part of the self-study, the next Self-Study Coordinator will mean something quite different when he/she is presented with the task and says, "Oh, sure."

Mary Odile Cahoon is Senior Vice President at College of Saint Scholastica, Duluth, MN.
Daniel H. Pilon is President at College of Saint Scholastica, Duluth, MN.

University Self-Study: Ownership and Analysis

Galen K. Pletcher

Although self-study is undertaken to produce evidence that an institution satisfies the NCA Criteria for Accreditation, the opportunity it presents for an institution to take a close look at its operations is of great value beyond the achievement of continued accreditation. The NCA staff stresses this, and the criteria are general enough to permit the tailoring of the self-examination to individual institutions. The value of self-study can be enhanced by emphasizing shared *ownership* of the process of self-study and the need for *analysis* of the findings of self-study. My comments are designed to highlight these two themes.

Although it is frequently coordinated by staff from academic affairs, the self-study is institution-wide. The coordinator should answer to the CEO of the institution. If this is not clearly signalled, the self-study may be seen as an exercise that is of primary interest only to "the academic side of the house." Such a view prevents development of a sense of ownership of the process and dilutes the commitment of the other functional areas (such as administration, development, public affairs, student affairs, etc.) to the process.

The coordinator should be a veteran member of the institution who writes well and has good organizational skills. Many institutions choose a mid-level administrator, since that person will have immediate access to secretarial and other support. (Choosing someone outside of academic affairs sends a clear signal about ownership of the process.) But an institution may think it important to have this function performed by a senior member of the faculty. The Steering Committee, which the coordinator should chair, should represent all principal institutional functional areas as well as undergraduate, graduate, and professional education, research, public service, and the library. Faculty members on the Steering Committee should be widely distributed by discipline. The Steering Committee should have some members who are relatively new employees of the institution and some members who are veterans of the institution.

The NCA self-study process is driven by the institution's mission. If the mission statement is weak or not widely accepted, then there should be considerable attention to it, perhaps by a special committee that prepares a revision. This committee must conclude its work early enough that the statement can be approved by the Board of Trustees well before the writing of the Self-Study Report. Moreover, the committee must seek to achieve some institutional

ownership for the mission statement. Although full ownership of a mission statement—its centrality to all major programmatic and budgetary decisions—requires considerable time and persistent effort, full discussion of the drafts of the statement during its formulation can help encourage ownership.

The components of the final report should be decided early in the process by the coordinator, the Steering Committee, and the CEO. This ensures an outline for the final report that, although it can be revised, will provide useful guidance in the writing of the report and in the gathering of data. How does one decide the components of the final report?

- **A few features of Self-Study Reports are fairly standard.** For example, there is usually a brief history of the institution. Similarly, all reports contain a statement of principal institutional changes since the last self-study. These sections might well be prepared by a member of the history department, by the institution's archivist, or by an individual in the CEO's office or elsewhere who keeps track of changes in institutional policy, capital projects, and the like. These portions of the report are useful, but they usually do not advance an insider's understanding of the institution.

- **The final report must also contain the institution's response to the concerns of the previous visiting team.** If these concerns were very extensive and/or sensitive, then it will be wise to form a special committee, sometimes called a contributing committee, that concentrates on the preparation of that section of the report. This committee will discover the ways in which the institution grappled with the concerns, including how the concerns may have altered the course of the institution's history. It is in such considerations that the opportunity for analysis arises and the task of self-study is fully joined.

- **The institution's mission statement should guide the selection of self-study topics.** If the mission of the institution calls, for example, for excellence in undergraduate education, professionally-oriented graduate education, and regional public service, then contributing committees should examine each of these areas in detail. (Remember that the institution's basic task is to show that it is organized to carry out its mission, that it is in fact doing so, and that it can continue to do so.) Since education is more than academics, student services might well be another topical area.

- **Another set of concerns is the status and nurture of the resources of the institution,** including the faculty and staff, the budget, the library, academic and administrative computing, and the buildings and grounds. Each of these areas is a suitable subject for a contributing committee.

- **The NCA requires that the institution be able to continue to meet its mission.** Accordingly, planning is an appropriate self-study topic. How are changes in programs planned? How is capital planning handled? What possible hazards does the institution face during the next ten years, and what contingency planning is in place relative to each?

- **Special projects or concerns of the institution present other possible topics.** Has the academic calendar recently changed? Has the general education program been significantly revised? Has the residential (or non-residential) character of the campus changed? Have there been recent initiatives toward, e.g., intercultural understanding? Each of these might form the focus of a contributing committee's work.

- Finally, **NCA requirements should guide self-study topics.** For example, there must be a thorough examination of the institution's procedures for the assessment of student achievement.

Some of the topics for the final report can be handled by standing committees of the institution. There may be a Committee on Assessment that can produce the report on that topic. Once it is determined which topics call for specially-formed contributing committees, the coordinator faces decisions about the orientation of each contributing committee. In briefest compass, there are two possibilities. One possible orientation is that of objective outsider, examining a certain function or area with an expectation that it may discover a number of features that are unsatisfactory and require address. The other possible orientation is that of knowledgeable insider. Although contributing committees take an evaluative stance toward their subject matter, they do not have the principal objective of discovering problems. For example, a contributing committee on the functioning of the office in charge of sponsored research may well be chaired by the Associate Dean or other person who directs sponsored research. The advantage of this is that the person most knowledgeable about the area will guide the writing of the report. The disadvantage is that, if there are problems with sponsored research in the institution, the chair of this committee can hardly be expected to take an objective look at it. In general, the decision about the orientation of contributing committees will vary from institution to institution, and within one institution from committee to committee, according to the views of the CEO, the coordinator, and/or the Steering Committee about how well each function is being handled.

In the self-study that I oversaw, I decided to appoint to committees those people who were most intimately involved in the operation of the unit or function that the committee was examining. This was because of my desire to streamline the self-study process and my belief that the functions under examination were, in general, in good shape. Although in one or two cases recommendations made by the contributing committees were self-serving, playing into the hands of one or more of the people on the committee, this did not happen very often.

Appointing to contributing committees those people most closely involved in the functions under review has the distinct advantage of increasing the likelihood that recommendations made by the committees will be implemented. Recommendations about, for example, administrative computing that emerge from a process in which the Director of Administrative Computing is sitting on the contributing committee are likely to be taken very seriously, since they will have resulted from deliberations in which the Director her- or himself was intimately involved. On the other hand, if, to continue the example, administrative computing is confronted with a number of recommendations from a contributing committee, all the members of which were outsiders to administrative computing, the unit

is understandably going to wonder whether its needs and special circumstances were taken fully into account. This is another application of the objective of ownership, relative to institutional self-study.

Ownership of the process and the results of self-study is further enhanced if contributing committees and standing committees that examine topics, functions, or areas are encouraged to make recommendations based on their findings. This encouragement also helps assure that they will take an "analytic" orientation to their subject; they should *describe* undergraduate education, public service activities, or whatever it is that they examine, but they should also *reflect upon* their topic or function with a view to helping the institution improve its performance. This orientation will, with the guidance of the coordinator, also inform the reports they write, ensuring that the raw material the coordinator receives for the Self-Study Report will be analytic, not just descriptive, in character. In writing the Self-Study Report, I included most, but not all, of these recommendations. After the publication of the Self-Study Report, I compiled a list of all the recommendations contained in it. The President distributed them to the Vice Presidents for their consideration, and the assistant to the President was in charge of tracking the institution's response to each of them. It has been gratifying for the members of the many committees to know that their insights and suggestions have been taken so seriously.

A crucial decision early in the process is whether to require unit self-studies and, if so, what role they will play in the formation of the final report. There are two potential problems with unit self-studies: First, they may become *apologia* of the operations of the units involved, wish lists, or, even worse, ledgers of complaint about how poorly the unit is treated. Such self-studies will contain very little self-examination and analysis. Second, both the quality of writing and the depth of analysis of unit self-studies may vary widely. But there is little alternative to unit self-studies for descriptions of the constituent units of the institution and an introduction to their problems. Moreover, requiring unit self-studies provokes very useful self-examination and ensures wide ownership of a principal part of the self-study process.

If the coordinator has outlined the report fully and structured the self-study process so that it produces reports in accordance with that outline, the writing of the final report is fairly straightforward. However, it is the coordinator's responsibility to make the overall result read more smoothly than a mere compilation of the ingredients would produce. The coordinator must also decide what portions of each report to use, since good contributing reports will be more extensive than is necessary for the final report.

The report that is the most useful to all concerned is as much an analysis of the institution and its operations as a description of the institution and its operations. A former Associate Director of the NCA was fond of saying that no Self-Study Report she had ever read had erred on the side of too much analysis. The components of analysis in the context of self-study include the following:

- An explanation of significant changes in enrollment, graduation rates, standardized test results, etc.;
- The rationale for major decisions, initiatives, long-range plans, capital projects, etc.;

- A description and discussion of what the institution takes to be its significant strengths;
- Identification and discussion of institutional weaknesses, including steps the institution is taking to remove them. (No one is perfect; to pretend in the Self-Study Report that there is no room for improvement only arouses suspicion.);
- A description of strategies for resolving conflicts and solving problems that the self-study may have revealed;
- Reconciliation of apparent contradictions, e.g., between mission and practice, or between policy and practice; and
- Comparisons (if appropriate) of the institution with similar institutions, together with a discussion of their significance for the institution.

Incorporating analysis into the report makes the report more interesting for everyone and more useful to the visiting team. It also enhances the services that the report can render to the institution: defining its strengths and mapping out the areas where it should seek to improve.

A Final Note

It is important to do multiple drafts of the report and to have them read by the Steering Committee, the authors of contributing committee and standing committee reports, the institution's liaison at the NCA, and, in general, anyone with the patience to do so. The CEO will be intimately involved in the later editing of the report and in decisions about what to include and what to omit, but people who have far more time than the CEO must read the report carefully and answer such questions as: Does the report contain as much information as necessary to understand problems and recommendations? Do analyses of the issues make sense in light of the descriptions presented? Even this: Does the report refer to the same issue more than once? I discovered to my horror that, in one early draft of our final report, a passage of about two pages in length was included in identical form in two different chapters. Having a number of good readers helps ensure that one discovers this, as I did, before showing it to the CEO the first time!

Galen K. Pletcher is Associate Provost at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, Edwardsville, IL.

The Finishing Touch: Preparing the Report, the Staff, and the Campus for the Visiting Team

Frank Wright
Carolyn Fitzmorris

Introduction

From the beginning of the self-study process, we adopted the attitude that this was going to be a positive experience. We told ourselves not to be defensive; if we considered ourselves a good community college, then we should enjoy becoming better. We wanted to use this time of evaluation to our advantage and felt this experience would not only show us where to improve, but it would also give us an opportunity to validate those areas in which we already excelled. From the first meeting, we began to envision the end and focused on how the report should look, how the information would be shared, and how the visiting team would accommodated.

Crafting the Report

The Steering Committee wanted the report to have a professional appearance, much like an "executive report" for business or industry. The resource room at the NCA Annual Meeting benefited us by giving us ample opportunity to review many styles and cover formats. We were also fortunate to have on our Steering Committee an experienced NCA consultant-evaluator. This input afforded us the opportunity to craft a document that would present the information in an attractive and easy to use format.

The first task of the Steering Committee was to prepare the Self-Study Manual that identified the purpose, the goals, and the format of the report. The next task was to address the General Institutional Requirements (GIRs). This project accomplished two purposes: (1) it satisfied a major requirement; (2) but more importantly, this activity brought the Steering Committee together, as a team, early in the process. At this point the Steering Committee estimated the potential size of the final report and decided upon three separate documents: (1) the main

body of the report; (2) the appendices, which contained the GIRs, the Basic Institutional Data Forms, and additional demographic information; and (3) the addenda, that contained our plans and accomplishments that resulted from the self-study prior to the team visit.

The outcome for this component of the project was to take a careful, intense, honest, and compassionate look at ourselves so that we could identify the strengths of our institution and capitalize on them, and take the same objective look at our weaknesses and improve them.

Sharing the Information and Preparing the Staff and Campus for the Visit

- **Faculty, Staff, and Administrators.** Each full-time employee was given a copy of the Self-Study Report one month prior to the visit. Additional copies were placed on reserve in every campus building and at each off-campus site so that part-time employees and students also had the opportunity to review them.

  One week prior to the visit, two institutional-wide informational meetings were scheduled by the president and the Self-Study Coordinator. The evaluating team's biography and a detailed itinerary of the visit were given to every employee. The Steering Committee was present to answer questions about the report.

- **Students.** We kept our students informed through articles in the college newspaper and announcements by faculty in the classrooms. A special meeting with our student leaders and the visiting team was also scheduled.

- **Campus and Facilities.** We organized three "sparkle days" before the visit. This gave everyone the opportunity to clean their offices, classrooms, storerooms, etc. An appointed committee went on a walking tour of our campus noting areas that could be improved with minor costs. We replaced soiled ceiling tiles, and broken blinds and windows, and repainted all dingy class and conference rooms. One office even assigned a team to redecorate. The plan included new carpet, furniture, file cabinets, and bulletin boards. We planted additional trees and flowers. As a result of this effort, the campus is cleaner and more attractive.

The outcome of this component was to inform the total campus of the purpose of the visit, to share with all staff the results of the report, and to involve everyone in the actual visit.

Assisting the Visiting Team

Organizing a hospitality committee to make the final arrangements for the visit was one of the best decisions we made. This committee organized the resource and conference rooms, made transportation and lodging arrangements, scheduled luncheons and meetings, printed name tags, wrote and printed handouts, etc.

- **Travel and Lodging.** While the team members made their own travel arrangements, we met each of their flights and provided transportation to and from the airport. Our school

cars were available to the team and drivers were provided when necessary. Motel reservations were made eight months before the visit. The team members were given the necessary motel information and their room requests were given to the motel management. A welcome basket containing fruit, crackers, juice, etc., a name tag, a notebook containing a city and campus map, an itinerary, a welcome letter to our city and campus, a college newspaper, cafeteria tickets, etc. were in each motel room when team members arrived.

- **Resource Room.** We moved our resource room into the team's conference room. The resource material was clearly labeled, categorized, and each team member was provided a list of available material. We provided the team with a secretary, two computers and printers, a telephone, office supplies, and a refreshment table.

- **Luncheons and Scheduled Meetings.** The formal meetings were established by the president and the chairpersons of the visiting teams. In Kansas, a state appointed team, acting on behalf of the Commissioner of Education, is required to conduct a campus-wide evaluation during the regional accreditation visit. Once the meetings were finalized, the president gave the information to the Steering Committee and the Hospitality Committee for final arrangements.

  Our tables at the opening dinner meeting were decorated with plants that were later transferred to the resource and conference room. Our art students prepared the table decorations for the remaining luncheons. Name tags were worn by participants at the luncheons and scheduled meetings.

The outcome of this component was to assure that the visiting team's needs were met in such a way that the members' time and efforts could be easily focused on their responsibilities and assignments.

Campus Mobilization for Follow-up to the Self-Study

During the week following the team visit, the Steering Committee met to determine "what's next." It was decided that the committee would like to continue to work on developing strategies to assure implementation of the recommendations of the visiting team. Each member was given the option to continue committee participation, and all but one of the 18 members decided to remain on the committee. The committee drafted a set of goals and objectives and presented them to the president. The president approved the committee's proposal and reappointed the committee as the "NCA Monitoring Committee." The committee will be responsible for:

1. developing a process to address the implementation of the team's recommendations,
2. monitoring the progress of implementation,
3. keeping a written account of all accomplishments for the 2003 Steering Committee, and
4. assuring that all the recommendations become a part of our institutional goals and objectives.

Conclusion

The ultimate purpose of the self-study was to determine if our institutional practices were consistent with our mission, if our resources had been properly allocated to support these practices, and if we were an institution that merited continuing accreditation. It was our conclusion, and the conclusion of the team, that we are a good community college, but we could be better. In other words, the process worked, and we are actively involved in becoming the institution we want to be ten years from now.

Carolyn Fitzmorris is Business Department Chairperson at Hutchinson Community College, Hutchinson, KS.

Frank Wright is Dean of Instruction at Hutchinson Community College, Hutchinson, KS.

The Leap of Faith in Institutional Effectiveness Assessment: Rediscovering Process[1]

Brian Nedwek

Institutional effectiveness requires "that we document whether or not our educational programs contribute to the attainment of important educational goals over and above the 'input' characteristics students bring to college" (Hanson, 1992). In many self-studies, the typical objects of inquiry include student services (quality and accessibility of counseling and advising), faculty accomplishments (published scholarship, research and development achievements, public and community service effects), service to specialized constituencies (targeted programs for legal assistance to the poor), institutional climate (satisfaction levels, financial capacity) and student outcomes (graduation rates, external exam pass rates, and the like). In this climate of accountability, student outcomes is the dominant focus of concern. This paper suggests that Self-Study Coordinators proceed cautiously in the analysis and reporting of outcomes.

Institutional effectiveness assessment, especially the student outcomes component within the quality/accountability movement, borrows heavily from a mechanistic input/output view of the learning environment. The least understood notion is the linkage between inputs and outcomes, that is, process variables. One of the major leaps of faith taken by Self-Study Coordinators is the often untested assumption that the academic program, institution, or organizational culture/climate was, in fact, responsible for, or explains variations in, student outcomes and performance. This leap of faith disregards the question of whether or not the intended learning actually occurred. Process assessment attempts to "get behind" outcomes to enhance the credibility of the claims of success (Hutchings and Marchese, 1990). It is an attempt to make the curriculum "visible" (Schilling and Schilling, 1993).

From an evaluative perspective, process refers to the "treatment," or what actually happened during the program (Rossi and Freeman, 1989). When applied to self-studies, this formative evaluation orientation asks questions about the degree of conformity with program design, the extent of coverage or exposure to the program, and among others, the timing and logic of the individual elements. Simply stated, the focus is on the "what" question, or, "What specific contribution did the institution and program make to the achievement of student outcomes?"

Process assessment is essential to document the degree of fidelity to the original program design. It generates baseline information about what service or curriculum was provided to which students of varying levels of competence by faculty. The problem of the "nonprogram" in the delivery of services has been well documented (Rossi, 1978). For example, the use of rising junior exams as a component of intermediate student outcome measurement may have limited utility if a large proportion of first- and second-year students are transfers from other institutions. Under a condition that the treatment (i.e., core curriculum) may not have been experienced by the vast majority of upper classmen, how can one attribute student outcomes/achievements to the program? In reality, the program was never implemented.

A recent discussion about quality in higher education makes the point about process even more convincingly. As one student of Deming, a seminal force in the quality movement, remarked (Dill, 1992, p. 43):

> Deming emphasizes that the improvement of quality does not come from inspection, or what in education might be termed assessment, but from design—from the continuous improvement of the underlying processes of production.

Deming's point is critical to understanding the need for process assessment that incorporates design review. A focus on design is essential to understanding TQM's view of quality by reducing variation; in this case, variation in program delivery. Thus, Deming's notion of "common causes" as sources of variation in quality provides a rich base for building process performance indicators, such as poor design, poor materials, inefficient technologies, ineffective supervision, and the like (Dill, 1992).

Dill contends that assessment of special causes will have little effect on organizational performance, while assessment of common causes, or processes, will have a substantial impact on institutional quality. Chaffee and Sherr (1992) characterize special causes as exceptions to the normal process that require quick detection and administrative action. Common causes are inherent in every process and are not attributable to the faculty or staff member.

Chaffee and Sherr (1992) emphasize the need to develop process assessment to identify common causes of variation. While numerous performance indicator ventures assess input and output phenomena, little is done with process variables. Often the problem with process measures is the lack of valid and reliable data, coupled with the cultural norm that faculty are not required to publicize their methodology of teaching or assessment in various learning situations.

Process measures are far less likely to generate consensus as performance indicators than "input" or resource indicators. For example, when process measures involve a discussion of faculty productivity, the concept of faculty time is highly influenced by the academic culture, especially group norms and "perceived property rights" (Massey and Wilger, 1992). Simply stated, time-on-task measures (contact hours, advising, and mentoring) are strongly influenced by shared beliefs about the faculty's perception of their environment. Self-Study Coordinators may find it impossible to achieve consensus on process measures that are common to a wide range of programs.

Despite the methodological, cultural, and organizational impediments to taking process assessment seriously, Self-Study Coordinators can make several facets of the learning environment more visible and, in turn, more measurable. Below is a brief list of questions that illustrate how an institutional assessment plan review may serve to uncover some of those "common" sources of variation in quality. The questions are limited to the teaching component. Sets of items can be organized into process domains that help to organize thought and action. There are, of course, many other ways to classify process domains.

The Teaching Domain

Based on a random sample of syllabi from courses offered in the school or program, what proportion of them have some or all of the following characteristics?

1. Articulates goals and objectives of the course expressed in terms of student skills to be demonstrated
2. States the relationship of the course to the program goals and objectives
3. Specifies student tasks, projects, and timelines
4. Provides a complete list of the readings, exercises, and assignments by individual time units, e.g., by week or class session
5. Describes student assessment practices (methods and timing) that flow from the goals and objectives
6. Posts faculty office hours, telephone, and other access information.

The six core items above are samples of what might constitute a template of good practices that can be used by self-study personnel to assess one dimension of the teaching component of learning processes. From a methodological perspective, these items can be "scored" into a programmatic measure, e.g., the percent of programs within the institution that meet the minimal standards for quality syllabi. Applying the same approach to instructional performance seems quite plausible.

Similar templates can be developed to assess "good practice" in academic support services, e.g., counseling and advising, as well as in faculty productivity areas, e.g., research, scholarship, and community service domains. The literature contains numerous items that can be used to get at good practice. Illustrative items include the following:

1. Proportion of courses taught by the full-time ranked faculty
2. The proportion of freshmen and sophomores completing the core curriculum of the college/university
3. The proportion of core curricular courses taught by the full-time ranked faculty
4. The proportion of rising juniors that have not completed core curricular requirements

5. The proportion of undergraduate courses that fail to post mid-term grades or supply other intermediate performance feedback data.

The important point is to discuss the purposes of collecting such data with key stakeholders in the academy. Darling-Hammond (1992) offers four primary purposes for performance indicators, e.g., (1) monitoring general conditions and contexts, (2) identifying progress toward specified goals, (3) illuminating or foreshadowing problems, and (4) diagnosing potential sources of identified problems. Process measurement can provide a cognitive map that will enable researchers to trace variations in outcomes to internal causes.

Summary

Performance indicators, for the most part, are variations of input/output mechanistic thinking. This orientation may be explained by the accountability theme as played-out by budgetary processes. Appropriations decision-makers are accustomed to trade-offs over resources because they are easily "priced" in the policy marketplace. Process indicators are not normally expressed in similar terms. These indicators most closely lend themselves to allocation efforts as proxy measures of process. Typical proxies found in the literature include class-size and full-time faculty per full-time equivalent (FTE) student (Schmitz, 1993).

Many institutional effectiveness models simply monitor or review current operations and, oftentimes attempt to include comparisons, despite the absence of consistency in definitions or data capture practices (Nedwek and Neal, 1994). Such an emphasis is consistent with the observation that most models are unprepared to address conversion or process variables. The absence of linkages back to the learning environments leaves academic managers without information to "correct" or modify the common causes that explain variations in quality. Thus, the probability of developing actionable policy or programmatic recommendations based on information developed from classic self-studies is highly unlikely.

Implications

Self-Study Coordinators must be sensitive to process phenomena and to the wide range of forces inside and outside the classroom, across time, that help shape student competence:

> Assessment...looks less like a graduation snapshot than it does like a movie: "scenes" from the student's college experience, behavior and achievement over time, seen in multiple settings and contexts, from various points of view, sorted out and interpreted by thoughtful, involved audiences—including students themselves (Hutchings, 1989, p. 4).

Second, the inherent tension between quality improvement and external accountability mandates from accreditation agencies may tempt Self-Study Coordinators to accept "off-the-shelf" instruments to measure outcomes and processes. Such an approach is short-sighted:

> Assessment per se guarantees nothing by way of improvement, no more than a thermometer cures a fever. Only when used in combination with good instruction (that

> evokes involvement, in coherent curricula, etc.), in a program of improvement, can the device strengthen education (Marchese, 1987, p.8).

Third, traditional assessment plans may suffer from the absence of a strong conceptual framework that supports tracing outcomes back to the learning environment. Self-studies must get inside the process. As one observer suggests:

> The task is not to evaluate how well "critical thinking" is being done, for example, but to identify assignments that clearly call for students to think critically. This review process has brought to light both the strengths of the curriculum and areas that needed strengthening (Schilling and Schilling, 1993, p. 174).

Self-studies are acts of political participation. Thus, faculty must be invited to lead in developing process and outcome indicators, just as Self-Study Coordinators, accrediting agencies, policy makers, and decision makers need to articulate the intended uses of such indicator data. Unfortunately, although there are several positive uses of institutional effectiveness data, such as building a common language for formative evaluation (Nadeau, 1992), the academy may quickly perceive such initiatives as punitive tools of an insensitive and arbitrary bureaucracy. Such cynicism is more likely to flourish in an atmosphere where self-studies are preoccupied with outcomes at the expense of process.

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[1] This paper is based on work reported in Nedwek and Neal's "Performance Indicators and Rational Management Tools: A Comparative Assessment of Projects in North America and Europe." *Research in Higher Education*. (forthcoming, 1994)

Brian Nedwek is Associate Provost at St. Louis University, St. Louis, MO.

Chapter III

Self-Study and Evaluation: Special Challenges and Opportunities

The Self-Study Editing Committee– Not Just for Commas Anymore!

Sally Foster Wallace
Donald M. Nolen

In an ideal institution in an ideal world, the entire college community is eager to participate in creating a Self-Study Report for the North Central Association—everyone from chief administrators to custodians asks how to be of help. All members of the Steering Committee arrive early for meetings, with all their homework done. No voices are raised; all is harmonious. In the twinkling of an eye, the chapters of the report flow effortlessly, and, before the clear, concise, accurate report is sent to the printer (early), a kind English instructor with a few spare moments consents graciously to check for infelicities in punctuation. (In this age of computer wizardry, there are, of course, no misspellings or typographical errors.) The creation of a perfect report occasions joy, celebration, and semi-permanent good will throughout the institution; everyone basks in the glow of a job well done. Hearts are full of love for the college and all those who labor in its vineyards. The NCA team recommends ten years of continued accreditation, with no interim visits or reports. Life is good.

In a not-so-ideal institution in a not-so-ideal world, the entire college community has not the foggiest idea about what a Self-Study Report is or why it is important, let alone how to do one. People are cudgeled into serving on the Steering Committee; they finally agree, with the tacit understanding that they will attend only every fourth meeting. Murk and gloom pervade the halls, and, when someone who is responsible for getting the report whipped into shape merely strolls down the corridor, everyone dives into doorways or takes cover behind a recycling barrel. Committee chairs resign; committee members have verbal fist fights; grudges are nurtured; resentment seethes; chaos reigns. There are no kind English instructors; the unkind ones have no spare moments at all, and besides, who would want to read those pitiful, tattered collections of jargon that pretend to be chapters?

Establishing a self-study Editing Committee will not guarantee the paradise described in the first paragraph, but it certainly can help avoid the nightmare described in the second one. An effective self-study Editing Committee can do far, far more than merely check grammar and punctuation in the completed report; an editing committee can *shape* the entire document. In Parkland's case, this is exactly what happened, although it was not entirely planned that way.

For about six years before the NCA team visit, we went through a major transitional period that included a tax referendum and three changes in presidents. This turmoil affected the self-study Steering Committee and the self-study process.

The first of the three new Parkland College presidents began preparations for the NCA team visit, which was scheduled for 1992. A kick-off luncheon involved all faculty and staff, and committees were formed. At first, there was a good deal of enthusiasm; a timeline was established, and we seemed to be on our way. However, the president resigned at the end of his second year. In addition, it was becoming obvious that the College needed to make preparations for a tax referendum or face serious financial problems. The new interim president decided to put the Self-Study on hold. In the meantime, committee assignments shifted, and original chairpersons were replaced by new volunteers. The interim president insisted on expanding the original Steering Committee from eight to 26 members. Although the rationale for this change was greater representation, it had a significant impact on the dynamics of the Steering Committee's decision-making.

When our current president, Zelema Harris, arrived in July 1990, she found herself devoting much of her time to the tax referendum; after its success, she and the rest of the College were finally able to refocus on the Self-Study. The College had been granted an extension, and the NCA visit was rescheduled for February 1993. It was evident that the Editing Committee would have a significant role in fashioning the Self-Study Report. The Editing Committee found itself filling in gaps that the previous two years of change and restructuring had created. In addition, the Editing Committee's expertise led to a natural leadership role in its interactions with the Steering Committee. Although members of the Steering Committee were responsible for creating drafts of the Self-Study Report chapters, it was the Editing Committee that discovered gaping holes, requested revisions, and corrected inaccuracies. A small, highly qualified group, the Editing Committee could act expeditiously and efficiently in the development of a clear, candid Self-Study Report that would help the College find its bearings.

The Editing Committee was chaired by an English professor who is a North Central Association consultant-evaluator; members included the Self-Study Coordinator, a philosophy professor; the Vice-President for Academic Services, a former professor of mathematics; a professor of visual arts; an associate professor of broadcasting who is also a research expert; and the general manager of the College radio station, who is a laser-eyed proofreader. The chair, the Self-Study Coordinator, and the Vice-President were also members of the Steering Committee, which facilitated communication between the two committees.

Early in the self-study process, the Editing Committee determined the general format for the document's chapters:

1. descriptive, supported narrative and, where relevant, changes since the last NCA team visit in 1981;
2. strengths;
3. recommendations;

4. Description of methods or instruments for assessment of effectiveness; and

5. Plans for implementation of assessment results.

Each of the proposed self-study chapters was the responsibility of a member of the Steering Committee. The Editing Committee set deadlines for chapter drafts, evaluated the drafts, then met with the chapter chair to discuss further questions, accuracy of information, etc., and to establish a deadline for the revision. Most chapters went through at least four revisions. The Editing Committee kept contributors on task and mindful of the fact that the report had to be an accurate reflection of the College—warts and all—and that it had to be unequivocally clear to non-Illinois readers.

When we did not have enough information to support a particular chapter, the Editing Committee's research member designed and implemented three major opinion surveys. When multiple pages of statistics threatened to induce glassy-eyed comas, our visual arts member designed charts and graphs to convey the information more clearly and efficiently. When various committee chairs kept promising but not delivering information, the popular-but-powerful administrative member could lean heavily on the recalcitrant promiser. When it became clear that some additional chapters were necessary, the Self-Study Coordinator wrote them. The committee chair was aware of the kinds of information NCA team members need—information about storage of backup computer records, how much seating the library provides, etc., and made sure it was included in appropriate chapters. Our proofreading member caught discrepancies in numerical data, which we then would resolve by tracking down the facts. All statements of fact were verified before the final draft.

Eleven months before the team visit, the Editing Committee distributed a rough draft of the entire Self-Study Report to all full-time faculty, administrators, and staff, and to those members of the part-time faculty and staff who expressed an interest. We asked that additions, deletions, and corrections of errors of fact be submitted to the Editing Committee. We also held a college-wide open hearing so that people could ask questions or offer suggestions.

We responded to each person who sent us additions, deletions, and corrections of errors of fact; we decided what information would be more effective in chart or graph form; we verified all information and resolved conflicting statements. We chose the cover design, cover stock, and typeface and format for Volume I, the Self-Study Report, and Volume II, Supplementary Information.

Five months before the team visit, we sent a revised draft to all full-time faculty, administrators, and staff, and to those members of the part-time faculty and staff who expressed an interest. Once again, we requested additions, deletions, corrections of errors of fact, and clarifications. It was virtually impossible for a member of the Parkland College community to be unaware of and uninvolved in the self-study process and report. The penultimate draft was approved by the Board of Trustees, and we went to press on time.

It is clear that an Editing Committee can be vital decision-makers in the self-study process. In some cases, such as Parkland's, this might be the best way to go—especially if your

institution is going through major changes. What is clear from our experience is that the Editing Committee must be comprised of respected people with a broad, deep knowledge of the institution, who can communicate well with a wide range of interests throughout the institution. It helps to have people who work well together, are task-oriented, are committed to a high-quality outcome, and who have a sense of humor. It worked well for us; perhaps it can for you.

Sally Foster Wallace is Professor of English at Parkland College, Champaign, IL.
Donald M. Nolen is Professor of Philosophy at Parkland College, Champaign, IL.

The Self-Study as an Electronic Document: Taking Advantage of Technology

David G. Clark

Modern electronic communication, available at most campuses, can save time, money, and personnel costs from start to finish. Self-Study Coordinators need no longer stand at the end of the word-processing line with their work that "is not really due for another eight months." Moreover, electronic communication can facilitate the accumulation, analysis, and reformatting of data required under the new NCA "patterns of evidence" that go into effect in Fall 1994.

This paper reports on the various electronic means used to carry out a self-study at Colorado State University. Without impinging on scarce secretarial and other staff resources, electronic communication and production saved both time and money, especially at the end of the study period. With the study and data used in its compilation now stored electronically, the next accrediting cycle should benefit as well.

Fifteen months elapsed between the first meeting of the Self-Study Steering Committee and the submission of the self-study to North Central. This report describes electronic activities during three stages:

1. **Start-up**—self-study committee establishment, planning of the self-study, and institutional and North Central approval of approach

2. **Mid-project**—subcommittee formation and work, overall document design, accumulation and evaluation of component data, creation of review drafts, circulation for comments and subsequent revision, and final production

3. **Wrap-up**—presenting findings to campus and governing board, final preparations for submission to North Central.

Each stage involved electronic applications including exchange of word-processed text via the campus backbone computer network, conversion of text from one format to another, collection and analysis of database and statistical information, and document design and layout.

Start-up

Ours is a state-supported university with some 20,000 students and 1,300 faculty. Its three campuses are located in the same city, each about two miles from the others. Of course, we have the usual parking and related travel problems. Our computer backbone network is virtually complete, and most professors have computer access to it.

Once the Steering Committee agreed to serve, work went forward using, whenever possible, the network or diskette exchange.

Some work from the previous accreditation cycle had to be put onto computer—both the table of contents of the previous Self-Study Report and evaluation team findings to which the university needed to respond in the current study.

After that, all new work was computerized and was readily available to the self-study group. Key documents were compiled either by transfer across the network or by collection of diskettes and copying onto administration hard drives. For example, as the Steering Committee elected to evaluate progress on the university's recently-adopted strategic plan, that plan (a document of some 45 pages) was sent across the system and deposited for use by the committee. Subcommittee tasks were simply formulated by portioning the plan into study categories and sending the results to the network laser printer. The task took less than half a day, and the only secretarial time required involved running multiple photocopies of laser printer output for the Steering Committee.

Initial meetings had to be arranged in the old way—secretary calling secretary to collect schedules, then calling again to propose meeting times, then calling again to confirm. Soon though, campus electronic-mail came into heavy play, both to announce meetings and to send minutes afterward. Often minutes awaited committee members on their return to their offices.

Campus e-mail's advantage in data collection revealed itself early. Writers drafting various sections learned to file questions directly with sources, without waiting for a personal or telephone appointment. Sources, on the other hand, were able to respond at their own convenience, without interrupting other work. The traditional "8-to-5" working hours of administrative offices thus adjusted to the traditional self-dictated working hours of scholars and scientists. Even absence from campus proved not necessarily to delay the project. Once, while school was out of session, a director of a large campus laboratory was contacted via Internet, while halfway across the continent presenting a paper. The director responded both to the query and to the lab, asking an assistant there to supply additional information. A week was saved in gathering that information.

Mid-project

The North Central Associate Director assigned to the university early on advocated that the final Self-Study Report be concise, focused on the essentials, evaluative, and selective rather than all-inclusive. The Steering Committee interpreted that advice by setting overall page lengths for the various sections and by seeking to compose a document designed for the site-

team, composed of persons well-informed about higher education but unfamiliar with the particular university.

These objectives were furthered by electronic book design, worked out early in the mid-project stage. While the majority of book designs are composed following completion of the manuscript, book design for this self-study offered guidance for the self-study subcommittees. As the Steering Committee had selected the special emphasis approach to the self-study, a design for the final report took into account both the need for a limited comprehensive section and for the special emphasis sections themselves. The book design thus identified material that was already known and available that would go into the comprehensive section and specified what the subcommittees needed to collect and evaluate. The book design permitted work on the comprehensive section to be carried out while the subcommittees were organizing, identifying sources, and collecting data. By the time they were ready to write, the comprehensive section was complete, so members knew what had been said and need not be repeated.

Having provided a large working outline that helped avoid duplication of effort, the document design, via PageMaker, facilitated the editing of the various sections into a cohesive whole. Ease of editing electronically helped create a consistent tone in the text as well as in the appearance of the final report. Thus, we avoided the helter-skelter, thrown-together look that some self-studies have. Campus reviewers—those involved in the work from the start as well as deans and vice presidents seeing it for the first time in near-final form—reported that they were able to deal with the document without distractions caused by unnecessary repetition.

PageMaker had certain advantages when used with WordPerfect:

- PageMaker publications by other campus agencies (the faculty/staff policy manual, for example) were easily exported into WordPerfect files for ease of editing into self-study.
- PageMaker's indexing capability permitted index generation with a minimum of effort. Previous self-studies contained no index.
- PageMaker also automatically generated and updated the table of contents

As the self-study was a part-time assignment for everyone involved, with meeting and analysis time snatched from otherwise full schedules of teaching, scholarly activity, taking classes, administrative work, and other regular activities, the Steering Committee planned its schedule to employ the computer as a short-cut provider. For example, to permit longer analysis time, the schedule was arranged to have subcommittee drafts due to the Self-Study Coordinator by the start of spring break. This gave the coordinator several days of undistracted time to assemble the full document. Had the work required a secretarial or word processing staff, it could not have been done without interrupting planned annual leave. By receiving electronic instead of paper files from the subcommittees, the coordinator was able to edit and assemble the document in the time allotted, run paper copies for distribution, and have them ready for critiques by the time the campus reconvened. Encouragement of e-mail responses permitted faster handling of comments as well.

Wrap-up

The self-study's first draft, circulated to key people immediately following spring break, was followed by a revised second draft, toward the end of spring semester, that went to vice presidents, deans, and college offices. Revisions at each stage were handled quickly and electronically without recourse to secretarial/word-processing pool. The Self-Study Coordinator devoted a couple of weeks in June to final revisions. During the first week of August, one more pass through the self-study provided opportunity to make further changes, and a final draft was printed for submission to the governing board. In the fall, after current year basic institutional data were complete, a few pages were run to replace older data. A minor change in site visit dates, requested by North Central, was reflected in the title page at this time as well. Again, such changes were made with minimal staff time.

Throughout the 15-month self-study period, frequent reports were required both on and off campus. Such reports were formatted and prepared with ease, simply by capturing summary paragraphs and data that already existed in electronic files. Some reports were made in text form as memoranda, while others were prepared as transparencies for use in talks before large groups.

Additionally, elements from the design or template for the report provided consistent logos for use on previously-published documents that were included as appendices to the self-study. The self-study's cover, for example, was converted into a 2 1/2" by 3 1/2" sticker label to be affixed to appendices, to support the desire for uniform appearance in the full report.

Electronic publishing also provided a partial solution, at least, to the storage space problem. Fewer paper copies will be stored permanently than in the past, since diskette and tape versions of the Self-Study Report will be retained. Eventually, with the arrival of compact disk recording, such documents will be kept in that format.

Summary

Electronic composition and production:

- permitted a physically attractive report to be completed on time, at reasonable cost, and with personnel effort directed mainly at substance rather than production;
- greatly reduced secretarial/clerical costs spent on production of various components;
- similarly reduced mail turnaround time at every stage, as well as time devoted to production;
- permitted incorporation of parts of previously produced electronic documents into new documents, with minimal editing;
- provided easily duplicated, stored, and transported documents for present and future use.

A Look to the Future

Eliminating virtually all the time traditionally required for typing and other secretarial work involved in producing book-length documents is noteworthy, but may not computerization contribute more? For example, how will electronically collected data help with the new "patterns of evidence" evaluation procedures adopted by North Central? This brief section devotes itself to suggesting ways in which accessible computer files may improve understanding of institutional objectives both on and off campus.

Perhaps the major way is in the computer's ability to search voluminous records. *The Handbook of Accreditation, 1993-1994—Working Draft* yields topics that within the next year or two may be addressed more definitively by use of computer than previously was possible. Among them are these:

- governing board and faculty senate minutes, uploaded to a campus network within a day or so of the meetings
- faculty demographics, both current and compared with previous years
- on-line catalogs with up-to-date policies, available not only on campus but to high school media centers/counsellors via Internet or direct dial-up
- other public information, such as tuition and fees, and refund and other policies affecting students or prospective students
- individual application status reports, as well as financial aid opportunities and conditions
- current news about the institution, such as faculty and student awards and recognition, grants received, and other information, dissemination of which historically has relied upon media gatekeepers to forward to most publics
- accumulation and display of factors comprising the various "patterns of evidence" called for in the new accreditation criteria. Placement statistics of various programs might be reported annually and their trends shown over time.

Making such records and others readily available may do more than facilitate easy retrieval for academic document production. It may generate a new openness to higher education's clients.

Appendix 1

Electronic Publishing "Starter Kit" Cost Estimates

For less than $5,000, taking advantage of educational discounts, a complete high quality electronic publishing set-up can provide everything needed for producing a self-study up to the final or distribution stage, which requires a good quality photocopier and a binder. Precise figures can be obtained from current computer consumer magazines, and educational discounts are usually available from vendors. Prices listed here are educational discount prices available at our institution. Of course, every item can be used for other purposes, simultaneously or subsequently.

- **PC** (at least 386, 486 preferred, or the new Pentium) with at least 100-meg hard drive (often a 250-meg drive costs only slightly more) and both 3 1/2" and 5 1/4" floppy drives. Operating system should conform to institution's preferred system. Color monitor (the larger the better, 15-inch recommended). A modem is usually included, and would be especially useful if the institution does not have a backbone network with Internet/Bitnet connection. Many PCs come bundled with various programs (Windows if they are DOS-based, word processors, and/or database managers), and there is frequently a choice of programs. *Estimated cost:* $2,000

- **Laser printer** (Hewlett-Packard LasrJet4 is the standard). *Estimated cost:* $1,000

- **Flatbed scanner** (if you can afford one). Handy for converting charts and graphs to computer graphics, which then can be cropped and sized to fit the page. Hewlett-Packard and Microtek offer good choices. *Estimated cost:* $1,000

- WordPerfect 6.0 for Windows or equivalent **full-featured word processor.**

  Estimated cost: $120

- PageMaker or equivalent **document design application.** Check with your publications office first. They may be using PageMaker, QuarkXpress, Ventura, or some other program. You want to be sure that institutional publications are stored in electronic formats that are readily accessible to and compatible with your application. *Estimated cost:* $150

- **Database manager.** You may want to consider this to help format numerical data. Before choosing an application, try to discover if the institution's primary financial data gathering systems offer a format that is compatible. *Estimated cost:* $400

- Some type of **hard disk backup** is essential. If you are connected to your institution's administrative computer system, backups will be done regularly. If your system is a stand-alone, you should backup on tape frequently. *Estimated cost:* $250

David G. Clark is Self-Study Coordinator at Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO.

The Special Emphasis Option for Focused Improvement

Dianne Cyr

In 1989, Byron McClenney, President, Community College of Denver, wrote:

> ...continuing the translation from vision to action is the annual planning process that is put in place. This process helps explain what the institutional priorities are for the year ahead in order to take steps that we have decided are important for our college. Such an approach provides for a clear focus and a strong agreement on where the institution needs to go, both from the perspective of community leaders and the perspective of people on campus. There must be the...shared struggle and int_iligent risk taking...if the institution is to develop. The other choice is to drift and decay.

In keeping with that philosophy, the Community College of Denver chose to focus on the integration of planning with accountability for our special emphasis self-study. We set out to demonstrate that clearly effective links exist between the measurement of student achievement and determination of institutional priorities.

Our Self-Study Report explains how the information gleaned from accountability data is integrated into our planning process each year. We address the question, "How does what we learn from our accountability data get translated into the way the College does business?"

Format of the Report

Because the Community College of Denver, with NCA approval, chose to build its self-study around a special emphasis, our report did not reflect the traditional institutional self-study process. Its purpose was to concentrate on the integration of our accountability results with the planning/budgeting process. Chapters in the report provided evidence of compliance with General Institutional Requirements (GIRs) and Criteria, responses to the most recent NCA report, and background and history of the CCD planning process. A summary chapter analyzed and evaluated the process, including recommendations for improvement and our request for continued NCA accreditation.

Background

Since 1984 CCD has been involved in developing the processes for a comprehensive accountability program aimed at providing data on CCD's effectiveness in meeting its mission. In 1990, the first accountability report was produced, with baseline data on first-time college students entering CCD in the fall of 1988. In 1991, CCD set goals based upon baseline data and produced a second accountability report, which included tracking of two special populations—minorities and students taking developmental classes. In 1992, CCD began collection of data by program and by additional groups of special populations—physically handicapped, learning disabled, limited English proficient, educationally disadvantaged, financially disadvantaged, and Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) clients using the Women's Resource Center. With these data, CCD began incorporating Carl Perkins' federal vocational reporting requirements into the college's overall accountability plan. CCD produced a third accountability report. The quality and quantity of information related to effectiveness and accountability continues to improve and the extent to which faculty and staff are involved and empowered continues to expand. This evolution has stretched the resources, both human and financial, of the Office of Research and Planning as it attempts to meet the challenge of managing and reporting vast amounts of information at program and faculty levels.

Steering Committee Goals

In fall of 1992, the CCD Planning Council/Steering Committee set about to accomplish two goals:

1. to conduct and refine the annual planning/budgeting process to include faculty and staff from all areas of the college and
2. to prepare a Special Emphasis Study for North Central Accreditation, "The Integration of Planning and Accountability"— a first for a community college.

On October 29, 1992, Byron McClenney convened the initial meeting of the Planning Council. The committee was selected to represent all constituencies of the college. Because the council would be expanding and refining the opportunities for involvement in "Integrating Planning and Accountability," the focus of our special emphasis study, President McClenney also gave the Planning Council the charge of doubling as the "North Central Steering Committee." It made sense to combine both functions for efficiency and communication. The charge to the committee was:

- to develop a framework facilitating full participation in the integration of accountability and the planning/ budgeting process and
- to produce a Special Emphasis Self-Study Report.

A discussion of this charge at the initial meeting of the combined Planning Council/ Steering Committee, targeted the need for a clear understanding of the planning process, its relationship to accountability and its impact on the budget. The committee recognized

the value of review and clarification and determined this would be a productive activity for all faculty and staff.

Clarification of the Planning Process

The clarification process began with an active brainstorming session, which produced several rough models. By early November the committee had created a chart representing the flow of the planning process with the integration of accountability data and full involvement of the college. The chart was revised and refined to accurately reflect the steps in the process and is represented by a flow chart and narrative. A separate chart, more fully illustrating the budgeting process to be implemented at the program level, was added. The CCD Planning Process flow chart and narrative with budgeting parameters provides an overview of the process.

The Committee also designed a set of planning and budgeting documents to facilitate the development of plans and budget requests consistent with college priorities.

In designing the documents, deans were consulted and participated in discussions on the process for incorporating them into planning/budgeting before they were finalized. The planning/budgeting packet was solely directed to more fully integrate accountability feedback into the planning/budgeting process and to promote consistency throughout the college.

Process of the Study

Specific plans to involve the entire college in an analysis of the accountability data were drawn during initial steering committee meetings. The model for faculty/staff involvement is intended to be an ongoing element of the planning process and was refined several times and reviewed with the President prior to approval. The approved model included:

1. Distribution of accountability data to all faculty/staff with a form for discussion and feedback
2. Collection of feedback from faculty/staff
3. Analysis and synthesis of feedback
4. Identification of priorities for planning and budgeting
5. Involvement in the budgeting process.

The steps in this model are depicted in the flow chart and narrative in figures 1 and 2. The budget process is represented in figure 3.

Summary

The first year for the current CCD planning process coincided with the 1987 NCA evaluation. The cycle of activities has been repeated each year since its inception, and each year's

process, though fundamentally the same, continually evolves to incorporate improvements and changes resulting from what has been learned from the previous year's experience.

Our most recent special emphasis self-study in conjunction with the NCA visit has provided an excellent opportunity for focused analysis, evaluation, and reflection on the college's progress toward a fully integrated approach to strategic planning. It was developed to better integrate accountability/effectiveness efforts with the annual planning cycle. The planning process, described by our last evaluation team as exemplary in structure, has been replicated each year since 1986-87 with careful attention to the linkage of strategies to operating plans and the linkage of plans to budgets. The study demonstrates and strengthens the ability of CCD to develop the appropriate vision and then link the vision to the way the institution does business.

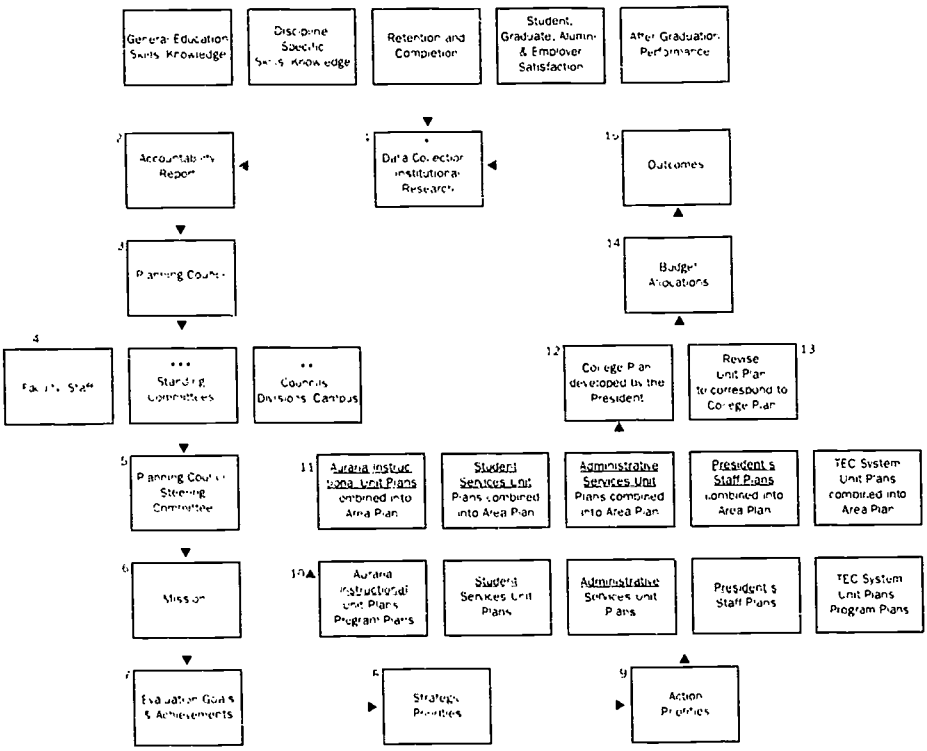
Seven years of experience in systemized planning and budgeting has allowed us to effectively incorporate accountability data as we plan for our future. Through this emphasis on the integration of accountability data into the planning/budgeting process CCD has provided evidence of its effectiveness in responding to the needs of its community. Our report cites many examples of how, today, the Community College of Denver is different from and better than it was in 1986. This is testimony to our serious commitment to carrying out our plans. We continue to take what we learn each year to improve the institution and its planning process, to achieve our ultimate goal of quality instruction and service to students.

The accountability report along with research data compiled by CCD will continue to reflect the continued needs, challenges, and successes of the institution. On the strength of a solid and evolving systems approach to planning, the Community College of Denver was granted continued accreditation with the next comprehensive evaluation in ten years by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

Figure 1.

Community College of Denver

CCD Planning Process



*** Data/Research**
Academic Profile
Follow up Surveys
Satisfaction Surveys
Perkins Requirements
Legislative CCHE Mandates
Other Pertinent Issues

**** Councils/Divisions/ Campuses**
Faculty Council
Instructional Divisions
Student Services
Classified Council
President's Staff
Student Government

***** Standing Committees**
TLC
PBAC
Marketing
FACCE
Academic Standards
Project Success
Diversity
Reading
Speaking Listening
Writing
Math

▲ See attached model for program targeting

Figure 2.

Community College of Denver

Steps in the Planning Process

1. Collection of data from surveys, assessments, demographics, faculty reports, Perkins reports, and other pertinent issues.

2. Synthesis of reports, assessments, follow-up studies, program data, to produce Accountability Report.

3. Planning council interacts with accountability report to develop framework for discussion and feedback.

4. Accountability report, summary of issues and framework for feedback is distributed to faculty and staff. Faculty and staff in divisions, on committees, councils, and campuses interact with the data and identify annual priorities based on accountability.

5. Lists of top priorities are given to the planning council for translation into planning priorities.

6. Planning priorities weighed against the mission and role of the college.

7. Planning priorities are measured against institutional values, strengths and weaknesses as demonstrated by past goals and achievements.

8. Planning council develops a list of strategic priorities (specific desirable outcomes) from faculty/staff input which are consistent with the mission and goals of the college.

9. Action priorities (no more than 5) are extracted from the strategic priorities by the planning council and submitted to the president and college council.

10. Action priorities are distributed to all units of the college to be used in the development of unit and program plans, and budget requests.

11. Unit plans and budget requests are combined into area plans for instruction, student services, administrative services, President's staff, and the TEC system.

12. The president develops a college plan based upon the area plans.

13. College units then revise their plans to correspond with the college plan.

14. The revised plans are used to revise program, unit and area budget requests, and drive budget allocations.

15. Data is collected to measure success in addressing priorities. This data will feed into accountability issues for the next year.

Figure 3.

Community College of Denver

Annual Program Planning and Budgeting Process Parameters

1. All full-time faculty/staff are involved in the planning and budgeting process (may be accomplished through program representatives).

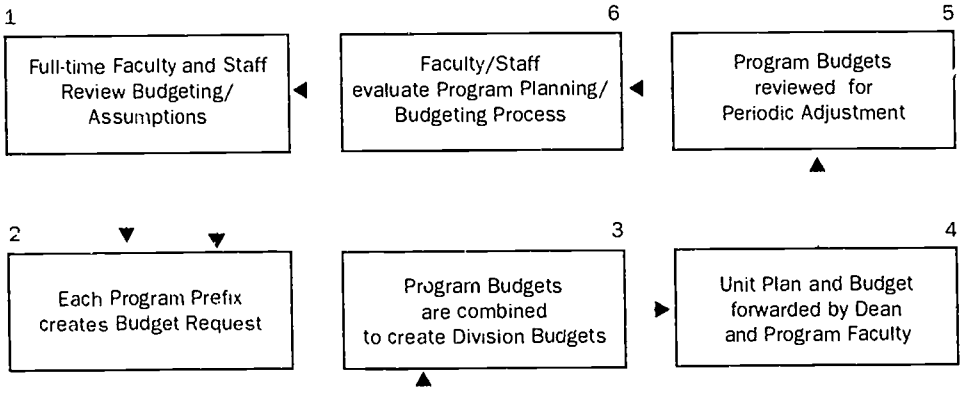
2. Each program/prefix creates an annual program plan and budget request (attached).

3. The division dean and the division program faculty combine program plans and budgets to create the unit (division) plan and budget. The goal is consensus; where consensus cannot be reached, final decision rests with the Dean.

4. The unit (division) plan and budget are forwarded under the signature of the Dean.

5. Periodic review of FTE budgets allow for adjustment and reallocation in a cooperative spirit within a unit (division) and between units.

6. Faculty/staff anually evaluate the success of the program planning/budgeting process and recommend improvements.



Dianne Cyr is Coordinator of the Teaching/Learning Center, Community College of Denver, Denver, CO.

Building a Self-Study around Special Emphases

Peter M. Hutchinson

Introduction

The special emphasis approach to a self-study is still a relatively new method for preparing the document that forms the basis of the accreditation visit. In considering this new approach, a variety of questions are likely to arise:

- What is the special emphasis approach?
- How does it differ from the traditional self-study?
- What is the rationale for adopting this method?
- How do you conduct this type of self-study?

What follows is a brief overview of Bowling Green State University's experience with building a self-study around special emphases. By examining my own institution's experience, I hope to provide some answers to these kinds of questions.

Background Information

Bowling Green State University (BGSU) is a Category I doctoral-granting institution, enrolling approximately 17,500 students on its main campus and 1,400 students on its Firelands College campus. The Firelands College campus is located in Huron, Ohio, 60 miles from the BGSU main campus. Approximately 1: ,000 main campus students are undergraduates, and 2,500 are graduate students. BGSU grants undergraduate degrees in 170 different programs, awards 13 masters degrees in 69 fields, two specialist degrees in four fields, and doctoral degrees in 14 fields, with more than 60 specializations. Firelands College offers a variety of associate degree programs including the Associate of Arts, the Associate of Science, and a number of technical degree programs. Firelands students may transfer to the BGSU main campus or to other four-year institutions prior to, or upon completion of, their associate degree programs.

BGSU was a candidate for continued accreditation during academic year 1992-93, with the actual site visit conducted on February 22-24, 1993. The overall self-study process was conducted over a two-year period prior to the site visit. The self-study was built around three special emphasis areas: The Student Learning Environment; Information Systems; and Graduate Education and Research.

The total Self-Study Report consisted of two volumes. Volume 1 represented the body of the report. It contained a comprehensive overview of the university (five chapters; approximately one-third of the total report), which is somewhat analogous to a traditional comprehensive report. It also contained three additional chapters, one for each special emphasis (approximately two-thirds of the total report). Volume 2 contained a variety of statistical data and other appendices.

The Special Emphasis Approach

A straightforward, but perhaps overly simplistic, way to describe the special emphasis approach is as a "more focused" self-study compared to the traditional comprehensive approach. A more precise description is to consider it as a "thematic approach" to the self-study in which the institution defines several specific lenses through which to view its progress during the preceding decade.

In many ways, conducting the special emphasis self-study is more difficult than conducting a traditional comprehensive self-study. For example, all units in the university must conduct their own individual self-studies, just as they would in the comprehensive approach. Insights gleaned from these unit self-studies continue to form the basis for the comprehensive section of the final report. In addition, however, they provide the "raw material" for the special emphasis sections of the final report.

Because of the dual purposes for these individual unit analyses, the entire self-study requires significantly more coordination among the committees and subcommittees conducting it. Significantly more coordination and integration in writing the final report also are required.

Some institutions might view the self-study process as inherently more uncertain and involving greater risk than a traditional comprehensive approach. However, I do not believe that attitude pervaded BGSU's self-study.

Rationale for the Special Emphasis Approach

If the special emphasis approach is more difficult, requires greater coordination and integration, and perhaps involves greater uncertainty and risk, then what is the rationale for the institution to adopt this approach? It basically boils down to the fact that this thematic approach offers the possibility of significantly greater rewards for the institution.

First, it enables, actually forces, the institution to focus on those themes that are most important to it and its institutional mission. Second, a greater sense that you are "doing it for

yourself" develops among the various institutional constituencies. This attitude develops a greater ability for individuals to buy into the process as something that "helps us," rather than as a make-work exercise conducted for outside reviewers. Third, it provides the opportunity to get a wider array of people from various constituent groups involved in the process.

Is the special emphasis approach right for every institution? Is it an approach that all institutions should adopt? It depends on the institution (typical academic equivocation!). I don't believe it is the correct approach for all institutions. Whether it should be adopted depends on the stage of history in which the institution finds itself. It seems appropriate only for institutions that are up for continued accreditation rather than initial accreditation. It also is more appropriate for institutions that have a relatively long history of institutional accreditation.

In my opinion, the special emphasis approach is most appropriate for institutions that have articulated a very specific set of institutional goals, and who want to take stock on how well they are succeeding in achieving them. This could involve institutions such as BGSU that are in the process of evolving in their historical mission, or institutions that are attempting to serve their same historical niche. The critical element is how specifically the institutional goals have been articulated.

Conducting a Special Emphasis Self-Study

Unfortunately the "how to" of conducting a special emphasis self-study also depends on the institution. The approach must be consistent with the institutional culture. Beyond that, there are four specific factors that must be addressed directly:

- Structure
- Coordination
- Integration
- Avoiding duplication

Although these factors might seem self evident, they must be considered and addressed explicitly. A brief description of BGSU's process and experience might provide a useful illustration. The formal structure developed to conduct BGSU's self-study consisted of the following:

- Coordinator—Associate Dean of the Graduate College
- Executive Committee
  - Student Learning Environment Special Emphasis Coordinators (2)–Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs; Assistant Vice President for Student Affair–Student Activities and Orientation
  - Information Systems Special Emphasis Coordinators (2)–Dean of Libraries and Learning Resources; Director of Computer Services

- — Graduate Education and Research Special Emphasis Coordinator (1)–Associate Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate College
- — Vice President for Academic Affairs
- — Vice President for Student Affairs

- Steering Committee
  - — Executive Committee Members
  - — Comprehensive Committee Members
  - — Special Emphasis Committee Members
- Support Staff
  - — Secretarial Support
  - — Technical Writer
  - — Graduate Assistants

I would describe the BGSU structure as "hierarchical with nesting." As with any self-study, the most important element of the structure is choosing the right Coordinator. Ours at BGSU was excellent. With a special emphasis self-study, however, an almost equally important task is selecting the Special Emphasis Coordinators. They provide direct information and feedback to the Coordinator, and they also provide the most direct linkages to the Steering Committee Members. They must be highly knowledgeable in their individual special emphasis areas, but they must also have a broad understanding of the entire university. It is essential that they are individuals who can work together as an effective team, so they must be assertive yet without too much "pride of ownership." The greatest care must be exercised in selecting these coordinators.

Because of BGSU's institutional culture, the structure had to assure widespread participation by all constituencies of the institution—faculty, administration, administrative staff, classified staff, and students. Therefore, the Comprehensive Committee and all three Special Emphasis Committees contained representatives from each of these five groups.

Coordination was the responsibility of the Coordinator and the Executive Committee. In particular, they were jointly responsible for achieving integration and avoiding duplication, both in conducting the special emphasis analyses and in writing the final report. The Executive Committee met frequently to assure adequate information sharing, to assure that the three special emphasis segments were integrated into a unified whole, and to assure that unnecessary duplication was avoided. Each Special Emphasis Committee functioned on its own to develop the goals of the special emphasis, and to develop a detailed definition of the special emphasis. These committees were also expected to organize and write their respective special emphasis reports.

The three factors of coordination, integration, and avoiding duplication are all essential if the self-study is to be successful. Although each special emphasis section of the final report must

be able to stand on its own, they must be tightly integrated if the total report is going to represent a unified whole. Failure to avoid duplication will cause the final report to be too long. If that is the case, the report will not be read widely by members of the university community and the primary benefit of the self-study will be forfeited. Undue length will also cause difficulty for the evaluation team in preparing for the campus visit.

Defining the Special Emphases

Defining the special emphases represents an iterative process regardless of whether the institution chooses a single emphasis or several different emphases. In BGSU's case, we started out with some very general ideas and only through a series of iterations did we arrive at a set of emphases with which we felt comfortable.

The rationale for choosing the three special emphases at BGSU was twofold. First, they needed to be tied directly to our institutional Role and Mission Statement. Following our previous NCA accreditation a decade earlier, BGSU developed what might be referred to as a "functional mission statement." In addition to containing fairly typical mission statement language in the preamble, the BGSU Role and Mission Statement contains a set of 27 specific institutional goals organized under five general headings. Moreover, during the previous decade the BGSU community had prioritized these 27 goals into three general classifications as goals to be "emphasized," "enhanced," or "maintained." The special emphasis approach provided a direct means for BGSU to achieve a precise understanding of how we were doing as an institution in achieving our specific goals. Pragmatically, this approach also provided a direct means of addressing NCA's "General Institutional Requirements."

Second, we wanted to focus our attention on those aspects of the university that had improved most during the preceding decade. Intuitively, it seemed that the university had progressed most significantly during the past decade in enhancing the quality of the student learning environment, in providing more and better learning resources on campus, and in developing the institution's graduate programming and research roles. Using these three themes as special emphases provided the opportunity to understand better what progress had been made, and to develop an in-depth understanding of those areas where concerns remained and further progress was necessary.

Caveats and Concerns

As mentioned earlier, some institutions might view the special emphasis approach as inherently more risky and uncertain than the traditional comprehensive approach. In order to minimize that potential risk, it is essential to maintain close contact with the NCA from the very early stages of the self-study process.

The role of the NCA staff liaison is critical in this context. In addition to frequent telephone contacts with the liaison apprising him/her of your plans and seeking advice, I encourage at least one formal visit to the campus by the liaison to meet with key players in the self-study. BGSU provided the staff liaison with the specific goals of each special emphasis area, as well

as detailed definitions of each special emphasis, prior to his campus visit. Based on these and other documents, he was able to provide essential feedback that proved useful during the reminder of the self-study process. Having the liaison come to your campus and meet with all key team members is highly preferable to having only the Self-Study Coordinator visit NCA in Chicago.

The most significant concern at BGSU regarding the special emphasis approach deals with the nature of the team visit. The evaluation team did not seem to be attuned to the nuances of the special emphasis approach that make it different from the traditional comprehensive approach. In particular, the team visit was structured precisely as it would have been had BGSU conducted a comprehensive self-study.

One crucial omission was the failure of the evaluation team to meet explicitly with the Special Emphasis Committees. This caused confusion, and a bit of indignation, among special emphasis committee members who believed that the special insights they had developed throughout the process were ignored in the team visit. NCA must expend more effort on the professional development of evaluation team chairs and team members regarding the different approach required in a site visit for institutions that have conducted a special emphasis self-study if they expect more institutions to adopt this approach.

Peter M. Hutchinson is Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs at Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH.

The Mandated Focused Evaluation: Transforming Institutional Crisis into Institution-wide Success

Lynn Priddy Rozumalski
Adrian Lorbetske

Introduction

In 1990, NCA granted Nicolet College continued accreditation with the next comprehensive evaluation in five years and a focused visit in 1993 to review serious concerns about stagnant strategic planning, inadequate governance and communication structures, inappropriate board involvement, questionable administrative stability, and more than 20 other concerns. The college had suffered more than 100 percent turnover in upper-level administration, while staff unrest, apathy, and frustration continued to heighten. As might be expected, the college climate was characterized by highly-publicized conflict among the faculty, board, and administration. This presentation discusses how an all-inclusive, candid, high-energy self-study process declared war on the problems, transformed crisis issues into positive opportunities, and used the NCA focused evaluation to catalyze institutional improvement and attitudinal change.

As required by NCA, Nicolet prepared a report detailing progress made in addressing each of the concerns identified by the team during its 1990 visit. In addition, the evaluation included a two-day visit in May 1993 by a two-member team of seasoned consultant-evaluators.

Because NCA had mandated a plan for assessment of student academic achievement since the last accreditation visit, Nicolet was told that the team would also review the college's progress in developing and implementing an assessment plan.

Taking the Proactive Perspective

Most Nicolet staff and board members were well aware of the critical state of affairs at the college at the time of the 1990 NCA comprehensive visit. The report from that visit spurred the board, administration, and staff to take immediate action.

In the spring of 1991, the college began to address specifically several of the NCA concerns. In June of 1991, the college developed an action plan that moved it into a somewhat more proactive, rather than reactive, mode. Follow-through on the plan resulted in improvement in many of the areas of concern.

Organizing an Impeccable Self-Study Process

The following served as guiding principles of Nicolet's focused evaluation process.

- Include as many campus staff as possible from all areas of the college.
- Provide a thorough, candid, objective review of progress made and progress needed to address the areas of concern.
- Ensure that the research and the process would be used to improve the institution.
- Generate staff belief in proactive, positive change and in staff members themselves.
- Publicize all the findings throughout the district.
- Break the "research-report-plan-but-no-action-and-so-we-complain" cycle.
- Begin a new cycle of action, involvement, collegiality, and continual improvement by using the NCA mandate as the external impetus for internal regrouping and change.

Step One: Educating the College and Community

To ensure that the process would be positive, candid, and high-energy and that it truly would transform crisis into success, several key first steps were taken by the president:

1. defining the 1993 focused visit as a springboard for the 1995 comprehensive evaluation and reaccreditation,
2. beginning preparations early enough (in this case two and one-half years before the visit),
3. repeatedly consulting with the NCA staff liaison on how to make both visits successful, and
4. identifying an enthusiastic, action-oriented coordinator to lead both the focused and comprehensive evaluations.

In retrospect, all four of these first steps were critical to success. On the advice of the staff liaison, the president asked the coordinator to attend the 1992 NCA Annual Meeting to learn how a positive, effective self-study process is conducted.

Following the April 1992 convention and throughout the process leading to the focused visit, the president and coordinator met weekly or more often to review what had been done, what needed to be done, what resources were needed, and how the process was progressing. Key to the success of this ongoing communication was the coordinator's freedom to re-create continually the most effective means for the process; an adequate budget, office, and appropriate release time for the coordinator; and the facilitating/supporting role of the president.

Once the president and coordinator had internalized the purposes of the process, they began educating the college community. At two sets of all-campus meetings in April 1992, the coordinator presented self-study principles to all staff and recruited members for a Steering Committee that would create a plan for and oversee the process leading to the visit. By May the Steering Committee was in place; the summer of 1992 was spent in-servicing members, organizing presentations for the August 1992 in-service, and developing the *Focused Visit Plan* for a proactive self-study. The audience orientation, detail, organization, and flexibility of that plan became critical for the campus turnaround.

Step Two: Developing and Adhering to a Detailed Plan

A subcommittee of the Steering Committee, led by the coordinator, created the Focused Visit Plan. This plan included background on Nicolet's accreditation history and the purposes of accreditation, NCA requirements and expectations, the general plan for preparing for the visit, the timeline, the organization and style of the preliminary and final reports, and appendices. In summary, the process was overseen by the Steering Committee, while the research on each of the concern areas was conducted by six study subcommittees. Four staff subcommittees prepared the plan and prepared for the visit itself. All subcommittees consisted of faculty, administrative, support/maintenance staff, student, community, and board members.

To keep the process organized, the coordinator provided the co-chairs of the study and staff subcommittees with guide sheets that outlined all required tasks, preliminary report format, and interview strategies. The final report, which was compiled by the coordinator and edited by the writing and editing staff subcommittee, was organized by concern topic. For each concern area, the report answered five questions:

- What was the status in 1990?
- What action has been taken?
- How do the campus staff and community feel about the issue and the progress?
- What are the opportunities for continued improvement for 1995?
- What is needed to ensure that improvement does continue?

Divider pages in the final document listed the members of the study subcommittees, all interviews and surveys conducted, and resource documents consulted. Two all-staff surveys provided the majority of staff perceptions for each of the concern areas.

Step Three: Communicating Every Detail to Every Stakeholder

Early in the process the coordinator and Steering Committee members chose to create a highly visible internal and external press and communication schedule. The goals were to keep every campus member, all board members, and all district communities aware of and involved in the process.

Beginning in June 1992 and continuing through June 1993, the process included these strategies:

- Open monthly, duplicate meetings of the Steering Committee
- Letterhead designed in-house specifically for the focused visit process
- Weekly or biweekly updates in the college newsletter
- Monthly press releases to student and local newspapers
- Building and small-group issue meetings and interviews to gather concerns
- Two all-campus surveys with results available to all
- Regular coordinator and subcommittee chair visits to all buildings and all staff
- Four sets of all-campus meetings, presentations at all-staff in-services
- Multiple presentations to the board and cabinet
- Large group attendance at NCA Annual Meetings
- A retreat day for subcommittee chairs to write and analyze research
- Two thank-you receptions and handwritten thank-you notes for participants.

Permeating all this activity was a commitment to openness, inclusiveness, positivism, hard work, and fun. The coordinator envisioned her role as host, facilitator, organizer, and guardian of objectivity and thoroughness. Light refreshments were provided at every meeting. Meetings were not just discussions, but actually work sessions for evaluating the research and progress of the plan, learning interviewing skills, identifying red-flag concerns, or collaborative evaluating and writing of reports.

Step Four: Improving while Researching

In 1990, the college staff viewed NCA as "that agency that would come in and give $#!!*" to the board and administration; NCA was an agency to whom the staff would complain about all the problems. In 1992-93, the attitude was reversed. NCA became a wealthy resource for providing the college staff with the information or contacts needed to help Nicolet work together, not only to identify and resolve its own problems, but also to establish systems for continually improving and for becoming a benchmark college for other institutions.

How was this attitude reversed? Early in the fall of 1992, the Steering Committee began giving regular reports on all the positive actions that had already been taken to address concerns. In addition, the committee and research subcommittees clearly identified, through interviews and small group focus sessions, the ongoing red-flag concern areas: strategic planning process, communication, governance, board role, and student assessment.

Instead of waiting for NCA to arrive in May 1993 and confirm what the new research was showing, the president began appointing short-term task forces to address immediately the priority concerns. These task forces included staff from all areas and levels of the college. With the college staff finally seeing and doing something about problems, an atmosphere of open talk and solid action ensued. In fact, the college as a whole prioritized its focus on these red-flag issues, rallying any financial, physical, or human resources necessary to assess them objectively and to deal with them.

Step Five: Taking Advantage of the Visit

The focused visit team usually consists of two consultant-evaluators (C-Es). Before the visit, the president, the coordinator, and the NCA liaison discussed at length the qualities and expertise needed by the C-Es to review Nicolet's concern areas. Because the president and coordinator maintained consistent contact with the NCA liaison, the liaison was able to arrange for team members whose expertise lay in the areas most troublesome for Nicolet. As a result, these C-Es were able to be extremely candid about the strengths and weaknesses of Nicolet's improvement efforts and to provide guidance that ensured the college would resolve its remaining concerns. Nicolet benefited tremendously from viewing the team members primarily as consultants and secondarily as evaluators.

One month prior to the visit, Nicolet sent NCA and the team members a copy of the *Focused Evaluation Report*, as well as the Statement of Affiliation Status, college catalogs, and State Board report. At the 1993 NCA Annual Meeting, the coordinator and two members of the Steering Committee met with one of the team members to discuss schedule, lodging, potential meetings, and other materials the team might want (in this case, the team wanted copies of the student handbook, faculty handbook, and minutes of board meetings). A week later, the materials were sent with a proposed schedule. Three weeks prior to the visit, the president contacted both team members. The proposed schedule was again discussed and altered.

One week prior to the visit, the coordinator and Steering Committee members held two all-campus meetings to explain the visit schedule and probable impact and to invite participation at the open and special group meetings scheduled during the visit. Two days before the visit, the coordinator and her secretary, in conjunction with the host and publicity and resource room subcommittees, set up an elaborate office and library of reference materials for the team members. The day before the visit, the entire campus was invited to view the materials in the resource room and to ask any questions of the Steering Committee members. Throughout the visit, this resource room was supplied with coffee, juice, crackers, and fruit for the team members and drop-in visitors.

The team members arrived the evening before the visit was officially scheduled to begin. They chose to spend that evening working with each other to organize for the visit. The next morning, at the one-hour meeting with the president and coordinator, the team members requested several changes in visit schedule. During the next rather pressing hour, the coordinator and staff delivered revised printed agendas to the team, posted them throughout the campus, and delivered one to every staff member.

Flexibility was key to the success of the visit as the C-Es scheduled new meetings, canceled others, and requested additional materials. The visit was tremendously invigorating, perhaps because of the candor of the team members and of the college staff. Throughout the two-day event, the message was unmistakable: "Yes, you're improving and have done an admirable job in this study process, but you need to continue to improve; your comprehensive is in 1995."

Continuing the Impetus for Change

It is the comprehensive evaluation in 1995 that has continued to provide external impetus for continued institution-wide improvement. Internal mechanisms have been built in as well. The *Focused Evaluation Report* was written in a manner that clearly identified the concerns that would need to be addressed by the 1995 visit, and the report content was integrated completely into the study committee work for the new self-study process. In fact, every effort to improve has become a group effort, and has been planned with a system for periodic monitoring, evaluation, communication, and motivation by the group responsible for the work and by campus members reviewing the work progress. Rounding out the impetus is the solid support of the president and his cabinet, as well as involvement of staff from all areas of the campus.

Conclusion

Authority and accountability for continual improvement now rests with all members of the Nicolet community. The commitment to proactive change remains driven both by internal and external forces. The college took seriously the findings and advice that were provided by the team for the 1990 comprehensive visit, by the NCA liaison, by the focused evaluation team, by colleagues from other colleges, and, *most importantly*, by the Nicolet people who researched and prepared the *Focused Evaluation Report*. In January 1994, Nicolet began implementing a strategic plan driven by a newly-developed mission, vision, and purposes; launched a participatory governance and communication process; and began tackling anew the development of integrated student academic achievement and institutional effectiveness plans. The mandated focused evaluation served as the catalyst for significant change at Nicolet and for creation of systems to ensure continued institutional improvement. It has served the college well.

Lynn Priddy Rozumalski is English Faculty and Self-Study Coordinator at Nicolet Area Technical College, Rhinelander, WI.

Adrian Lorbetske is President of Nicolet Area Technical College, Rhinelander, WI.

Accreditation Factors Unique to Tribal Colleges

Wallace B. Appelson
Martha McLeod

American Indian-controlled colleges possess common missions, serve identical student populations, are comparable in size, are similar in governance structure, are troubled with like financial woes and lack of support, share typically remote locations, and suffer from identically poor facilities. It is essential that consultant-evaluators as well as potential Tribal College accreditation candidates become familiar with the unique characteristics of these institutions that may affect their consideration for accreditation.

Mission

Generally, tribal colleges have as their mission, some or all of the following four goals:

1. **To provide for the individualized occupational and educational needs of the tribal communities they serve.** Through education, the tribes attempt to expand their economic base and increase employability in numerous ways. Their colleges are often concurrently charged with providing a competent work force in diverse skill areas. For example, in Michigan, Bay Mills College trains office technology and business students, black jack dealers, heavy equipment operators, and tribal fisheries personnel. The education of tribal members in employment skills development, as well as their own culture, represents equal priorities to most tribes. Woven throughout these college's programs, indigenous Native American philosophy and concepts are also offered in ways unique to each sponsoring tribe.

2. **To preserve tribal language and culture.** The Tribal tongue is the dominant language spoken at many homes. The native tribal language is frequently a major study component in the curriculum. Tribal culture and perceptions consistently remain the common thread of the every day life for the students and faculty. Elders are highly respected and influential throughout reservation life. Certain subjects are taught only at certain times of the year. Spirituality is a valued part of life. Tribal colleges are really extended family components of the reservation. Everyone is related to one another in some way.

3. **To prepare students for lifelong learning.** Often the experience of American Indian students during early years in the educational arena has not been a positive one. Part of the tribal college's purpose is to provide access to education and successful learning experiences in an environment where few role models are available. Most students enter these colleges lacking traditional educational backgrounds. Remediation is a vital component in raising students' skill levels to cope with college texts and theories. These colleges also frequently prepare students to transfer to further college or university studies to complete a baccalaureate degree. Students often take considerably longer than the initial two years to finish an associate's degree or to be prepared to transfer. Articulating with four-year institutions is a major tribal college activity.

4. **To be offered by and to a unique population.** Most tribal college enrollments have a predominant Native American student population. These are minority students attending a minority institution. Within the confines of the tribal colleges they are sheltered by their own dominant society. Here the values of tribal culture are fostered and perpetuated to a very high degree.

   While interviewing, understanding responses or lack of response, from the Native American student, faculty or staff; evaluators, as outsiders, must be sensitive to all local mission factors.

Size

Tribal colleges tend to have small student enrollments and small numbers of staff and faculty. The first-founded and largest Tribal college is Navajo Community College, with six campuses and several thousand students. Menomenee is the smallest, with fewer than 50 students. Small tribal institutions tend to find solutions to their problems in unique ways. Money is always tight since tribal colleges historically have been underfunded. Consequently, staff and faculty undertake many more responsibilities than are expected at larger higher education institutions. Class loads may be considerably heavier and more varied. Faculty all perform other duties, ranging from counseling, to running the student store, to moving furniture, when needed. All staff tend to be involved with many aspects of the college as well as with the reservation community.

Governance and Organization

Tribal colleges are chartered by their respective Tribes, meeting the requirements of the Tribally Controlled Community Colleges Act of 197[illegible] Each has undergone a feasibility study by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, that sets standards to be met prior to receiving federal funding. Most have a Board of Directors, Trustees, or Regents that establishes policy. The college president is directly responsible to the Board. Tribal policies and politics also have a strong impact on the colleges. College Board members often are elected tribal government officials. Frequently the student government president is also a voting member of the tribal college governing board. Students thereby enjoy a direct voice in policy determination. Many

colleges may serve more than one tribe, which requires that different languages and cultural approaches be addressed in curriculum and staffing needs.

Finance and Support

Tribal colleges consistently suffer from insufficient financial resources. The base funding for operation provided under the Tribally Controlled Community College Act is about $3,200 per student annually. The availability of allocated state funds, if present at all, varies among states. Funding through the Perkins Act for vocational education is limited by formula. Sponsoring tribes tend to be poor themselves and can provide space and in-kind services, but, in most cases, very little money for operation. The colleges must augment their fiscal resources in a variety of creative ways. Many rely heavily on competitive federal and state grants, raising funds for local foundations, agreements with other institutions to provide classes and facilities, contributions from local and regional industrial donors, and more recently, income from gaming revenue.

Location

Most Tribal colleges are located within the confines of a reservation serving geographically isolated and dispersed population segments. Some reservations in which a college is located are larger than many European countries while others are small enclaves found in the middle of a National Forest or within the boundaries of a small city. One college serves seven reservations, separated from each other by hundreds of miles, within the boundaries of one state. Navajo Community College has six campuses in two states. To overcome distance learning obstacles, tribes are moving toward delivery of courses to remote sectors by interactive television, satellite, modems, and the like. Tribal colleges provide classes when and where they are needed. That often results in some unusual facilities, sites, locations, and teaching methods.

Facilities

Tribal college facilities are often inadequate, deteriorated, and small. Some consist of non-centralized campuses and function in space wherever the tribe has room. Storefronts, post office basements, lofts, abandoned buildings, and a remodeled fish processing plant are typical educational environments for tribal colleges. There is little money available to these colleges for bricks and mortar. Evaluators should appreciate the creative use of recycled and remodelled spaces.

Conclusion

Almost 30 independent tribally-controlled colleges are chartered in a dozen states and Canada. They vary in quantity from Montana which has the greatest number (seven) to Michigan which has only one to serve seven separate tribes. More than half of all these

colleges are within North Central Association's jurisdiction. It is essential that current and future NCA evaluators of tribal colleges develop an appreciation of the uniqueness of these institutions.

Cultural sensitivity on the part of evaluators is pivotal. They emerge from the non-tribal society and enter the Tribal college environment to assess accreditation readiness. Evaluators should accept and respect what they find that is different from their own experience.

Wallace B. Appelson is President of Harry S. Truman College, Chicago, IL.
Martha McLeod is President of Bay Mills Community College, Brimley, MI.

Chapter IV

Assessing Student Academic Achievement

Faculty Designed Assessment Strategies

Cynthia M. Heelan
Kathy Nelson

Arrowhead Community College (ACC) services 7,000 students at seven campuses spread over 23,000 square miles in northeastern Minnesota.

The Outcomes Assessment project at Arrowhead Community College grew from the strategic plan. Early in 1989, after a statewide workshop, college administrators agreed to work together to address student outcomes/concerns from a student success perspective.

Readiness on the part of Arrowhead Colleges was made possible in many different ways. Sources of information in addition to data about students, were the many reports written about students' lack of learning. Starting with "A Nation at Risk" and moving on to community colleges "Building Communities" reports told us there was a need for a greater emphasis on student learning—"are they getting it?" In 1987, the Minnesota State Legislature asked each public postsecondary system to develop a pilot project addressing student outcomes, and ACCR's effort was, in part, related to these pilot projects. The Arrowhead Community College Region and the Minnesota Community College System were committed to student success and to outcomes assessment as one approach to increasing the percentages of students who succeed.

The first pilot project developed for community colleges was North Hennepin Community College. The College focused on data collection and they used graduate placement data, former student surveys, developmental instruction follow-up, and other surveys to generate information about student success. Arrowhead Colleges followed and modified the North Hennepin model in data collection.

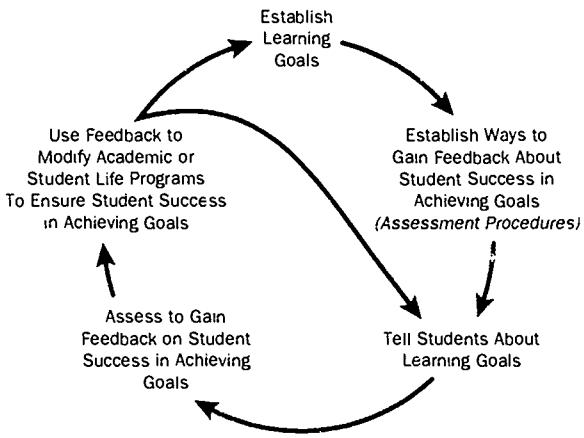
In addition, Arrowhead Colleges attempted to examine student learning goals. Based on the outcomes literature, and conference workshop information, the college created a structure to explore learning goals and student success in achieving them.

An important strategy on the part of academic administration was to make this a faculty based program. Faculty design and partnership was essential to the program's success. A successful student learning and assessment model evolved for ACC Colleges. As the project developed,

the vice president, Cynthia Heelan, developed the following as a picture describing the cycle of learning and its assessment.

SUCCESSFUL STUDENT LEARNING

Learning Goals and Assessment



Successful Student Learning Procedures

The following describes the processes used to implement each stage of the student learning model at Arrowhead's seven campuses.

A. **Establish Student Learning Goals.** What were the college's learning goals for students? More specifically, what *should* our students know or be able to do when they have graduated from or left the institution?

Defining these goals meant determining the most significant educational outcomes for the college. For the goals statements at this step to function best, they should include the following:

— explain the purpose/mission of the college/strategic plan

— be developed across several organizational levels

— describe outcomes or results, not processes or treatments

— be measurable in some fashion

— establish targets for excellence as well as minimum standards

Processes used:

— Selected a faculty partner to work with the regional vice-president and campus deans.

- Visited faculty in their offices and asked for advice.
- Conducted a transcript analysis.
- Faculty partner visited every campus and talked with faculty about an educated person.
- Created a regional group of faculty and administrators to discuss learning goals. Led by faculty partner and vice president as a team.
- Shared literature about learning assessment.
- Conducted staff development events about assessing student learning.
- Developed self-learning goals.
- Reviewed all course syllabi to see if learning goals were taught.

B. **Establish Ways to Gain Feedback About Student Success in Achieving Goals.** How would the college know how well students were doing in achieving these outcomes? In other words, what measures and means would be used to determine whether or not students were learning, achieving the goals? By whom? When?

This area addressed method concerns about how to assess learning goals, and included reviewing existing methods to see how well they met needs, and/or developed specialized methods to specific situations and learning goals.

Processes used:

1. Expanded the faculty partner concept to one representative from each campus.
2. Established a regional stipend fund to provide seed money to faculty for researching, writing, and conducting and evaluating individual or collaborative learner outcomes assessment projects.
3. Established campus-based multi-discipline faculty committees to review, approve, and award stipends for individual and collaborative outcomes assessment projects.
4. Engaged faculty (five-ten at each of the seven sites) in designing, conducting, and evaluating assessment projects related to the regional learning goals.

C. **Assessing to Gain Feedback on Student Success.** What *did* students at the college learn? Did they achieve the learning goals as defined? How much progress did they make toward the specified learning goals?

This step began the action of gathering assessment information designed specifically to answer the outcome questions defined in Question One, or more generally, to clarify the range of actual outcomes produced. The instructor's role could be to administer a test, or observe students at work or analyze a portfolio. Capstone seminars were encouraged.

Processes used—Interdisciplinary/College-wide Processes:

1. Created faculty collaborative teams and a display of relevant literature and materials on each campus.
2. Developed pre- and post-self-perception surveys related to the end-of-degree assessment of the colleges' learner outcomes statements (in progress at Hibbing College).
3. Created a "sophomore seminar" format to evaluate end-of-degree learner outcomes (Fond du Lac Community College Center and Vermilion Community College).

Processes used—Individual Faculty Processes:

Duluth Community College Center

4. Developed chapter concept questions to enhance critical thinking in an introductory anatomy and physiology course.
5. Used pre- and post-assessment on awareness of current events and academic self-confidence and the use of the Baker/Anderson model of critical thinking in an introductory psychology class.
6. Implemented test and retest opportunities and short essay portfolios in a general biology class.
7. Used the Baker/Anderson model of critical thinking to improve critical analysis in a social problems course.
8. Used individual and collaborative writing portfolios, peer critiques, and teacher-student conferences in developmental English classes.

Fond du Lac Community College Center

9. Implemented the case study method of evaluation to improve students' writings in beginning composition.
10. Organized collaborative learning groups to assess students' understanding of cultural diversity in a philosophy course.
11. Used student portfolios in a basic developmental studies course.
12. Required oral presentations and peer evaluation in an Environmental Science course.
13. Organized collaborative learning groups and text-generated exams in a pre-algebra course.
14. Used simulations, oral presentations, and written essays in a beginning journalism class.

Itasca Community College

15. Pre- and post-tested student perceptions that included objective and subjective measures of student growth in public speaking activities.

16. Organized cooperative learning groups in elementary algebra classes.

17. Implemented pre- and post-survey of student learning styles related to student critical thinking in a general psychology course.

18. Developed an analysis of a critical care plan during clinical experiences in nursing courses.

19. Used self-assessment relating to critical thinking in an economics course.

20. Maintained writing portfolios in English composition classes.

21. Initiated self-analysis of nursing practices relating to cultural diversity.

22. Assigned homework problems and student self-perception surveys in a precalculus course.

Mesabi Community College

23. Integrated learning outcomes statements into all English curricula.

Rainy River Community College

24. Required critical analysis paper in a college physics course to evaluate communication and critical thinking.

25. Used a case study simulation and thesis paper in a college statistics class.

26. Required a computer-assisted progress report in a wellness course.

Vermilion Community College

27. Used case studies, small group discussion, and oral presentations in a wellness course.

28. Used sentence-combining assessment activities in a development English course.

29. Initiated five-minutes writes and aural testing in an American Popular Music course.

30. Used a test-bank in an Introduction to Criminal Justice course.

31. Organized small group discussions and oral presentations in a college Accounting course.

32. Used self-evaluation in a college composition course.

33. Developed computer-assisted assessments in Basic Arithmetic and Elementary Algebra classes.

34. Used student portfolios and research project presentations focused on cultural diversity in an English literature course.

35. Implemented entrance and exit surveys measuring sensitivity toward a global perspective in an Earth Science course.

36. Introduced simulations using computer applications in a beginning computer science course.

D. **Using the Results.** How would findings about students' outcomes be used to focus specifically on improvement at our campus? How could the assessment efforts, from design to data collection to reporting results, be incorporated into the ongoing operation of the college?

This step was crucial if assessment efforts were to be taken seriously and considered meaningful. In general, answers to these questions should:

— involve a wide range of people

— focus assessment on issues people care about

— choose appropriate levels of analysis

— provide small quantities of useful information rather than large amounts of data

— emphasize uses for improvement

— establish high expectations

Processes used:

1. Adapted instructional methodologies and/or course content to improve students' attainment of the learning goals.

2. Developed an expert pool of faculty who would serve as consultants to one another and to their colleagues across the system in relation to learner outcomes assessment work.

3. Gathered, summarized and distributed information regarding the learner outcomes assessment project proposals, assessment findings, and curricula revision.

4. Reviewed general education curriculum.

Funding for the Outcomes and Assessment Project

A grant from the Minnesota Community College System supported the learning outcomes assessment project. Funds supported faculty partners (a stipend of $2,000 per campus),

faculty experimenters (a stipend of $1,500 maximum), and staff development. A total of $120,000 has been used for these purposes.

Summary

Staff energy and enthusiasm in relation to this project spread throughout the seven Arrowhead campuses. The network of faculty working to design and evaluate assessment techniques and to improve instructional methodologies and curricula continues to expand. Course adaptations took place as a result of the colleges' preliminary findings. Major curriculum renewal projects are underway at each of the campuses as a result of this project and in regard to the State of Minnesota's State Colleges and Universities' (name of merged system in 1995) commitment to the Minnesota General Education Curriculum based principally upon the work of the Arrowhead Community Colleges in this project's initial stage.

The project provided the Arrowhead Community Colleges' faculty with opportunities to explore, to create, to investigate, to play, and to experiment. It has provided the basis for instructional improvement and curriculum renewal while improving opportunities for students' learning success.

Cynthia Heelan is President of Colorado Mountain College, Glenwood Springs, CO.
Kathy Nelson is Dean of the College, Vermilion Community College, Ely, MN.

Using Assessment to Effect Positive Change

Tanya Pitzer
Sharon Nickell
Vicki Wheeler

North Central Missouri College's (NCMC) Criterion Three committee used a combination of surveys and individual interviews to develop its Assessment Plan. From the data gathered, the committee created a visual representation of the college's assessment program in 1991 and then synthesized the material to provide a baseline document that could be used and modified for the foreseeable future. NCMC's Assessment Committee monitors the institution's annual assessment efforts to see that the plan continues to operate and evolve. Over the past two years, NCMC's use of the Assessment Plan has led to many positive changes in the institution.

The committee responsible for designing an assessment plan was composed of eight faculty and four classified staff and represented all areas of the college. When the committee began meeting in 1990, no models were available. At first committee members were frustrated by the lack of models, but then they decided that it was important to create a plan that fit the needs of our institution. Once the search for the "right" way to design a plan ended, committee members began with new enthusiasm to decide on a process that would be supported by all areas of the college. After considerable discussion, committee members agreed that the NCMC Plan of Assessment had to be affordable in terms of human and financial resources and would need to provide proof about whether or not NCMC was accomplishing its missions and purposes.

The first step was to gather information about current assessment efforts at the college. Committee members began by asking every faculty and staff person to list all assessment measures that were in use. Then committee members individually interviewed each person asking them to give more specific information about the measure and to complete an information sheet for each assessment measure mentioned.

This three-page form was detailed and required respondents to provide specific information about any initiatives they had listed. The outcomes/achievement area(s) being assessed were identified by the respondents: student academic achievement, student development, program

quality, faculty accomplishments, research and development, public and community service, special constituencies, and institutional climate. Next, respondents had to decide what part of the Mission Statement the assessed outcome supported. The Mission Statement was broken down into six basic components, followed by eight statements of how the Mission Statement was manifested. The information sheet provided space to explain why each specific outcome was assessed and how the results would be used to determine or improve effectiveness in either or both the outcome/achievement area or the Mission Statement element to which the assessment measure was related. Other questions on the information sheet asked how the information would be gathered and used and who was responsible for its collection. If comparative data would be available, the source was also listed.

Because our small college has no office of institutional research, the task of compiling all these data fell on the Criterion Three committee. First, the committee weeded out duplications and discarded ideas for which no evaluative data would be available. All of the remaining information was compiled into a matrix. Across the top were the eight outcomes achievement areas and eight divisions of the Mission Statement. The left side listed the assessment measures, which were then checked off under each appropriate area. This matrix provided an easily understandable, visual survey of the strengths and weaknesses of NCMC's 1991 assessment efforts.

NCMC Outcomes Assessment and Accountability Matrix
Sample Entries

	Institutional Outcomes								and	Mission Statements/Purposes						
Supports / **Outcomes Assessed**	Student Academic Achievement	Student Development	Program Quality	Faculty Accomplishments	Research & Development	Public & Community Service	Special Constituencies	Institutional Climate		Associate of Arts	Associate of Applied Science	General and Cont. Ed.	Occupational Retraining	Comp. St. Services	Comp. Academic Resources	Developmental & Remedial	Community Services
Graduation Honors	X									X	X	X	X				
Graduation List	X									X	X	X	X				
Dean's and President's Lists	X									X	X	X	X				

The NCMC Plan of Assessment grew out of the assessment matrix. The Assessment Plan is basically a chart that (as of the 1993-94 school year) consists of 22 components. The components were derived from the assessment measures on the original matrix. For example, specific measures were sometimes grouped into more general components. Some specific measures of student achievement and placement were grouped to create a general component called program/department evaluation. In addition, college-wide assessment measures (like ACT scores) which appeared on the original matrix were retained as components of the Assessment Plan. Each component represents a specific assessment task carried out at NCMC.

The components are listed down the left side of the chart. Across the top of the chart are shown (1) when the assessment will take place, (2) who or what will be assessed, (3) who will receive the results, (4) how the results will be used, and (5) who is responsible for seeing that the assessment takes place at the appropriate time. An example of a component is the CAAP Exit Test. The responses to the five queries for this component are as follows: (1) semi-annually, prior to December and May graduations, (2) all A.A. and A.A.S. graduates, (3) students who take the test (individual scores); Dean of Students and Dean of Instruction (composite scores), (4) instructional improvement, and (5) college testing staff for administration and Dean of Instruction for use of data.

NCMC Plan of Assessment—Sample Entry

Component	Time Schedule	Population/ Program	Distribution of Results	Use of Results	Responsibility
CAAP Exit Test	Semiannually (prior to December and May graduations)	AA and AAS graduates	Individual results to students. Composite data to Dean of Instruction and Dean of Student Services	Composite data used for instructional improvement	Administration of test–testing tstaff; Use of composite data–Dean of Instruction

Although each component of the Assessment Plan has a person or group responsible for conducting the assessment, an Assessment Committee was formed to monitor the plan annually. Each spring, the committee compiles a summary of the assessment activities completed during the school year. The committee also seeks input from faculty, staff, administration, and students and makes suggestions to the Administrative Council regarding modifications to the NCMC Plan of Assessment.

The purpose of the Assessment Plan is to help the college better meet its mission. This purpose has been achieved in several ways since its inception. In fact, the original matrix graphically demonstrated two weaknesses in our institutional assessment in the Academic Achievement and Program Quality categories. These revelations resulted in the adoption of the CMF Exit Test and a total revamping of NCMC's program evaluation packets, even before the Assessment Plan was finished.

In the instructional area two recent changes came about as people examined the results of various assessments. First, in the developmental area, no follow up was being done on the success of people who completed this program; in the fall of 1993 these data was gathered and deficiencies showed up the developmental reading course of study. At the request of the developmental supervisor, the Dean of Instruction appointed a Reading Committee that looked at the results of the follow up and made recommendations, which were implemented: a course was added, reading requirements were modified, and delivery of instruction methods were changed.

Second, a survey of area employers suggested there was a need for people trained in criminal justice—a correctional facility recently opened in the area and state requirements for law

enforcement officers increased last year. The Dean of Instruction appointed an Advisory Committee composed of area law enforcement personnel and chaired by a faculty member and asked them to prepare a proposal for a new criminal justice program. The proposal was accepted by the Missouri Coordinating Board of Higher Education in December of 1993 and the new program will begin in the fall of 1994. This is the first new vocational program at NCMC in 15 years.

In the area of faculty development, the assessment measure that asks faculty for evidence of community service, professional development, and recruitment activities revealed that few instructors had recently earned graduate hours. NCMC is located in rural north Missouri; the nearest institution offering graduate courses in education is a two-hour drive. To meet the needs of instructors for graduate courses the Dean of Instruction arranged for the University of Missouri to teach a course on the NCMC campus and the faculty committee that oversees professional development funds offered partial tuition reimbursement.

In the Student Services area, surveys of student needs revealed that NCMC had inadequate student housing, too few recreational opportunities on campus, insufficient library facilities, too little "green space," and inadequate parking. To meet these needs, the college developed a Campus Master Plan that includes the building of two dormitories with a total of 160 spaces (the college currently uses remodeled houses to house about 30 students), a multi-purpose building for recreation, a library building (NCMC's library is now 5400 square feet in the main administration/classroom building), a quadrangle that would become a central core of the campus (this space is currently an asphalt covered parking lot), and a 100% increase in parking space. College personnel and students worked with foundation members, community representatives, alumn , and architects to develop the campus plan. In the fall of 1993 bonds were sold for the first dormitory, and ground was broken January 1994. The building is scheduled to open in the fall of 1994. Demolition of the current student housing will result in more parking. This increase in parking will mean that the asphalt parking lot can be converted to a quadrangle with green space. In addition, the foundation board has hired a fundraising consultant and pledged itself to a five million dollar fundraising campaign to finance the multi-purpose building, library, green space, and parking.

These are only a few examples of the way the results of the Assessment Plan have been used to meet the mission of NCMC. When the Criterion Three committee members first began searching for the "right" assessment model, they expected that their creative efforts would help the college develop a useful and effective Assessment Plan. The implementation of that plan, however, has had immediate positive impact, which they could not have envisioned. The Assessment Plan provides the College with a process for continual improvement, a process that will help guide NCMC into the 21st century.

Tanya Pitzer is Coordinator of the Academic Reinforcement Center at North Central Missouri College, Trenton, MO.

Sharon Nickell is a Faculty Member and Coordinator of Computer Services at North Central Missouri College, Trenton, MO.

Vicki Wheeler is Dean of Instruction at North Central Missouri College, Trenton, MO.

Assessment of Student Academic Achievement: Development and Implementation of Successful Strategies

H. Marie Suthers

The purpose of this presentation is to provide a brief overview of the development and implementation of assessment strategies at Columbus State Community College. Key components in the process of implementation are identified, and procedures developed by the college to ensure consistency and quality of assessment efforts are described. Furthermore, linkages are illustrated between components of the assessment efforts and the institutional mission and goals. To allow sufficient coverage of the material to be presented, only portions of the college-wide effort are described.

Linking the College Mission to Assessment Strategies

Billboards and radio stations across the greater Columbus, Ohio, area shout, "We have your future in mind!" They express succinctly the heart of the Columbus State Community College mission: to provide quality educational programs to enhance the educational and employment opportunities of its students. As called for by the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, the Plan for Assessment of Student Academic Achievement was structured around this mission statement. Columbus State Community College is an urban, public, two-year institution, chartered under state statute, that serves a student population reflecting the demographic, socio-economic, and educational diversity of its four-county service area through pre-baccalaureate and technical associate degree programs, general education studies, supportive programs and services, and community services. The college's programs and services are student-centered and focus upon maximizing access to and success in postsecondary education for attainment of students' education and career goals. The college endeavors to provide linkages between education and employment through a continuing process of planned change, in response to changing needs of society and technology.

The Assessment Plan is based on the college's mission and the first three goals that follow that mission statement. Assessment efforts are designed to determine the extent to which

students develop the technical, transfer, and general education objectives throughout the curriculum; demonstrate mastery at the end of their program of study; and utilize these skills and abilities after graduation.

Part of the college's mission is to provide "*quality* educational programs." In the 1992-95 college strategic plan, Academic Affairs defined quality as, "Students achieve predetermined educational outcomes." Within this definition are four assumptions:

- The educational outcomes are the correct ones: clearly stated, measurable, and developed through industry input or based on accepted academic skills.
- The curriculum has a coherence and integration that culminates in the students' achieving the outcomes
- The teaching-learning process is effective and helps students achieve the stated outcomes.
- The assessment activities focus on improving the teaching-learning process and student achievement.

Each of these assumptions is addressed by the implementation of assessment strategies through several components. These include student outcome statement validation, course outline and curriculum review, and accountability for the utilization of assessment data.

Student outcome validation processes ensure that educational outcomes are correct. The portion of the plan that focuses on student outcomes validation directly addresses the following phrase from the mission statement: "The college endeavors to provide linkages between education and employment through a continuing process of planned change in *response to changing needs of society and technology*" (emphasis added).

The processes of course outline review and linking course outcomes to student outcomes ensure that the curriculum has a coherence and integration that culminates in the students' achieving the published student outcomes. Course outlines are reviewed to ensure that a logical link exists between the course content/methodology and the published course outcomes; course outcomes are reviewed to ensure that they will lead to the program level student outcomes; and course sequences associated with a program are reviewed to ensure that formative and summative assessment of published student outcomes is performed and utilized throughout the curriculum. Each of these review processes enhances the effectiveness of the teaching-learning process and helps to ensure that students will attain intended outcomes.

The data utilization procedures being designed ensure that the assessment activities focus on improving the teaching-learning process and student achievement. Review procedures are in place that require each academic department to show how assessment results are being used to improve the curriculum. These reviews occur on a three-year cycle. In addition to assessing program-specific student outcomes, each department is required to assess general education outcomes and to use the data to make informed decisions designed to enhance the attainment of general education within the context of the program. As an open-enrollment institution,

it is part of our mission to "*...maximize access to and success in post secondary education...*" Assessment data are used to improve instruction and maximize student success, not to exclude students from programs of study.

The assessment efforts are based on faculty and administrative commitment to evaluation of academic effectiveness, defined in terms of student achievement of predetermined educational outcomes (student outcomes), and use of the results to improve continually the teaching-learning process. Faculty members are integral in the assessment process. The assessment plan emphasizes that faculty identify and define student outcomes, select or build the measures of student success, review the curriculum for coherence, and review assessment results. From their perspective, and with their expertise, faculty members can then select or design the most effective instructional strategies to strengthen student performance.

Design of the College-Wide Task Force on Student Outcomes and Program Assessment

In 1992, Columbus State Community College faculty and academic administrators began a systematic revision of the college's assessment program. The revision process was enhanced in January 1993 with the formation of the college-wide Task Force on Student Outcomes and Progr. Assessment. The task force consists of three subcommittees: the Student Outcomes Assessment Subcommittee, the General Education Subcommittee, and the Program Effectiveness Subcommittee. Each subcommittee is chaired by a faculty member who is charged with designing coherent, useful assessment practices to be used throughout the college. The task force is coordinated by the Assessment Steering Committee. This committee is comprised of all academic deans, chairpersons of the division assessment committees, and the college-wide task force subcommittees, and is chaired by the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

The strength of this 45-member task force lies in its diverse membership, including representatives from each academic division within the college, student services personnel, and the Director of Research and Planning. The diversity of this membership and its far-reaching span across the college have been key factors to the success of the implementation of student outcomes assessment strategies and procedures. Because Task-Force members bring a variety of backgrounds and expertise to bear on the tasks, creative solutions to implementation have resulted. Furthermore, members have been able to disseminate the work of the committees throughout the college, and collect feedback from others, further enhancing staff and faculty involvement.

The remainder of this document will focus on the products and processes resulting from the work of the Student Outcomes Assessment Subcommittee.

Charges to the Student Outcomes Assessment Subcommittee

The Student Outcomes Assessment Subcommittee of the college-wide Task Force on Student Outcomes and Program Assessment was given the following charge:

1. Determine the subcommittee's role as a resource to faculty, department chairpersons, and deans in the area of student outcomes assessment.
2. Recommend a system for each technology and A.A./A.S. program to validate, review, and revise student outcomes systematically.
3. Recommend a system for reviewing the curriculum for each technology and A.A./A.S. program.
4. Recommend a process to ensure that each course is reviewed systematically and that changes are recorded in appropriate documents.
5. Recommend a process for determining student achievement of student outcomes (i.e., assessment methods).
6. Recommend a method for reporting achievement of student outcomes by each student during and at the completion of the curriculum.
7. Develop a method for reviewing 2-6.

Student Outcomes Validation

For each degree-granting program, the college publishes eight to 12 student outcome statements in the College *Bulletin*. The student outcomes state in behavioral terms the knowledge, skills, and attitudes specific to each program that students acquire as a result of their college experience. These student outcome statements begin with this phrase: "Upon completion of the Associate Degree in [this technology/program], the graduate will be able to..." Student outcomes statements are developed by faculty in each degree program and validated by external representatives using multiple measures. The student outcomes are essential to Columbus State's assessment of student academic achievement, as students are assessed and evaluated based on the extent to which they have mastered these outcomes. The outcome statements also control the curriculum, providing coherence and focus to the coursework that comprises a degree program.

The student outcomes validation process is designed to allow faculty to gain information regarding the appropriateness of published student outcome statements as well as the importance of the outcomes to external stakeholders. Every three years, all academic departments will validate and, if necessary, revise the student outcome statements. It is expected that each academic program will custom design the validation process to fit its needs. The validation process selected must meet two common parameters: First, each outcome must be validated by external representatives such as industry, accrediting bodies, or other higher education institutions. A by-product of this activity is that it allows faculty to remain current with changes in technology and to build further relationships with representatives from business and industry. Second, the process must use multiple measures to obtain quantitative data indicating the appropriateness of the student outcomes such as survey, interview, focus group, accreditation process, or DACUM. Specific information may be elicited regarding each outcome, such as frequency of performance, consequence of deficient performance, and opportunity to learn on the job, as well as explicit behaviors

indicative of superior, average, or poor performance. Detailed information such as this is valuable for improving the curriculum, developing assessment methodologies, and setting performance standards.

Results of the validation process are reviewed first with all faculty and the department chairperson. A report on the results is shared with the program advisory committee and then presented to the division assessment committee. An executive summary then is reviewed by the college-wide Student Outcomes Assessment Subcommittee and forwarded to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. At each step of the review process, reviewers must be assured that the results are being applied to improve the teaching-learning process.

Curriculum Review

Curriculum review is a formalized process by which departments can carefully and systematically evaluate the courses they are teaching and evaluate how these courses support their program's student outcomes. The process enables departments to examine what they are doing to assess student outcomes and to make modifications, if appropriate, and provides a way to help faculty document what they already do to enhance student learning.

The review of the curriculum is performed from the perspective of student outcomes assessment. An assessment matrix is used that lists all courses required for a program of study across the top. These courses include all technical, basic related, and general education requirements within the curriculum. The published student outcome statements are listed down the side of the matrix. Faculty fill in the cells of the matrix by indicating whether the outcome is formatively or summatively assessed in that course. After completing the matrix, faculty complete a form indicating assessment methodologies used to formatively and summatively assess each student outcome.

When going through the process of completing the matrix and assessment methods form, discussion is generated across divisions between technical faculty and faculty teaching the general education and basic related courses. It has been found that this cooperative effort is an extremely valuable component of the process. The sharing of information allows faculty to ascertain the degree to which we are teaching what students need to learn and to determine whether or not they are using the most appropriate evaluation methods to assess students' attainment of those outcomes. Furthermore, sharing information across divisions provides faculty with a holistic view of the curriculum enabling them to advise students and describe the relationships between general education coursework and the technical student outcomes more effectively. The overall goal is to enhance the teaching-learning process.

Course Review

The course review process utilizes a five-column course outline in which the rows represent the units within the course, and the columns represent the following dimensions: (1) Unit Content, (2) Unit Student Outcomes, (3) General Education Outcomes, (4) Suggested Instructional Methods, and (5) Suggested Assessment Procedures. The recommended

process involves having faculty address a series of questions with regard to each dimension as the course outline is reviewed, and then to make modifications based on the answers to these questions.

Assessment Methods

Assessment methodologies for each student outcome are described by faculty on the Assessment Methods form included with the Assessment Matrix. Assessment instruments and procedures are selected or designed by department faculty. The Student Outcomes Assessment Subcommittee has designed a review process that allows faculty to judge the quality of the assessment strategies utilized.

Creative examples of summative assessment of the student outcomes can be found throughout the college. Many programs utilize capstone courses to integrate knowledge and skills gained throughout the program and assess student achievement of published outcomes. Assessment methodologies also include the use of portfolios, projects, external assessors, written exams, and mock registry or certification exams.

As organizational change agents, one of the challenges faced by the college-wide Task Force on Student Outcomes and Program Assessment has been the dissemination of plans, products, and procedures developed for the institutionalization of college-wide student outcomes assessment. A related challenge has been the nurturing of "buy-in" into the concepts and processes. These challenges have been met through faculty in-service days, faculty forums, division and department meetings, as well as widely distributed publications and surveys. The campus community is keenly aware of the increasing requests for accountability from within and outside the higher education community. Administrators, faculty, and staff are committed to improving student performance and the teaching-learning process by implementing the college's assessment plan. This commitment to student success is a strength of the college, and we can say with confidence, "We have your future in mind!".

H. Marie Suthers is Associate Professor of Veterinary Technology at Columbus State Community College, Columbus, OH.

The Assessment Process: Lessons for Liberal Arts Colleges

Nelson E. Bingham
Len Clark

Introduction

Assessment of student outcomes is a fact of life for institutions of higher education in the 1990s. With the mandate for such assessment established by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools in 1989, it is not an option to be debated by individual institutions. All institutions accredited by the NCA must, henceforth, have in place a formal plan for the assessment of student academic achievement and must implement that plan in an effective manner. Nevertheless, the NCA has wisely provided considerable latitude for each institution to pursue these goals in ways that are faithful to the distinctive identity and mission of that institution. How, then, shall liberal arts colleges respond to the challenge posed by this new mandate?

This paper is aimed at using the experience of one such liberal arts college—Earlham College—as a basis for offering some guidance to other similar institutions as they strive to meet the expectations of the NCA concerning assessment. To do this, it will begin by describing the process followed in developing its assessment plan. Then, the plan itself will be reviewed. Subsequently, the implementation of the plan will be addressed. And finally, several principles will be articulated that might be generalized to other liberal arts colleges.

The Process of Developing the Assessment Plan

In a certain sense, assessment is not an outcome we achieve but a process in which we engage. Hence, the success of our efforts at assessment will depend upon the careful attention we give to this process from the very beginning. It must proceed from a clear sense of the identity and mission of the institution itself. In Earlham's case, a great deal of work had been done during the past decade to develop clear statements of our mission and goals. The documents that grew out of that work formed the foundation for our thinking about assessment. On the other hand, given the amount of turnover in personnel and realities of individual memories, it was deemed essential that the current generation of faculty should reconsider and reaffirm that mission and those goals.

The core of Earlham's institutional identity lies in its intention to be a Quaker learning community—a liberal arts college that makes a difference in human society by "graduating persons marked by veracity, discipline, integrity, individuality, community, concern and peace." The liberal arts commitment of Earlham College was described in its NCA Self-Study Report (1993) and included some features inherent in all liberal arts colleges (e.g., intense student/faculty involvement) and some features more distinctive to Earlham (e.g., an emphasis upon global studies and foreign languages). The point here is not to examine Earlham College; rather it is to highlight the fact that the process of assessment at Earlham began with a careful review of Earlham's institutional identity. Such a review is essential for any successful assessment effort.

Another key element in Earlham's assessment effort was its early identification of the philosophy and principles that would guide the process of developing and implementing its assessment plan. It turned out that three such principles emerged.

- First, the assessment process should be **comprehensive.** It should include not only student achievement within major fields of study, but also general education (defined to include residential life experiences and foreign study and other off-campus program experiences as well as the array of distribution requirements). Nothing short of this could reflect the breadth and depth of Earlham's liberal arts mission.

- Second, the assessment process should be a **college-wide** activity, involving as many people as possible. To the extent possible, the assessment plan should grow out of widespread consultation and the collective vision of the entire community. Moreover, its implementation should be decentralized, with data collected and utilized at the departmental or program level.

- Third, the assessment process should be maximally **efficient.** This is, of course, a necessity in these days of tight budgets. Efficiency means more, however, than minimizing financial costs; it involves enhancing the connection of assessment procedures to goals and the connection of data generated to the use of those data for self-improvement. In this sense, efficiency may best be seen as an aesthetic principle, which for Quakers is often expressed as a value of simplicity.

With these principles in mind, a timetable was developed that emphasized active engagement of as many facets of the Earlham community as possible. This timetable began 20 months prior to the scheduled site visit. As a first step, a concise briefing document was written to inform everyone about the accreditation process. That document was then used as a basis for informational meetings with the Board of Trustees, chairs of all departments and interdisciplinary programs, representatives of all administrative units, the faculty curricular policy committee, and the faculty as a whole. In this way, the entire campus was familiarized with not only the accreditation process generally, but with the recent emphasis upon assessment and the need to work toward an assessment plan. In the process, most faculty lent at least tacit support to that emerging assessment plan, support that was based upon a wide general understanding of what assessment would entail and why it is important.

In preparation for the development of the assessment plan, an inventory was conducted to determine what kinds of assessment were already being done on campus. This included a summary of how each major handled the comprehensive examination for graduating seniors. Additional data from surveys by the office of institutional research, the career services office and the admissions office were compiled.

A major step was achieved when the curricular policy committee assumed responsibility for the development of the assessment plan. The Self-Study Coordinator drafted a proposal for the creation of a small ad hoc task force that would actually generate the assessment plan. That draft plan would then be approved by the full Curricular Policy Committee and recommended to the full faculty for approval. In this way, the groundwork was laid for the Curricular Policy Committee to assume ongoing ownership of the assessment plan.

The site visit was scheduled for September, 1993 and by September, 1992, the informational campaign was completed and the more active grass roots involvement could begin. As a first step, each unit (academic departments/programs and all administrative offices) was requested to generate a unit self-study report for inclusion in the overall institutional Self-Study Report. A key component of those individual unit reports (for all academic and co-curricular units) was a description of present assessment activities and a proposal for how each unit might improve upon its assessment of its students.

These unit reports were collected and reviewed by the Self-Study Coordinator (who sent detailed responses to each unit); each report was also reviewed by two faculty and, wherever possible, by at least one student and one hourly staff member. All of these review comments were then shared with the unit writing the report and an opportunity was provided for a final revision of those unit self-studies. One unanticipated outcome of this process is that many of those faculty reviewers became vociferous advocates of the assessment process as they pointed out ways in which a unit's assessment of its majors could be improved.

All along the way, regular progress reports were issued to the entire community via the college newsletter. In this way, there were no surprises waiting for anyone and it was clear that the process rested upon a wide foundation of community involvement.

The task force responsible for producing the assessment plan carefully reviewed the final self-study report of each academic and co-curricular unit. From those reports, a list of eleven goals of Earlham's general education program was compiled. That list was presented to a meeting of the faculty as a whole for discussion. Then the task force proposed a formal assessment plan to the curricular policy committee. That plan is described in the next section of this paper. It was eventually recommended by the Curricular Policy Committee and approved by the entire faculty.

The Assessment Plan

There were two key features of the assessment plan that emerged. First, a timetable was proposed for defining, gathering, interpreting, and disseminating assessment data concerning the **general education** of Earlham students. Although some of this information was now

being collected, this part of the plan represented a new commitment to gather and utilize even more data on general education (which has not, up to now, been systematically assessed). In developing this portion of the plan, the meaning of "general education" was broadly defined to include not only the formal distribution requirements, but also foreign study and other off-campus programs, internships, residential life, and extra-curricular experiences, etc. Second, each department and program offering a **major** had indicated in its unit self-study report both existing and proposed forms of assessment of students' academic achievement. The assessment plan incorporated those departmental/program assessment procedures.

Implementation of the Assessment Plan

The assessment plan's timetable was centered around the annual production of an "Assessment Book," to be first compiled and issued in the autumn of 1995. In order for that to happen, a commitment was made to hire a half-time "assessment coordinator" to actually collect data from all possible sources on campus (i.e., departments, programs, the institutional research office, the alumni office, the Registrar, the career services office, etc.) and to arrange and interpret the data into a user-friendly publication annually from 1995. That coordinator will work with the director of institutional research.

The Assessment Book will be distributed to those administrators responsible for curricular matters, to the curricular policy committee, to all departmental and program chairs and to any other parties interested in it. Emphasis will be given to the use of the data in this Assessment Book for purposes of improving what we do.

At Earlham, each department or program undergoes a review every five years. In the future, those reviews must include the department's or program's response to any assessment data that have been collected. This is one of the ways in which we hope to ensure that such data are, in fact, fully utilized for institutional improvement. Our assumption is that the existence of *good* data on student achievement will, in itself, provide an impetus for programs and departments to address any concerns that are identified in the data.

At this stage in the assessment process, we are keeping as much of that process as possible at the grass roots level of individual departments and programs. Specifically, the setting of educational goals, the design and execution of data collection procedures, and the utilization of such data will mostly be in the hands of the individual units. The role of the central administration (via the assessment coordinator) will tend to be one of collecting and integrating assessment data from across the college and distributing the collective results back to individual units. If any "official encouragement" is needed to get some units to either gather appropriate data or take appropriate steps in response to data, that role will either be played by the curricular policy committee or the academic administration.

Lessons for Liberal Arts Colleges

Several lessons emerge from the preceding description of how Earlham College has developed and implemented its assessment plan. These lessons might apply to any institution, but would seem especially appropriate for a liberal arts college.

First, given the emphasis such colleges typically place on community and on faculty involvement, it is desirable that the assessment process should be done as much as possible at the **grass roots level.** This means that both the initial design of a plan and the ongoing execution of that plan should involve individual faculty and academic units as much as possible. This will increase the likelihood that the data generated will actually be *used* for self-improvement by the departments and programs. It will also *enhance the validity* of the assessment process by keeping the data collection closely tied to the unit's educational goals. Finally, this will tend to *minimize suspicions and cynicism* on the part of individual faculty since they will have more control over the process.

Second, the development of an approach to assessment should be **a gradual evolutionary process.** It is crucial in the early stages of developing such an assessment plan to allow enough time for individuals to become educated about assessment and to think through how their department or program should do it. In Earlham's self-study process, considerable effort was put into informing every constituency about the purposes of the review and about the steps to be followed. One of the most useful steps in Earlham's process was that of having individual faculty review the Self-Study Report (including assessment plans) for some academic unit other than their own. To do that task effectively, a faculty member had to learn something about assessment and often, the process of reviewing another plan provoked ideas about how their own unit might assess its students more effectively.

Third, assessment should be **conceived in the broadest possible terms,** at least initially. It is particularly important that it not be construed as only involving numerical scores or standardized testing. Such a view is certain to arouse significant opposition. Non-quantitative methods are valuable in their own right in assessing student outcomes, but additionally, the use of such methods promises to increase awareness of the further value that quantitative measures might add to the assessment effort. One way in which this principle interacted with that of grass roots involvement is that the individual units have been very creative in proposing many diverse assessment procedures. This has achieved two things—it enriches our assessment approach and it enhances support for this approach among individual units.

Fourth, the principle of **efficiency** stands out in our experience. Certainly, any institution must strive to achieve the best results for the lowest costs. But efficiency has another meaning as well—roughly akin to the concept of "elegance" in the design of scientific experiments. In a sense, this aesthetic meaning of efficiency may be more important than the financial meaning. In the case of assessment, the pursuit of efficiency entails fully utilizing all present sources of information, as well as integrating assessment data with other data display functions of the institution. For example, Earlham already produces an annual Fact Book and annual Board Reports and it is important that the Assessment Book be integrated with those at the levels of both form and content. This will be facilitated by having the same person (i.e., the Assessment Coordinator) handling the production of those other reports. A different kind of efficiency is achieved when the assessment effort becomes integrated with most of the other forms of data collection on the campus—e.g., departmental comprehensive exams, alumni surveys, senior exit interviews, departmental five-year reviews, etc.

Fifth, it is clear that the success of Earlham's assessment process is and will be a function of the extent to which it is **derived from and reflects the fundamental identity of the**

institution. The grass roots emphasis, for example, is crucial in an institution that prides itself on active involvement of all community members and on the diversity of viewpoints participating in any discussion. Earlham had no choice about this since its Quaker traditions include governance by consensus. We could never have committed ourselves to an assessment plan without building widespread understanding of and support for such an effort. Few other institutions face that requirement—for many, a majority vote will suffice and for some a decision by key administrators may get the job done. But any institution should benefit from efforts to build the widest possible support for the assessment of student outcomes.

Conclusion

As noted earlier, assessment is here to stay. Distinctive types of institutions, such as liberal arts colleges, must therefore take the initiative to ensure that their distinctiveness is fully reflected in both the process of developing an assessment plan and the actual character of the subsequent assessment. Despite potential resistance to assessment, the spirit that drives it can be seen as at the very heart of the liberal arts enterprise namely the dedication to developing and using a body of knowledge to make a difference in the lives of our students and in the world.

Nelson E. Bingham is Professor of Psychology at Earlham College, Richmond, IN.
Len Clark is Provost and Academic Dean at Earlham College, Richmond, IN.

Developing the Assessment Plan at a State University: Strategies and Lessons Learned

Daniel R. Rice
James Larson

The successful development of an institutional assessment plan at a state university has provided the opportunity for discovering effective strategies and reporting on lessons learned to others who are or will be embarking on the same task. In this presentation the Chair of the Assessment Committee and a key faculty leader on the committee at the University of North Dakota report their findings.

The site visit by the North Central Association at the University of North Dakota (UND) was concluded on November 3, 1993, by a joint news conference by the President of the University and the Chair of the NCA Team. The Chair of the NCA Team listed as one of the strengths of the University the Institutional Assessment Plan.

The development of the plan spanned nearly a three-year period. The development of a commendable Institutional Assessment Plan had been both exciting and frustrating. Bringing to fruition an institution-wide project of this magnitude required considerable effort, persistence, and political savvy. While the strategies utilized and the lessons learned at the University of North Dakota will not provide a complete template for other campuses, the experience here will be most instructive for similar institutions, namely medium sized state universities, and some aspects of our experience will be well heeded in nearly all circumstance.

Forming the Assessment Team

One of the early tasks facing an institution is forming the assessment team. Selecting the Office of Instructional Development Director, as Vice Chair of the NCA Steering Committee, gave prominence and continuity to assessment planning activities. The charge to the Subcommittee was to develop the Institutional Assessment Plan for the University.

The Chair of the Assessment Subcommittee decided to keep that group relatively small. A faculty leader from the larger Steering Committee was asked to serve on the Assessment Subcommittee, along with two additional faculty members, one an expert on student portfolios, and another who directed an educational research bureau on campus and was a distinguished member of the faculty. Other committee members were selected from college offices and student affairs staff. All members had some knowledge of and interest in assessment, and the faculty members were all senior, seasoned faculty who knew a good deal about educational issues and campus politics. The subcommittee decided to meet weekly and the members committed themselves to see the task through to completion. This model, developed with only some intentionality, proved to be successful for us.

Tasks to be Accomplished

An early issue for the Subcommittee was to identify critical tasks to be accomplished. Each will be discussed briefly.

1. **Considering how the culture of the University should inform the work of the Subcommittee.** UND is a medium sized state university of a Doctoral Granting II institution, according to the Carnegie Classification. Importantly, the campus has a strong tradition of faculty governance with an active University Senate. During the 1990-91 academic year, the initial efforts by the Vice President for Academic Affairs to ask each Dean to develop a college assessment plan met with mixed results. Several of the Deans produced superficial plans that reflected both little attention to the issue and little understanding of assessment. The Dean of the largest college failed to produce a plan by the requested deadline. After this experience, the Director of OID planned an assessment workshop led by Peter Ewell. Virtually all of the Deans and Department Chairs attended the workshop. Ewell's presentation put the assessment movement in historical context and he described many creative examples of effective practices at other campuses. The Ewell workshop began the process in a more positive and constructive direction. An important lesson clarified our institutional culture and we decided that our primary efforts would be with department chairs and program directors.

2. **Determining what academic departments were presently doing with assessment.** The Subcommittee Chair, a key faculty member, and the graduate student from the Subcommittee met to design a survey instrument for Department Chairs. The instrument requested that Chairs identify assessment elements being utilized in their programs beginning with pre-admission, through program completion, to after graduation follow-up practices. As expected, when analyzed, the survey data revealed a wide range of assessment activity at the departmental level, with some doing much and others doing little. Also expected, professional programs with external accreditation standards were much more engaged in assessment activities than were traditional liberal arts programs. These findings enabled the Subcommittee to have a clear sense of which departments would require the most assistance with assessment.

3. **Planning a training event for Department Chairs.** A second major training event was planned for the spring term of the 1991-92 academic year. Trudy Banta and David Linge, both from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, were the presenters. Approximately 45 chairpersons from a possible total of 60 attended. The workshop provided participants with a deeper understanding of assessment issues. Linge's description of the work of his own department seemed to be of special interest.

4. **Considering how the University mission statement should shape our work.** The UND mission statement does contain references to goals for students but they are very general and expansive. It became evident that the student goals would require a variety of assessment methods, several of which are not amenable to standardized measures. After lengthy and often lively discussion of these issues, the Subcommittee decided to develop a matrix with the student goals from the mission statement listed down one side and possible assessment methods listed across the top. The matrix enabled us to identify multiple measures of assessment for each goal.

5. **Being clear about North Central expectations for the Institutional Assessment Plan.** A careful reading of the printed NCA materials by all Subcommittee members was essential. Two members attended the special assessment conference sponsored by NCA and the Chair of the Subcommittee attended the NCA Annual Meeting. A challenge for institutions at that stage of the implementation of assessment by NCA was that there were few examples to follow. It also seemed that NCA's own understanding of the process was developing. The NCA staff, however, were most helpful in answering specific questions and clarifying expectations. It became more clear to the Subcommittee that the assessment plan had to focus at two levels—the academic major and the institutional level that included general education. Interpreting this bi-level approach to the administration and to faculty was important.

6. **Establishing a timeline for the completion of specific tasks.** While this is an important procedure for any project, it was especially important with a project of this magnitude and of vital importance to the University. The Subcommittee asked the Vice President for Academic Affairs to provide a deadline for the completion and submission of a summary statement of the assessment plan for every academic major. This letter was sent to all department Chairs. The letter offered the support and technical assistance of the Subcommittee and announced two additional events—an Assessment Fair and a formal review process for the assessment summaries.

   The Assessment Fair, held in November, was a day-long series of presentations and consulting opportunities. Sample summaries and other assessment materials were displayed. The morning and afternoon sessions were essentially the same but were repeated to ensure the maximum opportunity for persons to attend. The review process was a day long event conducted by consultant Jim Nichols, assessment author from the University of Mississippi. Nichols was sent copies of the assessment summaries and he read them prior to coming to campus. He held one-hour

meetings with clusters of department chairs to give them feedback on the adequacy of the summaries. At our request, he was direct and concise in his comments. Those who needed further help were identified and given the help they needed. This process greatly improved the quality of many of the summaries. A deadline was set for the submission of the revised summaries. Virtually all of the summaries were submitted on time.

7. **Submitting the plan to the appropriate governance process.** We could have simply presented our plan to the NCA Steering Committee and the Provost but believed that it was essential to submit our plan to the University Senate for its approval. While this process became more complicated than expected, in the end the plan was approved with a much wider hearing than it otherwise would have received and took on a greater degree of integrity.

Strategies Used

The Subcommittee learned that some strategies worked and some did not. While this list is not exhaustive, it covers most of the significant strategies of both types.

1. **Strategies that seemed to work well.**

   a. *Make the plan fit the organizational culture.* Take enough time to be sure you understand the culture and continue to check your plan against your understanding of the culture.

   b. *Select faculty leaders who have credibility across the campus* and who also have a genuine interest in assessment and, as much as possible, some area of technical expertise. The first qualities are probably more important in some ways than the latter. Faculty with the credibility and the interest can learn more about the technical aspects of assessment. Staff people can provide technical assistance to the core planning group.

   c. *Keep the core planning group small.* Large committees often do not work well when they have a difficult and complex task to perform. A smaller group can move more quickly to a common sense of purpose and collegiality, which will make it possible to work through complex issues and deal openly with disagreements. The Chair of the group needs to present clear options, solicit candid views from members, and keep the process moving forward. The Chair, a faculty member, and the graduate assistant met regularly before each meeting of the committee to discuss the agenda and develop alternatives for the group to consider.

   d. *Over-inform the campus rather than run the risk of under-informing.* The UND Subcommittee circulated drafts of the plan to Deans, Department Chairs, and key administrators on a frequent basis. The Subcommittee communicated

periodically with the General Education Requirements Committee and communicated directly in writing to Department Chairs at key junctures. The *University Letter*, a general newsletter, was used from time to time to inform the entire campus of key events and developments.

e. *Provide training for key campus leaders.* Our strategy was to begin with training that was more general and informative and introduced assessment to key campus leaders (Ewell Workshop). Training was provided on a "Just in Time" basis and moved to the more specific, hands-on kind of training (Banta and Linge, and the Assessment Fair).

f. *Identify the key players,* in our case, the Department Chairs, and work directly with them. Department chairs are in the strategic position to make things happen and engaging them in the process was critical. To the credit of our Chairs, their response was consistently and almost totally cooperative, which also says something very positive about our campus culture.

g. *Secure and sustain administrative support.* Having the President and Chief Academic Officer articulate the importance of assessment to key audiences at critical points is critical. We were fortunate to have a new President who did not need to be convinced and a new Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs who is trained in the field of assessment and educational research. Be aware, that even commitments made at the highest levels can be eroded by the bureaucracy. In our case, lower level administrative officers subjected the assessment budget to an across the board budget cut.

h. *Be proactive.* We identified academic departments that we knew would need a prod or extra assistance in developing an assessment plan. The Chair of the Subcommittee, a key faculty leader, and the graduate assistant scheduled appointments with those Chairs and met with them to provide both prodding and support. This process required considerable diplomacy in a few instances when we met with some resistance. In one instance we chose to delay until an outgoing Chair retired and was replaced by someone more sympathetic. We found that Chairs were responsive to examples of creative and effective plans developed by colleagues from other departments.

i. *Do not hesitate to play up the linkage between assessment and the accreditation of the institution by NCA.* Most academics understand the importance of accreditation. If they understand that the work they are being asked to do with assessment is vital to the successful accreditation of the institution, they are more willing to do it. We made that point often.

j. *Engage questions that are important and interesting.* People are motivated to a greater extent when the questions being addressed by assessment seem to be genuinely important and interesting. This is one reason, for example, why we chose to use some qualitative methods rather than standardized assessment instruments. The discussions within the Subcommittee were often quite spir-

ited and engaging and members even reported that they found the meetings intellectually stimulating—a far cry from the perception that assessment has to be an obscure, technical matter left to institutional research staff and other supposed experts. We encouraged the same kind of thinking at both the departmental level and the institutional level.

k. *Use external resource people.* At our campus, external resource people were important both for the assumed expertise they brought and for the momentum they provided to the process at critical points. We had specific assignments and purposes in mind for each of them.

2. **Strategies that did not seem to work well.**

a. *Initial expectations that the Deans would lead the process proved to be faulty.* In defense of the Deans, the University was and continues to be going through a series of budget reductions and a reorganization process that has preoccupied the Deans. Perhaps they saw this as a less immediate concern or one that could be dealt with in a perfunctory fashion.

b. *Initial assumptions that Deans, Chairs, and faculty were informed about and understood assessment proved to be false.* For example, some Deans and Chairs confused assessment with program evaluation. Others questioned why simply traditional measures such as course taking and grade point averages were not sufficient indicators of student achievement. Fortunately, we realized the need for further training early on. We also discovered that with some turnover in the Chairs positions, we needed to go back and bring new Chairs up to speed.

c. *Do not ask people to do too much.* Initially, we asked Chairs to address both general education and major. Our external reviewer recommended that we not require the former and we agreed. That decision moved the process along much more rapidly. As it turned out, there was some overlap in institutional goals and goals for the major anyway. Further, we discovered that Chairs and their faculty became frustrated when they thought that they had to assess all of their goals for the major with the same degree of seriousness and at the same time. We suggested that they identify a few significant goals to assess initially and develop a plan that would provide for assessment over time of other goals. We also urged more attention to existing data (Ewell).

d. *Do not expect agreement about everything.* Consideration of assessment tends to raise complicated and controversial educational issues, which it should, and getting people to agree about those is both fruitless and unnecessary. Our Subcommittee was empowered to make the choices and we did, even when we did not completely agree within this smaller group. We also recognized that the plan is not cast in stone and will change over time as we learn more from our experience. The NCA team members confirmed this view in their comments on the plan in their report.

Concluding Thoughts

Developing the Institutional Assessment Plan at UND turned out to be an exciting, if at times frustrating, experience for those most directly involved. The strategies that worked and the lessons learned will continue to inform our work, not only with assessment, but as we strive to improve our institution in other ways.

Daniel R. Rice is Associate Professor of Educational Administration at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks, ND.

James Larson is Professor of Sociology at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks, ND.

Commitment to Academic Integrity Through a Graduate Performance Guarantee

Linda Avant
Larry Davis

Introduction

How many of you would consider purchasing a new car without a warranty? Probably very few. Then why should parents (or the students themselves) consider investing approximately the same amount of money (as a new car) in pursuit of a degree from our college? Because that is the way we have always done things. As we all have often heard, colleges cannot continue to do business as in times past because the competition for students is keen.

Background

OSU-Okmulgee is a branch campus of Oklahoma State University located less than an hour south of Tulsa. Operating on a tri-semester academic calendar, the College's mission focuses on high-quality, advancing technology. The College confers only the Associate in Applied Science degree. Fall enrollment generally runs 2,200-2,300 students, most of whom are full-time. Twelve instructional departments (eleven technical plus general education) employ 125-135 full-time faculty, most of whom teach 12 months. Few adjunct faculty are hired. The only educational institution in Oklahoma to offer such a guarantee, OSU-Okmulgee graduates began receiving the award in Spring 1993.

The concept of educational guarantees is gaining momentum across the nation. Henry Ford Community College (Dearborn, MI) was the first college in the nation to begin offering a warranty for its graduates. Beginning in 1986, they developed a guarantee both for the transfer of credit of academic and career courses and the placement of occupational graduates.

Illinois is well on its way to guaranteeing education received at all its 49 public community colleges, according to a recent article published in the *Community College Times*. The initiative began in spring 1992 when the Illinois Community College Board decided to pilot-test the concept. One year later, Provisional Guidelines for Educational Guarantees were

approved by the Board as an interim development model for the 40 colleges participating in the pilot-test. Final guidelines will be developed for implementation in 1994.

Also beginning in 1994, according to the State Board of Technical Colleges for Minnesota, employers who find technical college graduates lacking skills that were a part of their program may re-enroll the employee for as many as 12 tuition-free credits.

Because several colleges are implementing transfer guarantees that ensure the transferability of courses to baccalaureate programs and/or occupational guarantees that ensure graduates or completers have mastered essential competencies for employment, the Office of Community College Research and Leadership at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is currently conducting a study designed to describe educational guarantee policies being adopted by two-year colleges across the U.S. as well as uncover important issues related to their implementation.

Why Develop a Guarantee

Instructional leaders at OSU-Okmulgee had long been working with employers to develop some type of covenant with reciprocal benefits. In the College's Strategic Plan, it was determined that the critical starting point was the identification of comprehensive, employer-certified competencies that represented the essential skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed by employees in the workplace. This includes both technical and general education with an appropriate emphasis on the scientific basis of the occupation, and culminates by translating these competencies into curricula that are competency-based and guide both faculty and students in optimizing learning and improving accountability.

This procedure assures employers that future employees will meet the essential performance requirements of their jobs and merit investment in future education. An essential dimension of this covenant is that employers in their recruiting seek graduates with guaranteed competencies. Graduates with these verified levels of preparation, because of their competence and relevance to employer needs, are often given hiring preference and are appropriately compensated for their attainment in starting wages and benefits.

Other components of the covenant include employer participation on advisory committees, their assistance in student recruitment and graduate placement, rotational equipment loans and faculty/industry personnel externships. Expanded internships for students and other forms of workplace learning, funding scholarships, and participating in the proficiency examinations to verify competency levels also represent expanded employer participation.

Process Used to Identify Competencies

The identification of the competencies that each program of study would honor was the most difficult process in developing the guarantee, and several different procedures were used by the departments. Three programs of study were already nationally certified by their respective accrediting groups, and their detailed lists of competencies were adopted by us as well.

Those programs of study that began from ground zero had much more work to do. Lists of basic competencies were compiled (often from various course syllabi), reviewed, and adapted as necessary. Although generally we wanted to maintain our existing curriculum, this was also an opportunity for the faculty to compare their program expectations with various duty/task lists from other states and/or organizations. The competency lists were also reviewed by various employers.

Once complete, other campus personnel reviewed the lists to assure that the competencies were written to the appropriate cognitive level. (The knowledge level was appropriate in some cases; other competencies were targeted to the analysis or synthesis levels.) Final validation was provided through our Advisory Committees.

OSU-Okmulgee's "Graduate Performance Guarantee"

If an Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) graduate is judged by the initial employer to be lacking in either academic or technical job skills identified as exit competencies for the specific degree program, the graduate will be provided up to nine credit hours of additional education by OSU-Okmulgee.

Special conditions that apply to the Guarantee are as follows:

1. The graduate must have earned the A.A.S. degree from OSU-Okmulgee beginning April 1993 or thereafter in a technical program identified in the current college catalog.
2. The graduate must have completed the A.A.S. degree from OSU-Okmulgee with a majority of the credits being earned at OSU-Okmulgee and must have completed the degree within a four-year time span.
3. Graduates must be employed full-time in an area directly related to the program of concentration as certified by the Office of Academic Affairs.
4. Employment must commence within 12 months of graduation.
5. The employer must identify deficiencies and certify in writing, within 90 days of the graduate's initial employment, that the employee is lacking specific entry-level skills guaranteed by OSU-Okmulgee as a part of the degree program.
6. The employer, graduate, department head, academic affairs officer, and the appropriate faculty will develop a written educational plan for the needed education.
7. Education will be limited to nine credit hours related to the identified skill deficiency and to those classes regularly scheduled during the period covered by the education plan.
8. All education must be completed within three semesters from the time the educational plan is agreed upon.
9. The graduate and/or employer is responsible for the cost of books, insurance, uniforms, fees, room and board, tools, and other course-related expenses.

10. The Guarantee does not imply that the graduate will pass any licensing or qualifying examination for a particular career.

11. OSU-Okmulgee's sole responsibility for skill deficiencies shall be limited to nine credit hours of education under conditions described above.

12. The Guarantee process can be initiated by written notification from the employer to Office of the Provost, OSU-Okmulgee, 1801 East 4th Street, Okmulgee, OK 74447-3901.

Tying the Guarantee to Our Assessment Plan

As part of the assessment process, each full-time OSU-Okmulgee student is pre- and post-tested in her/his technical area and in the general education areas of math, English, and reading. Competency in the technical areas is reviewed through department-generated tests, incorporating the objectives and competencies identified as common to all graduates. Competency in the general education areas is measured through the pre- and post-test Accuplacer (College Board computerized tests) scores by each student. The same objectives and competencies used in the graduate performance guarantee are examined in the development of the pre- and post-assessment tests. Modified percentage gain (percent of actual gain divided by percent of possible gain) from entry to exit is reviewed.

The Graduate Performance Guarantee is the final statement that OSU-Okmulgee is satisfied with the competency level of the graduate after all assessment is completed.

Conclusion

The development and promotion of our Graduate Performance Guarantee has been a good process for our campus. Faculty generally appreciated the opportunity to identify publicly the competencies that they required for successful completion of their courses. Often they found that they were needlessly overlapping their curricula or missing a key concept altogether. A couple of faculty even realized their teaching was less rigorous than the college expected.

As the first college in Oklahoma to offer such a warranty, there has been good publicity. Most importantly, it is viewed as the "right thing to do." This commitment to academic integrity is further embodied in OSU-Okmulgee's macro goal for the twenty-first century: to further enhance our recognition as the premier technologically-oriented institution of higher education in Oklahoma and the region through improved performance and service.

Linda Avant is the Assistant Provost for Academic Affairs at Oklahoma State University-Okmulgee, Okmulgee, OK.

Larry Davis is Department Head of the General Education department at Oklahoma State University-Okmulgee, Okmulgee, OK.

Indicators of Success: Evaluating the College Mission through Assessing Institutional Outcomes

Jeff Hockaday
Philip J. Silvers

Introduction and Perspectives

The assessment of institutional effectiveness in higher education has received increasing attention in recent years. Both two-year and four-year postsecondary institutions have engaged in a myriad of assessment activities ranging from evaluating instructional programs and services to assessing student achievement. These assessment activities often provide information for improving instruction and services to students, as well as meeting the requirements of external accreditation and funding agencies. Recent federal legislation on the Student Right-To-Know and Ability to Benefit has added further impetus.

The literature on Institutional Effectiveness suggests many alternative paths to assessment. Authors focus on one or more of these dimensions: (1) *What* should be measured? (2) *Who* should do the measuring? and (3) *How* institutions might go about it? Shirazi (1991) cites more than 100 potential measures, none with specific criteria for success. Similarly, Tucker (1992) advises that institutions "measure everything," and he provides numerous examples of measurable inputs, outcomes, and processes. DeHart (1992) takes a comparative approach, relating such indicators as degree production in one's institution with peer institutions over time.

While the North Central Association (1991) assigns responsibility for devising outcome measures to college faculty, Cowart's 1988 survey of 675 community colleges found that outcomes are most often developed by the institutional research office. By way of counterpoint, MacDougall, Friedlander, Cohen, and Romo (1990) suggest that effectiveness research is best done by a *decentralized* approach. They propose using a campus-wide committee to coordinate and screen research work done by faculty, staff, and administrators. Alfred and Kreidler (1991) urge demonstrated value-addedness for students and customers

with documented outcomes of teaching and learning. They cite several community colleges that have linked the organizational mission statements with goals and students outcomes. Doucette and Hughes (1990) and Ewell (1990) recommend considering the clients served by the mission and what they tend to expect. Ewell (1987) also advocates making a visible commitment to improvement across a wide range of "seemingly unconnected areas—from advisement to parking" (1990, p. 14).

The approach taken by Pima Community College (PCC) emulates the recommendations of Doucette and Hughes, (1990) and Ewell (1990). PCC, a multi-campus college of 30,000 students in Tucson, Arizona, sought community expectations regarding outcomes to evaluate the degree to which it is fulfilling its mission. This paper discusses the methods used to identify and operationalize outcomes, as well as the initial assessment results.

Methodology

Following the appointment of a new chancellor in 1989, approximately 100 representatives of the Greater Tucson community and Pima Community College used a *charrette process* (Shepak, et al., 1988) to develop a new mission statement for the College. A *charrette* (French for *little cart)* is a compact, fast-track planning process that uses community members to envision the future of an organization. Architects and planners in modern times have adapted the process, used at the medieval University of Paris, by architecture students who gradually improved their drawings or models as a result of community input received as they rode carts to the University.

After the initial *charrette*, which produced a highly regarded mission statement, the same group convened several months later to develop a set of evaluative criteria, called Indicators of Success, that were directly linked to the twelve major areas addressed by the College Mission.

In the ensuing four months, a committee of College administrators, faculty, and staff prescribed specific measures to assess each of the Indicators of Success. The intent of this process was to provide information that could be used to: (1) improve programs and services for students, (2) annually report the College's progress in fulfilling its mission to the community, and (3) support other College initiatives, such as Program Review.

One or more specific measures were developed to assess each of the outcomes specified by the community in the Indicators of Success. For each measure, the Institutional Effectiveness Committee listed a success criterion, data source, and a timeline for collecting assessment data. This specifications table served as the basis for the collection, analysis, and reporting of assessment information.

The measures used to assess the Indicators of Success drew upon existing measures, commercially developed measures, and additional College-developed measures. Here are examples of several Mission areas and their corresponding Indicators of Success and assessment measures.

Mission Area	Indicator of Success	Assessment Measure
Creative and effective teaching	Students will rate faculty good or excellent on evaluation items dealing with instruction.	Student ratings of instruction
Occupational programs	Completers will demonstrate competency on certification exams.	Percent passing certification or licensing exams
Transfer education	Academic achievement of students transferring to 4-year institutions will equal that of native students.	Grade point averages (GPAs) of transfer students compared to native students
Employees and work environment	Employees will show a greater understanding of the College mission, communications, decision-making, and EEO/AA procedures.	Ratings on Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) survey

For existing measures, data were collected, analyzed, and summarized. In other cases, plans were made to develop data collection procedures and instruments. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, while qualitative data were categorized and summarized.

Results

Initial assessment results were presented to the original *charrette* groups of community and College representatives in May 1992. This "report to the community," which was updated in 1993 and will be conducted annually, serves as a way for community members to evaluate how well their tax dollars are being spent. Assessment results are also being distributed within the College to support various College initiatives, as appropriate. Examples of these results are:

Mission Area—Indicator of Success	Specific Measure	Assessment Results
Creative and effective teaching– Students will rate faculty good or excellent on evaluation items dealing with instruction.	Student Evaluation of Instruction Questionnaire	District-wide, students rated faculty 5.46 (outstanding) on a 6-point scale.

Occupational programs–Completers will demonstrate competency on certification exams	Data from certificate/licensing agencies on PCC completers in programs with practitioner certification/licensing requirements	Percent of completers passing certification exams: Respiratory Therapy, Radiologic Technology, Oral Radiology (100 %); Registered Nurse (94 %), Licensed Practical Nurse (91 %), Dental Lab Technician (58 %)
Transfer education - Academic achievement of PCC students transferring to 4-year institutions will equal that of native students	Transfer data supplied by the 4-year institution to which PCC students primarily transfer	Lower division transfer students from the Community College have somewhat lower 5-year graduation and persistence rates than do native freshmen from the local university
Employees and work environment-Employees will show a greater understanding of PCC mission, communications, decision-making, and EEO/AA procedures	Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) survey	College employees rated the communication of the College Mission 3.87 (satisfied) on a 5-point scale

Charrette Success Factors

In retrospect, the double-*charrette* process to re-create the mission of the College and to establish community expectations about mission results was enormously successful. The process reflected Keller's (1987) view that the "business of the college is in reality whatever the community says it is" (p. 76). It established a firm basis for accountability to taxpayers and to the community-at-large. It became a major support for program improvement and helped to meet new accreditation reporting requirements on Institutional Effectiveness.

What made the process so effective? Beyond the prerequisites of strong leadership and attention to hundreds of details, the following conditions were important:

- **Preparation.** The preparatory research and call for papers provided a strong information base for the participants and ensured that many voices contributed to the final product. Consequently, the mission statement and the indicators enjoyed widespread ownership.
- **A balance between control and letting go.** While certain control mechanisms were in place (group topics assigned, participants selected on certain criteria, a common information packet, the use of a "Jury," and committee-of-the-whole), *charrette* leaders invested a high level of trust that the participants would produce a quality, responsive product

- **The editorial committee,** comprised of a key cross-section of participants, helped winnow the proposed 56 indicators down to a more workable 23. This six-person committee helped preserve integrity, yet expedited the process.
- **The Institutional Effectiveness Coordinating Committee.** This group of ten faculty, administrators, and institutional research professionals met monthly to operationalize the Indicators of Success with specific metrics and criteria of success.
- **Quick turnaround.** Once in motion, the *charrettes* moved to a quick resolution and provided participants with a prompt sense of closure.
- **Celebration of achievement.** The closing luncheon and awards, a newspaper ad publicizing the results, and the Report to the Community luncheon not only engendered a sense of closure, but also permitted an opportunity to celebrate the College and its accomplishments.

Three years after its re-creation, College employees and members of the community are ***still celebrating*** the mission statement and Indicators of Success—by displaying them, by quoting from them in meetings large and small, and by measuring their performance against the stated ideals.

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Jeff Hockaday is Chancellor at Pima Community College, Tucson, AZ.

Philip J. Silvers is Senior Assistant to the Chancellor, Research and Planning, at Pima Community College, Tucson, AZ.

Integrating the Plan for Assessment into Overall Institutional Effectiveness: Lessons Learned/Obstacles Overcome

Patricia Skinner
Jack Kristofco
Marsha Bordner
Betty Dooley

Introduction

Clark State Community College (CSCC) developed its Plan for Assessment of Student Academic Achievement as part of its 1992 Focused Evaluation Visit. That Plan (approved by NCA that year) was developed while the college was also developing its models for Institutional Effectiveness and Program Review. CSCC has attempted to coordinate all of these initiatives, and, in doing so, has encountered a number of obstacles and learned many lessons about assessment. This paper describes the individual programs and the college's efforts to coordinate them.

The Plan to Assess Institutional Effectiveness

In the spring of 1991, the Clark State Board of Trustees identified Institutional Effectiveness as one of its chief priorities. That year, the president formed a college-wide task force to address the issue. It was composed of 12 members of the faculty and staff, representing all the areas of the institution.

This group began its work using an Institutional Effectiveness assessment model that had been developed the previous year by the Ohio Board of Regents. This model divided the work of a college into three basic areas: Resources, Processes, and Outcomes. It then analyzed each of these three into "areas of inquiry" and "indicators of success" (The "Areas of Inquiry" within the category of Resources, for instance, might include items such as: Board of Trustees, College Personnel, Students, Finances, Physical Resources, Student Services, and

Academic Services). The task force decided to use that document as a starting point with the ultimate intention of designing a Clark State assessment model customized to the unique character and needs of the college. The following is the Outcomes section of the Clark State Plan.

OUTCOMES

AREA OF INQUIRY	INDICATORS			
Instructional Outcomes Mission Statement (s): 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, and 9	Instructional Outcomes are consistent with the college's mission.	The college plans for the assessment and improvement of instruction.	Students demonstrate basic academic skills.	Students demonstrate advanced academic skills.
	Students demonstrate program specific skills.	The college assesses the effectiveness of its academic programs.	The college uses a variety of measures to assess its instructional outcomes and its program effectiveness.	
Student Development Programs Mission Statement(s): 5, 7, and 10	Student Development programming is consistent with the college mission.	The college has a plan to assess and improve Student Deveopment programs.	A variety of measures are used to assess the success of each Student Development office's programs.	
Diversity Mission Statement(s): 1, 5, and 10	The college has defined 'diversity' in terms of its mission.	There is a plan to assess and improve the diversity program for the entire college.	The assessment plan includes strategies for students, faculty, and staff participation.	The assessment plan also invites participation by residents of the college's service area.
Community Impact Mission Statement(s): 3, 9, 10, and 11	The college has partnerships with the community that meet its mission.	The college plans for the development, assessment, and improvement of college-community relationships	The community participates in college events and uses college facilities.	The community participates on college committees.
	The community supports the college through fundraising.	The economic impact of the college on the community is addressed.	The college participates with the community in economic development projects.	

As the task force's work went forward, several issues became apparent. The group would have to define a number of key terms within the context of the college's assessment project. In addition, the task force also called the college's mission statement into review. There were times, for instance, when an area of inquiry (something that most assuredly belonged in the instrument—"diversity," for example) did not seem to be clearly set forth in the mission. As a result, the group's final recommendations included a request that additions to the college mission statement be made.

The task force also decided that in order to facilitate the eventual implementation of the assessment grid, it would have to identify people at the institution who would be asked to respond to the indicators listed with each of the areas of inquiry. Further, the instrument

should also identify data already at the college that will be available to that person (to those persons) as the indicator is addressed.

Ultimately, it also became the business of the task force to translate the grid itself into a set of worksheets, one for every one of the indicators in all three sections. These individual worksheets include the area of inquiry, the indicator that is being addressed, the person(s) who will complete the worksheet, and the data sources available. Space was then made available for the actual responses: a description of the current situation on that indicator, strengths, needs, and recommendations/plans for change.

Implicit in this, of course, is the application of some notion of standards for the assessment. As did the Regents' committee before it, the Clark State task force determined that, given the demographic, historical, and economic make-up of an individual college, the basic orientation on standards should be internal rather than external. Hence, the Institutional Effectiveness model must be grounded in the college's mission statement.

The final question that the task force had to answer was the implementation question: "Who will do what, when?" After lengthy discussion, the following strategy was devised for 1992-94:

1. **Fall 1992:** finalize a list of data sources.
2. **Fall 1992:** identify an "Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Team," designating a chair.
3. **January-June 1993:** new Assessment Team meets with the Task Force.
4. **Summer-Fall 1993:** Assessment Team gathers data on the indicators.
5. **Winter-Spring 1994:** Assessment Team reviews data, writes **first** draft of report.
6. **Spring 1994:** final report is produced.
7. It was recommended that this Institutional Effectiveness Assessment plan be implemented **every five years,** with 1993-94 being the first time (as a pilot test).

Implementing the Institutional Effectiveness Plan

The President appointed the chairperson and the rest of the Assessment Team in March 1993. The chairperson had also served on the Institutional Effectiveness Task Force. Immediately after being appointed, the chairperson formed a committee to gather data and write the report on the college's overall institutional effectiveness. The team consists of three faculty (including the chair), two administrators, and two staff personnel.

The newly formed committee met with the original Institutional Effectiveness Task Force twice to update the new members on the history and the status of Institutional Effectiveness and to give the new members an opportunity to ask questions (only two of the members of the current team also served on the task force). Members were given copies of the report from

the Institutional Effectiveness Task Force as well as binders containing all of the worksheets for the grid itself.

In late May 1993 a timeline was established in order to have the report completed by May 1994. In addition, the committee was broken down into three teams with two members serving on each team. The teams were assigned the responsibility of gathering information on the areas of Resources, Processes, and Outcomes. The worksheets were distributed to the designated respondents in July 1993 with requests that they be completed and returned by mid-October 1993.

Because of concerns expressed by some of the worksheet respondents, a second memo was sent in mid-September 1993. Attached to the memo were four sample worksheets filled out by the committee, a list of abbreviations used on the worksheets, a list of terms used on the worksheets along with their definitions, and a paper presented by Jack Kristofco that further explained the assessment model being used. In addition, the deadline for completion of the worksheets was extended to November 1. .

During the winter quarter of 1994, the two-person teams will analyze the data from the worksheets and writing their reports. During spring quarter the chairperson and one member of the committee will write the final report based on the input from the three teams.

There has been difficulty obtaining worksheets from some of the respondents. At least four important respondents had not sent in their worksheets as of January 10. Beyond that, because the data analysis is just now beginning, it is not possible to evaluate any other problems at this point.

However, several lessons have been learned.

1. The committee should have met with all the respondents at the very beginning of the procedure to make sure that they understood the worksheets and how to fill them out rather than try to explain them in writing.

2. The worksheets should have been created or reworded by the members of the assessment team so the committee understood them better and had a greater sense of ownership.

3. The chairperson of the committee probably should be an administrator with the leverage necessary to get the respondents to complete their tasks.

4. There should be an Assessment Review Team named to receive the report of the Assessment Team. They would be charged with monitoring the recommendations and plans for change.

The Plan for Assessing Academic Achievement

In the spring of 1992, a joint committee of the Institutional Effectiveness Task Force and the Program Review Committee was charged with the development of an assessment plan to

measure student academic achievement. The committee reviewed the "Ten Characteristics of an Assessment Program" as outlined by North Central as well as other models of assessment available in Ohio and across the nation as it developed its plan. The committee also reviewed Clark State's mission statement and the components related directly to academic achievement. The group felt that the word "quality" should be the anchor that provided the focus for the assessment plan.

The committee ultimately determined that indicators of a quality education could be divided into three broad classifications: Basic Academic Skills that are common to all programs on campus, Advanced Academic Skills that are developed in the "general education" and "major" components of the college's degrees, and Program Specific Skills that are developed more specifically in the major in which a student enrolls. Within Basic Skills, the committee included writing, reading, mathematics, and library research. Within Advanced Skills were included critical thinking/problem solving, and knowledge of the humanities and social sciences. Within Program Specific Skills, we included the knowledge and skills that are developed particularly in majors at the college.

The next stage in the development of the assessment model required the committee to determine the student outcomes and the assessment measures that would demonstrate that "quality" had been achieved in any particular program. The group agreed that the outcomes needed to be precise and limited, and that the assessment measures needed to be inclusive of all elements of a performance in classes at all levels, including capstone courses, practicums, co-op's, and internships; portfolios; surveys (student, alumni, employers); transfer statistics; career/placement reports; licensure, registry, and certification examinations.

The first step in the implementation of Clark State's plan has been the collection of data related to the "assessment measures." As expected, data collection is an ever difficult chore and can be quite costly.

Rather than convene a special Assessment Committee to evaluate the three categories of Student's Academic Achievement as originally planned, the college has determined that Basic and Advanced skills will be reviewed every five years by the Institutional Effectiveness teams, focusing on instructional outcomes. Program specific skills will be assessed as part of a newly-developed Program Review process.

Program Review

CSCC's program review process was developed in 1992 as part of the College's Plan for Assessment of Student Achievement as well as the College's overall Institutional Effectiveness program. The program review criteria were included in the Plan for Assessment submitted and approved by an NCA team in November 1992. During 1992-93, the program review model was pilot-tested on the college's agriculture programs. An evaluation of the process was done, using an external consultant, and recommendations were made for changes based on this evaluation.

The recommendations for changes were based upon experiences with what was essentially a trial-and-error process. Major obstacles were the amount of time and funding required for

the in-depth review that had been developed. For example, the original process required the development and administration of surveys to the following groups:

- Employers
- Current Students
- Students Who Stopped or Dropped
- Students Who Have Graduated
- Current Faculty
- Staff
- Advisory Committees.

While the surveys would be easier to develop from a common format in the future, it was felt that so many new surveys were time-consuming and expensive and that the information gathered was in some cases duplicative of that gathered in other surveys and through other means. Thus, it was recommended that four surveys be eliminated.

Rather than hire an Assessment Coordinator as originally planned, an external consultant was employed to assist in developing, refining, and conducting surveys; helping with the data collection; and writing of the report. Once the survey instruments were developed and a systematic process for data collection was put in place, there would not be a need for an Assessment Coordinator. It was also determined that the faculty would need to play a major role in the program review process; thus, funding was requested for faculty to have either reassigned time or receive a stipend for involvement in program reviews.

The external consultant also conducted an evaluation of the criteria and process, making recommendations for changes that are now being implemented. In addition to those mentioned earlier, the following changes were made in the program review criteria and/or process:

1. Data for assessing academic achievement in the areas of basic and advanced skills will be collected through the college-wide Institutional Effectiveness program rather than at the program level.

2. The timeline for the Program Review process was changed to begin in January rather than in September.

3. The definition of "program" was revised to better reflect the organizational structure and nature of programs at the institution.

4. The budgetary needs were changed to reflect the focus on faculty involvement and the need for clerical assistance.

5. A more-defined process was developed to fit into the institutional budgeting cycle, so that recommendations could be easily implemented and monitored.

6. The role of a college-wide program review committee was reaffirmed and further defined.

In all, then, Clark State has been involved in assessment on a number of levels during the past three years. From a comprehensive plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the whole institution

relative to its mission to a strategy to assess the quality of an individual program, the college has spent a great deal of time and energy building systems through which it can "see itself" more clearly and better change itself to meet the needs of its students and its community. It has been a process that has presented many obstacles and taught many lessons. (Materials on these individual assessment plans are available by contacting the authors at Clark State Community College, Springfield, OH 45501)

Patricia Skinner is Vice President/Dean of Academic and Student Affairs at Clark State Community College, Springfield, OH.

Jack Kristofco is Associate Dean for Student Development at Clark State Community College, Springfield, OH.

Marsha Bordner is Assistant Dean for Arts and Sciences at Clark State Community College, Springfield, OH.

Betty Dooley is Professor, Business Technologies Division, at Clark State Community College, Springfield, OH.

"...You Might Not Get There": Cyclic Program Review as a Means of Assessing Accomplishment of Institutional Purposes and of Effecting Institutional Improvement

Douglas Steeples

Spring arrived in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, during the late 1950s, when Robert Frost arrived each year to share an evening reading selections from his poetry to a rapt audience. Discussion followed, during which he graciously responded to requests for additional reading and to questions. One spring a young graduate student, probably in English, rose to offer a question. The query turned out to be a long set of assertions that the *real* meaning of Frost's poem—ostensibly about picking cherries in the springtime—was a hidden, profound "thus-and-so," wasn't it? Frost replied, with a chuckle, "No, I was just writing about picking cherries in the springtime."

The exchange just recounted can stand as emblematic of our tendency in higher education to make simple things complicated, or at least to make them *sound* complicated, and even to fail to notice obvious things about what we say and do. Take, for example, the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the North Central Association's Criteria Three and Four for accreditation. The former, we well know, states, "The institution is accomplishing its educational and other purposes;" the latter, "The institution can continue to accomplish its purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness." Straightforward enough, these propositions. Yet what evaluation team and what self study steering committee and writer has not struggled with the question of the adequacy of information with which to demonstrate that these criteria are met? There are obvious problems of evidence, which the *Handbook of Accreditation, 1993-94—Working Draft* addresses at some length. The issue is, however, at once more difficult and less difficult than it seems on the surface. It is more difficult because we ask ourselves in Criterion Three to perform a task that, superficially simple, is freighted with epistemological issues. How, and when, can we legitimately judge that the criterion is met? The task here seems akin to that of providing a rigorous empirical demonstration,

perhaps a scientific proof. Then in addressing Criterion Four we turn from empiricism to prophecy, to an act of faith, as it were, or at best to informed conjecture, which would seem to impose a much less demanding standard of proof.

Probably these paradoxical, and opposed, tendencies are unavoidable, but we may retain a useful and appropriate humility if we bear them in mind. And remember that, despite the cynicism that often greets discussions of assessment, assessment is important and may yield results that help to resolve the difficulties mentioned above. As one eminent philosopher, former New York Yankee Ralph "Yogi" Berra put it, "You've got to be very careful if you don't know where you're going, because you might not get there." Assessment helps us to determine where we are really going, as gauged against stated goals. While much of the conversation about assessment properly focuses on student learning outcomes, there remains a legitimate area in which a carefully conceived plan for periodic program review can play fruitfully in furnishing evidence toward determining how well we meet Criteria Three and Four.

Aurora University, a comprehensive metropolitan institution of 2,100 students, 70 percent non-traditional, 80 percent commuting, 85 percent pursuing career-related majors, 30 percent in a half dozen professional masters degree programs, is in fact very different from what its tree-shaded, manicured campus, set in a quiet residential neighborhood, suggests. It has evolved into a highly complex organization of five schools and colleges since assuming university status. It has found program review to be a valuable tool for institutional self-analysis and improvement in a volatile higher education environment. In fact, program review has become one essential element in furnishing empirical evidence relative to Criterion Three and toward informing the planning activity that transforms satisfaction of Criterion Four from the equivalent of an Ouija board maneuver into reality-based strategic planning. The process works because it goes far beyond the traditional realm of internal program review. That is, it considers not only facilities, equipment, budget support, and the curriculum of an academic unit—but also extends to an appraisal, at the program level, of outcomes, planning, goals.

The review process began in academic year 1991-1992 as an integral element of institutional planning. Designed collaboratively by the chief academic officer and the academic deans, it prescribes a five-year, recurring, cycle during which, on a regularly scheduled basis, all academic programs undergo study with the intention of identifying opportunities for institutional improvement. The activity is mission-based and faculty-centered. It begins with reconsideration by unit faculty members of unit mission statements, and their revision if necessary to conform them to the University's mission and purposes. It continues with unit faculty members framing statements describing how the program curriculum and the individual courses that they teach serve the program's, and the university's, purposes. Faculty members review syllabi, revise them as needed, and submit them for inspection after having considered and stated afresh in them course goals, intended learning outcomes, and which measures will be employed to determine student success in accomplishing outcomes. Also included in the unit report are statements by program faculty members of their personal/professional goals for the forthcoming five years (accompanied by current *vitae*), including identification of any issues that they think it will be necessary to address. In addition, program faculty members, the jurisdictional dean, the chief academic officer, and the president submit written estimates of program strengths and weaknesses, of opportunities and threats in the

external environment, as well as statements considering how well the program fits prioritized institutional purposes.

Aurora University adds to the foregoing relevant records of the performance of students in a program, of enrollment patterns, of graduation rates, of the success of graduates, and of costs and income associated with each program.

The result of the activity described is a one- to four-volume report. The report receives the attention of an external reviewer, selected with the concurrent approval of the unit chair, the jurisdictional dean, and the chief academic officer. The external reviewer, recognized for disciplinary and evaluative expertise, works with a faculty member from a program unit other than that undergoing review, who serves as a faculty liaison person. Ordinarily the external reviewer visits campus twice, following extended telephone conversations with the jurisdictional dean and the chief academic officer about the review process. The reviewer reads all written materials relative to the program before coming to campus. The first visit includes meetings with the full program faculty, individual faculty members, students, the jurisdictional dean, the chief academic officer, and the president. The final visit ordinarily involves discussion of the reviewer's written report at a meeting of the program faculty and with the University officers noted above. Costs average less than $1,000 per review, involving stipends that average $500 and some expenses for the reviewer (Aurora typically seeks reviewers whose travel costs will not be excessive), together with printing costs for report materials and so on.

The entire review process is cast as developmental and affirmative. Once the reviewer's report is in hand, the chief academic officer, jurisdictional dean, and unit chair meet to conceive a follow-up strategy. This is a crucial step, to ensure that the review carries consequences.

To date, reviews have occurred for mathematics and sciences, for physical education and athletics, for undergraduate and graduate business, and for communication. The first review yielded findings that will require gradual implementation over several years; it confirmed that Aurora University possesses an opportunity to revamp its math-science general education offerings, and to develop majors as centers of excellence. The second brought an overhaul of an old curriculum and suggestions for enhancing the educational effectiveness of the athletics program. The third reviewed and counselled in the development of a new, state-of-the-art business curriculum. The results of the fourth are due shortly and will assist in focusing efforts in the communication program. All reviews have functioned as means of forwarding planning and sources of vital information about program effectiveness. The review process complements and supports the University's developing plan to assess student academic accomplishment. It is applicable to non-academic areas. And it is affordable and exportable.

So far as I am aware, no contributor to the growing mass of literature on management, whether in the profit or the not-for-profit sector, has recommended founding plans and decisions on ignorance, error, or whim, although some have identified value in chaos. Program review is one way to narrow the ranges of ignorance, error, and whimsy, enabling us to know better "where we are going," so that we can "get there."

Douglas Steeples is Vice President for Academic Planning and Professor of History at Aurora University, Aurora, IL.

Assessing Academic Achievement of Graduate Students

Patricia Murphy

The North Central Association has determined that assessment of student academic achievement includes graduate students. Most of the emphasis at conferences and in the literature has been on the achievement of undergraduate students. The purpose of this session is to address two areas of concern related to the assessment of graduate student learning: (a) apparent lack of attention to graduate education in assessment plans and activities, and (b) problems with the traditional ways of assessing competence of graduate students for the purposes of improving learning.

This session focuses on the procedures followed at North Dakota State University (NDSU) for graduate education in (a) stating intended student outcomes, and (b) gathering evidence of student achievement of those outcomes. The data come from the 40 master's degree programs (M.A., M.S., M.Ed., M.B.A.) and the 19 doctoral programs (Ph.D.) at NDSU. Master's degree programs are in various fields of agriculture, business, humanities, education, engineering, home economics, science, and social sciences. The doctoral degree programs are in various fields of agriculture, engineering, science, mathematics, pharmaceutical sciences, and computer science. More than 170 master's degrees and more than 30 doctoral degrees (Ph.D.) are awarded annually.

At NDSU, department faculty identified "intended student outcomes" for each program at each level (bachelor's, master's, and doctoral). In this session, only master's and doctoral level programs are discussed. The faculty then identified the types of assessment they expected to use. Departmental plans were communicated through The Chart (see page 149). The collection of evidence began during 1992-93.

Content analysis of the 40 master's and 19 doctoral program plans revealed that all had included four common intended student outcomes, the ability to:

1. Communicate effectively in written and oral forms,
2. Solve problems related to the field,

3. Carry out research project(s),
4. Demonstrate knowledge in the field.

Although the wording varied by department, every department included these four in their expectations of those who complete an advanced degree. The ways in which departments proposed to assess these outcomes were also common across programs:

1. Preparation of case studies, term papers, or projects in courses
2. Exam questions in courses
3. Seminar oral presentations
4. Comprehensive written exams[1]
5. Research proposals[1]
6. Dissertations, theses, scientific papers, or comprehensive study papers
7. Oral exams (defense of paper).

The most widely used activities are the written comprehensive exam, the research proposal, the thesis or dissertation, and the final oral exam. These are used to judge all four of the common outcomes listed.

Faculty involved with graduate programs know how to make judgments about the work of individual students. They regularly make such decisions in giving grades to students in graduate courses, administering comprehensive exams, approving the research proposal, and signing off on the thesis or dissertation. In these decisions, faculty are making judgments about students as individuals.

Faculty at NDSU did not wish to abandon the traditional hallmarks of graduate education, such as the written comprehensive exams, research proposals, theses, or final oral exams. They also did not wish to create a new system to assess program outcomes. They claimed not to have the time nor the inclination for such an effort. The task became that of determining how to use what is already in place for the additional purpose of assessing program outcomes with the goal of improving student learning.

For example, the faculty recognized that although ten students successfully completed all requirements for the master's degree in computer science, that fact told the department nothing about strengths or weaknesses of their master's program. It provided no clues as to which part(s) of the program (if any) needed improvement. Likewise, grades of B or A in courses provided faculty with no evidence of areas of need or strength. As a result, faculty decided it was necessary to look at these in-place activities in a new way.

In the session, the revisions being tested by the graduate faculty are described. Successful adaptations as well as things that did not work well are shared. The overall purpose is to demonstrate how one institution has adapted ongoing activities to meet the needs of assessment of graduate student academic achievement.

The Graduate School has recently published a style manual for all papers, theses, and dissertations (NDSU Graduate School, *Guidelines for the Preparation of Disquisitions*, rev. June 1993). Use of this document facilitates oversight of the technical aspects of written communication. All graduate students are expected to follow these rules. Compliance is monitored by graduate faculty and, on final oral exams and papers, by the Graduate School appointee on the examining committee.

Variations of checklists have been developed to collect program-relevant data on outcomes as opposed to individual student achievements. Members of the Graduate Council and the Graduate Dean have pilot-tested some of these variations at final oral examinations.

The session is organized around an overall presentation including transparencies, examples of outcomes and examples of adaptations, etc., with time allowed for audience participation in discussion and questions.

[1] Required in all doctoral programs but only in some master's programs.

North Dakota State University

THE CHART

Department — Prepared by

Program — Level: Bachelor's ____ Master's ____ Doctoral ____ — Date

Intended Student Outcomes	Type of Assessment	Need to Find/ Develop	Conditions for Assessment (to whom; when)	Date Results Available

Patricia Murphy is Dean of Assessment and Institutional Research at North Dakota State University, Fargo, ND.

Assessment of Adult Degree Program Students at Capital University

Albert Maag
Richard Schalinske

The Adult Degree Program

Capital University's Adult Degree Program (ADP) enrolls about one thousand students in three centers in Dayton, Cleveland, and Columbus, Ohio. Most students attend on a part-time basis while holding full-time jobs. The program's emphases are on experiential and community-based learning; individualized advising; independent study; and small, seminar-like classes in a learning environment that is self-directed, pro-active, and interdisciplinary. Most ADP students enter the program with some college credits earned elsewhere and may receive credit for documentable, college-level experiential learning. All students fulfill requirements of the 12-course, 36-hour, competency-based core curriculum and all other academic regulations of their degrees, just as if they were traditional students. Degrees available to ADP students are the Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Social Work, Bachelor of Science in Nursing, and Bachelor of General Studies.

Transcript evaluations for transfer credit are processed by the registrar with academic departments or the ADP Degree Review Committee determining application of transfer courses to a student's major. The Director of the Assessment Center hears appeals of the registrar's decisions and makes final decisions on course waivers; he also handles such "problem" transcripts as those with courses not equivalent to any in Capital's bulletin or those in which students wish to combine parts of two or more courses into one course equivalency.

Evaluation of Degree Plans

Every ADP student writes an individualized degree plan, in consultation with his or her advisor, and submits it to the Standing Degree Review Committee in the appropriate center. For standard majors from Capital's catalog, only the student's advisor and one other faculty member must approve the plan.

The first part of the degree plan is a goal statement linking the student's academic goals with life/career goals. Next is specification of the desired major. Cases involving a standard catalog major with course substitutions or a multidisciplinary major (25% of ADP majors) must be formally approved by the Degree Review Committee. The student is expected to present a rationale for all course substitutions and a support statement from a university-approved expert in the discipline in question. Multidisciplinary majors must also be approved by the dean of the college housing the degree. In the process, minor alterations may be made to the plan. The final part of the plan is a degree grid indicating course work in progress and to be taken and detailing how requirements of the 36-hour core curriculum, the major, and electives are to be met. A degree plan for a multidisciplinary major must specify why all disciplines included in the plan are essential to the academic integrity of the degree, why each course is essential, and how the combination of courses and disciplines forms a coherent program of study leading to stated academic, professional, and personal goals.

Assessing Experiential Learning for Academic Credit

Almost half of Capital's ADP students seek academic credit for prior college-level experiential learning acquired outside traditional methods and that is equal to what would have been taught in a course on the same subject. The prior learning assessment process is available to all undergraduates, although ADP students are the most frequent users of the process. ADP students seeking such credit are advised to take the Prior Learning Portfolio Development course early in their curriculum. The course, which helps students learn how to articulate and document college-level learning achieved through life or work experience, results in a portfolio of the student's work that is then presented to the University Competency Assessment Panel (UCAP) that awards full, partial, or no credit. Objectives of the course are to teach students how to identify areas in their backgrounds that may warrant college credit, how to write a competency statement, and how to identify and gather appropriate documentation to support th claim of college-level learning. In-class critique of competency statements is a valuable learning methodology in the course. The UCAP average award is eight semester-hours of credit; most students apply for between one and five courses of credit.

Available to all students is the 40-page *Guide to Experiential Learning*, a step-by-step guide to policies and procedures regarding the awarding of academic credit for life experience. To be creditable, such learning must be equivalent to college-level learning in terms of quality and quantity, applicable to situations outside the one in which it was learned (generalizable), and it must integrate practical and theoretical knowledge. The *Guide* advises students to (1) identify learning outcomes and source-experiences to determine areas of college-level learning; (2) research courses from Capital's bulletin or that of any other regionally accredited college to determine appropriate course models (Frequently the student will need to supply a copy of the course syllabus, review the course text, and consult with a professor currently teaching the course.); (3) prepare a statement of experiential learning that demonstrates learning outcomes. Students are encouraged to use documentation that is direct, authentic, and relevant. Examples include samples of work produced, evidence of applying learning outcomes, licenses or certificates supported by performance standards, completed assignments, graded work, authenticated publications, etc.

UCAP members represent all three undergraduate colleges (Arts and Sciences, Nursing, Conservatory) and the three ADP centers; occasionally external members are used, if necessary expertise is not represented by panel members. Each panel member reviews and assesses all prior learning portfolios in advance of the monthly meetings. Occasionally the panel may request additional information and/or that the student meet with the panel. The chair summarizes individual members' recommendations and presents them at the meeting. For each prior-learning-credit request, the panel may make one of three decisions:

1. "Granted," in which case college-level credit is noted on the student's transcript; the panel also decides on the number of hours awarded and the level (introductory or upper) of learning achieved. (No grades are received for prior learning.) The panel also decides if a competency statement meets a specific degree requirement.;

2. "Granted with Partial Credit," in which case the panel indicates what was lacking for full course credit; or

3. "Not Granted," with the panel stating reasons and recommending revisions.

Once assessment instruments and/or processes are in place for all 12 core courses, students may waive individual courses upon demonstration of the appropriate core-course competencies, as specified in the *Guide to Experiential Learning*. Additionally, UCAP can assess competency statements in any curricular area chosen by the student.

In a recent UCAP satisfaction survey, 69% of responding students found the portfolio development course and the *Competency Assessment Manual* helpful, 88% considered the UCAP process fair, and almost all would recommend the process to others.

The Significant Project

A required capstone experience occurring late in one's ADP curriculum, the significant (or senior) project allows the student to integrate past learning and serves as assurance that expected learning outcomes are demonstrated in an integrated manner. The significant project often results in a product of direct benefit to the student's employer or to the community. Students working on their significant projects have an opportunity to design intensive units of study incorporating both new and prior learning not related to the discipline of one's major. The project should reflect a real interest of the student and therefore requires self-direction and a proactive approach. A one-credit course ("Significant Project") is required.

Prior to formal approval of the project, the student attends a one- to two-hour meeting with the degree review committee that proceeds to evaluate the project proposal using a previously-submitted narrative description and the student's defense of the narrative. The committee helps the student refine the project and establishes acceptable guidelines for its completion. Students specify evaluative criteria for the project: What evidence will be presented to demonstrate learning objectives have been met?; What are the criteria for evaluating the project?; What percent of the final grade will each piece of evidence be worth?; and, What letter-scale grade will be used?

Assessment Center Test Battery

In the late 1980s, Capital University began developing an assessment program to verify empirically many of the educational assumptions being made by the institution. Since the university's mission implies that students would experience academic, personal, and social growth through their course work, it was assumed the process would have to measure changes not only in academic proficiencies but also in student attitudes and values. The University Assessment Center envisioned an integrated, multiple-measure battery to reflect the premise that learning is a complex relationship of dynamic variables.

Accordingly, four standardized instruments are used to form an assessment battery: *Shipley Institute of Living Scale*, a verbally-loaded, group-administered measure of intellectual ability that can yield valid *WAIS-R* equivalent IQ scores for use as a co-variant in group comparison studies; *Canfield Learning Style Inventory (LSI)*, a measure of individual preferences for conditions and ways of learning that can identify optimal sets of preferences for use in developing group profiles, making decisions about academic programs, and detecting significant, longitudinal change; *Jackson Personality Inventory (JPI)*, a measure of personality traits, styles, attitudes, and values that can yield individual and group profiles for use in descriptive, comparative, and longitudinal research; and *Academic Profile*, a primary measure of academic proficiency that can yield both norm-referenced scores and criterion-referenced proficiency levels for use in constructing individual and group profiles and detecting longitudinal change. In addition, *The Student Survey*, a qualitative measure of self-reported characteristics, values, attitudes, and opinions was developed for administration to both entering and graduating students.

The complete assessment battery is administered to all students at Capital University as part of a mandatory assessment testing policy. Adult Degree Program students are administered the battery upon entrance and a large sample completes all measures except the *Academic Profile* upon graduation. Results from the five instruments are collected, entered into a PC , and used to process individual student files. Each file consists of a custom, computer-generated report that describes the significant Canfield scales. The student report form from the Academic Profile is included, along with a detailed explanation sheet. Completed files are then distributed to the students and their advisors for use in academic program planning. Once individual data have been reported, the information is uploaded to the university mainframe database and used to construct a current profile of incoming ADP students and in a variety of current and longitudinal studies.

Assessment Battery Findings

An extended study of ADP students who entered the university in 1992 reveals that this "class" was similar to previous samples of entering ADP students, i.e., the majority was identified by the *LSI* as independent types of learners with strong preferences for clearly articulated expectations and formal, slightly distant, instructors. Results of the *JPI* show these students endorsed conservative or conventional behaviors and beliefs, and tended to be responsible, self-assured, but not particularly intellectual or analytical. An analysis of the *Academic Profile* fails to find any significant difference between the mean scores of entering Capital ADP students and a national sample of entering traditional freshmen. Results from

The Student Survey tend to corroborate these findings in that students primarily characterized themselves as well organized, confident, independent, and concerned with earning a degree. From this institutional profile it is possible to verify the assumption that the most incoming adult students are independent types of learners and that the program's self-directed learning philosophy could apply to most, but not all, ADP students. Results underscore the need for a practical, well organized, and clearly articulated educational program.

A subsequent study comparing this sample of ADP students with 331 traditional students who also entered Capital in the fall of 1992, reveals these adults differed significantly from traditional students in their learning style preferences. While the majority of incoming adult students are identified as independent types of learners, most traditional students characterize themselves as social types. However, no significant differences are found between the two groups in terms of general personality styles or academic proficiencies. Given these findings, it is concluded that: (1) adults may benefit most from an approach to learning different from that usually used for traditional students; (2) ADP and traditional students may be more alike than different in terms of general personality; and (3) ADP and traditional students very probably have equivalent levels of basic academic skills upon entry.

In another study, a statistical and thematic analysis of quantitative and qualitative data from 240 ADP students entering since the fall of 1992 reveals that entering male and female students differed primarily in their academic ability and potential for becoming effective students in ADP. While both groups have many of the learning style preferences and personality styles usually associated with adult students, female students are more likely to enter with significantly higher levels of academic proficiency, even in such areas as math and critical thinking. The fact that females differ in their preference to learn in self-directed environments and tend to be more organized, tolerant, introspective, and innovative indicates a potentially better fit with the basic structure and nature of the program. Remedial academic interventions and learning opportunities may be appropriate for some incoming male adult students in the program.

A recently developed survey is now used to assess ADP's mission until a true longitudinal sample is available. Data from an adult version of the Student Survey administered to all students who either entered in the Fall of 1991 or graduated from ADP in the Spring of 1992 reveals insights into ADP mission accomplishment. While these samples are not technically equivalent, the study provides both a model and credible data for assessing the ADP mission in the future. A statistical and thematic analysis of the results suggests:

1. **The ADP program probably has a positive effect on graduating students.** Graduating ADP students are significantly more likely to agree that they are confident about expressing themselves in class, able to solve problems effectively, and unafraid to take on leadership roles. In addition, they question their beliefs and have grown as individuals. These students also characterize themselves as significantly less cynical as entering students. Both entering and graduating students tend to agree that they want to continue learning about new things.

2. **Students tend to view ADP more favorably the longer they are enrolled.** While both groups of students generally characterize ADP in positive terms, graduating

students tend to view it more favorably. These students are significantly more likely to describe ADP as more caring, guiding, academic, relevant, inspiring, valuable, innovative, exciting, and self-directed than entering students.

3. **There is a good fit between ADP student expectations and realizations.** Graduating students profess to have learned the same important things that entering students claim they want to learn. While both groups cite graduation as being important, many more graduating students cite the acquisition of skills and their senior projects or independent studies as being the most important things they did. In terms of personal change, graduating students report they had changed in the same areas that entering students wanted to experience change, namely becoming more independent, knowledgeable, and understanding.

Future Directions

One of the most important implications of the adult assessment program at Capital University is that assessment must be a constant and evolving process. Even basic approaches and procedures require constant attention, evaluation, and revision. New measures must be developed to expand the scope of assessment. For the coming year, a measure for assessing academic proficiencies in the core curriculum will be administered to both traditional and ADP students. Such a measure should prove useful for comparing achievement levels in both programs and to move the assessment process more directly into individual classrooms. Similar measures for the assessment of academic majors are also being developed. It is hoped that with these additions, Capital University eventually will be able better to assess the Adult Degree Program.

Albert F. Maag is the Library Director at Capital University, Columbus, OH.

Richard Schalinske is Associate Director of the Assessment Center at Capital University, Columbus, OH.

Why Don't Students Come to Class? An Assessment Model That *Answers* the Questions

Anita Gandolfo

Introduction

Last year at this conference, Karl Schilling and Karen Maitland Schilling presented a session on "Descriptive Approaches to Assessment: Moving Beyond Meeting Requirements to Making a Difference." Their excellent summary of the limitations of the evaluative model highlighted the importance of the formative model in outcomes assessment. If the Schillings' presentation had been a course, my session this year could be considered the practicum. That is, at West Virginia University (WVU) we have a strong focus on formative assessment, and I will present one activity (a longitudinal study of student experience) that is part of our comprehensive assessment plan. In my presentation, I will describe how we implemented our study and share the results that answer the question in my title (as well as some other questions we posed). As a preface to that presentation, this essay emphasizes how we came to our formative emphasis, a process that may help other institutions understand the dynamics of these models.

Background

Like most institutions, WVU came to assessment through external mandates, both from the North Central Association and our own Board of Trustees. Perhaps it is the element of accountability to external agencies that results in evaluative assessment as the primary (sometimes sole) model, but I believe that its origin in stipulations from external agencies also makes outcomes assessment *seem* external to the institution. In fact, it is a natural part of the teaching/learning process—as we eventually discovered.

It is important to emphasize the fact that those of us on the initial Assessment Task Force at West Virginia University came to assessment as unprepared as any group could be. The University did not hire any outside consultants or create an administrative position for a specialist to come in and develop a plan for us. The Provost instructed his Assistant Vice President for Curriculum and Instruction to assemble a Task Force and "in two years"

develop a comprehensive plan for outcomes assessment. In light of WVU's fiscal constraints, this action by the Provost may have been a purely pragmatic effort to conserve resources, but, in retrospect, it was inspired, as it immediately placed assessment in the instructional environment and moved us into a more formative model.

In their presentation, the Schillings argued that for assessment to "make a difference, it needs to start out with the goal of being formative in character rather than summative." While we had little understanding of assessment at the time (much less the differences between formative and summative), formative assessment was the goal implicitly shared by all concerned.

When a charge was developed for the Task Force, it included several philosophic principles that served as a conceptual framework for the assessment initiative at WVU:

- Faculty must be involved at all levels in the design, implementation, and evaluation of a student learning outcomes assessment plan.
- Assessment should be used to promote positive changes in institutional effectiveness, not just to find problems and weaknesses in programs.
- WVU should strive continually to improve the quality of instruction and institutional effectiveness. Assessment can be viewed as analogous to "quality circles," and Total Quality Management (TQM).
- Assessment should focus on the broad area of student achievement and attitudes, as these relate to content knowledge in majors, general education, and student development.

In accord with the first principle, the Task Force was principally composed of faculty representatives, and, interestingly, the group explicitly affirmed the conceptual framework very early in our deliberations. As we examined assessment literature, it became apparent that the process could be limited to data collection for purposes of accountability, and faculty Task Force members balked at the thought of investing any energy in the process unless it would lead to improvements in the teaching/learning situation.

Thus, although the Task Force did not create the conceptual framework, it was clear from the beginning that central administration's definition of the task at hand was congruent with the beliefs of the people charged with that task. This cannot be stressed too emphatically. Faculty members cherish autonomy, and there are those among us (you know them, too) who delight in objecting to anything and everything. Although a strong conceptual framework is central to an institution's assessment efforts, it is equally important for that framework to represent values shared among the people responsible for planning and implementation.

Nevertheless, in spite of the Task Force's shared values, we spent almost an entire academic year formulating our list of goals for undergraduate education at WVU, something we agreed was the first step in the assessment process. We had imagined (and our charge had suggested) that the development of a plan would be a linear process and that all aspects of the plan would

be outlined before implementation. But after a year of study and discussion, we found ourselves lost in the enormity of the task with no clear indication how to proceed. I have subsequently understood the development of our assessment initiative as analogous to the composition of my doctoral dissertation, an analogy that I believe is instructive.

When I began my dissertation, I went through a period of delight in my research, cherishing every new bit of information I discovered, but the longer I worked in the library, the more I resisted moving to the writing stage. Being strongly goal-oriented, I forced myself to confront the blank page, and I eventually discovered that the writing phase had its own merits.

Similarly, our Task Force spent a year learning about outcomes assessment and discussing it in an institutional context but seemed entrenched in that speculative phase. Knowing we had to move on, we did not feel ready for the "writing" phase, but we did not know why. I now understand that the problem was that although our orientation was formative, most of the assessment literature was about summative assessment, and our understanding of the process was conditioned by that literature. We thought we *should* have a clear-cut plan with specific measures for each of our goals and a mechanism for implementation.

In retrospect, we now understand that formative assessment develops in a more parallel than linear fashion and our inability to outline a complete plan was related to the formative model we would implicitly embraced. Fortunately, our Assistant Vice President for Curriculum and Instruction (who chaired the Task Force that first year) believes, as an article of faith, that doing *anything* is better than doing nothing. So when one member of the group mentioned that he had found an article about longitudinal studies of students interesting, our Chair immediately said, "Let's do one!" None of us had any experience with such a study, and I am sure we have done things that would make a good social scientist cringe. Nevertheless, taking that action was the single most significant step of our entire assessment process. We are in the sixth semester of that study and have used the information in a variety of ways.

Results

Those who attend my presentation may believe that the major benefit of this study is the information it has provided, information we wanted to know and even some we had not expected.

But from this study and subsequent developments, our university assessment plan gradually has evolved, and we have discovered that there is a name for our approach. We also learned that formative assessment is basic to what we do as teachers. The fact that assessment has become affiliated with offices of institutional research in many institutions is unfortunate not only because that administrative structure may perpetuate the summative model, but also because it also defines assessment as outside the average faculty member's competence. Formative assessment should be the province of units dedicated to faculty development and instructional improvement, and the early emphasis on the summative has made that affiliation more difficult.

The element of accountability will probably never disappear from assessment, and formative assessment does not mean ignoring accountability. The particular blend of formative/

summative emphasis will depend on an institution's mission and circumstances. However, it is important to learn about formative measures, since that model has the greatest potential for affecting the teaching/learning situation directly and positively. The best kept secret of outcomes assessment is that *formative* assessment can benefit the entire institution by providing reliable information about concerns and important issues (as I will explain in my presentation). We need to get beyond doing assessment for external agencies and understand the importance of doing assessment for ourselves.

Anita Gandolfo is Associate Professor of English and Chair of the WVU Assessment Council at West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV.

The Social Science Assessment Test at Shawnee State University

Anthony J. Dzik

Introduction

In preparation for self-study and an NCA visit in 1993, the Department of Social Sciences met in January 1991 to discuss aspects of NCA's Criterion Three. We were particularly concerned with ways that we could go about measuring the academic achievement of our majors. A number of measures, such as alumni surveys and GRE results, were suggested and later implemented. Most members of the department also desired some sort of testing instrument as part of the assessment project. It was believed by the department that the test should be in tune with the departmental mission statement, particularly, "provide students with a sense of the importance of cultural influences, a sense of history within the scope of changing cultural themes...These understandings are refined through...a sound curriculum...which explains variations in human behavior based on theoretical models, instruction in research methods used by contemporary social scientists, and a special focus on interdisciplinary connections among topical social issues."

Because of the interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary nature of our baccalaureate major in social science, we were unable to find a national standardized test that would fit our needs. Since all of our majors are required to complete a core of social science courses, it was decided that the test would primarily cover material expected to be part of the content of those courses. The Social Science Core consists of 36 quarter hours distributed among the disciplines of psychology (eight hours), history (eight hours), government (eight hours), introductory sociology (four hours), Introduction to macro- or micro-economics (four hours), and a spatial/cross-cultural course (four hours in geography or anthropology). The remainder of the major requirement consists of 36 upper-division hours in social science disciplines. Majors who are also pursuing certification in elementary education have some of their upper-division courses specified while general majors select the upper-division hours in consultation with their academic advisor. Although upper-division courses vary from student to student, the social science faculty felt that there might be certain principles and ideas that were highly

likely to be part of the great majority of our majors' upper-division experiences. It was hoped that some of these could also be incorporated into the test. After much discussion of content and logistics, it was agreed that the instrument would be an objective test that ideally would be administered to freshman and senior social science majors. In a sense this would be a pre- and post-test and the scores of seniors could be compared to those of freshmen. It was thought that this could give us insight into student progress.

The Test Instrument

A departmental committee of five was assigned the task of designing the test. It was decided by this committee that the test would consist of 100 multiple choice questions.

Questions were solicited from each member of the social science faculty who were instructed to provide questions covering "significant" or "essential" material that all of our majors could be expected to encounter in the faculty member's core course(s). In total, more than 400 questions were submitted. These were reviewed by the committee which then proceeded to select 100 questions that appeared to meet one or more of the guidelines set by the committee. These guidelines were (1) questions that were of an interdisciplinary nature, (2) questions that were submitted by two or more faculty in an academic discipline, (3) questions that appeared to be "essential" knowledge for a social scientist, (4) questions that involved some degree of critical thinking. In total there were 34 questions selected that could be considered cross-disciplinary. Two examples are:

Empirical evidence is...

A. evidence that cannot be directly observed.
B. evidence that agrees with common sense.
C. evidence that we are able to verify with our senses.
D. evidence that is consensual.

A correlation coefficient of .90 indicates that...

A. one event/phenomenon was caused by another event/phenomenon.
B. one event/phenomenon is strongly related to another event/phenomenon.
C. there is little relationship between two events/phenomenon.
D. the two events/phenomena are not related 10% of the time.

Six questions were selected from geography, five from anthropology, eight from political science/government, eight from economics, 14 from history, 14 from sociology, and 11 from psychology. Some examples are given below.

Geography– Megalopolis is the name...

A. of the region in the Near East where the first cities were located.
B. given to the stretch of almost total land use from Boston to Washington.
C. of the capital city of ancient Greece
D. given to the metropolitan area of New York City.

Economics– Keynesian economics tends to emphasize this side of the economy.

A. tertiary
B. supply
C. production
D. demand

History– Populist politicians such as Huey Long, George Wallace, and William Jennings Bryan are those who...

A. gather huge popular votes.
B. portray politics as class conflict.
C. argue against population controls as being anti-Biblical.
D. advocate transferring all political power to the "popular" branch of Congress—the House of Representatives.

Psychology– B.F. Skinner is to , as Ivan Pavlov is to

A. cognitive learning, classical conditioning.
B. operant conditioning, classical conditioning.
C. classical conditioning, operant conditioning.
D. classical conditioning, cognitive learning.

Before the test was to be administered to our students, copies were sent out for review and commentary to several social science faculty at other institutions with interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary types of majors. It was also reviewed by Salvatore Natoli at the National Council for the Social Studies. John Hudson, Chair of Anthropology and Geography at Northwestern University, commented that the test is "...a most interesting document... questions quite reasonable...substantive...overall seems a good comprehensive coverage." Some reviewers suggested some question redesign and the committee followed their recommendations.

Results of Testing

During the period November 1991 to September 1993, the test was administered to 198 Social Science majors (68 freshmen, 130 seniors). Almost every senior major took the test, because it was administered in our program's capstone course. The number of freshmen tested is lower for two reasons: (1) a number of students do not declare a major in their freshman year and (2) there are logistical problems that result from freshman majors not being in the same introductory class sections. The table below summarizes the results.

Group	N	Mean Score	SD	Low Score	High Score	Median
Freshmen	68	44.41	9.6	24	71	44.5
Seniors	130	62.35	10.8	34	87	61.0

The majority of senior majors appear to score consistently higher than do most freshmen. A two-sample t-test of the means provides a t of 11.9 that is significant at $p<.001$. This indicates that the difference is not apt to be due to chance. The department believes that these results suggest a degree of positive achievement.

Future Refinements and Uses

With time, we expect that a sizable number of majors will actually take the test in both their freshman and senior years. When that occurs, we will have a truer pre- and post-test. Down the road we envision reviewing each question on the test in terms of the number of senior students who answer correctly. Such data may be able to point out which concepts, ideas, and facts that are taught in our core courses may need to be emphasized or rethought. In the long run, we expect that this part of our assessment plan will aid in refining our curriculum.

Anthony J. Dzik is Associate Professor of Geography at Shawnee State University, Portsmouth, OH.

Data Linking: A Model of Student Outcomes Assessment

Liz Sanders
John Burton

Overview

With the increased attention on institutional accountability from both external and internal audiences, higher education is searching for tools to assess and improve institutional services and academic programs. Institutions are looking for new ways to evaluate student outcomes across many dimensions. No one set of tools is sufficient and most institutions will want to develop a number of instruments, including academic testing, student portfolios, outside evaluation, and periodic qualitative assessments. However, institutions should not only look to new data collection efforts but also should examine information sources already available at their campuses and devise innovative methods for redirecting these data sources to answer questions of student outcomes assessment better.

At DePaul University, the Office of Institutional Planning and Research annually conducts a student satisfaction survey to support the strategic planning process, to enhance quality, and to strengthen customer satisfaction. This survey includes assessment of the institution's commitment to student academic and personal development and evaluates the quality of both administrative services and the academic programs. While the survey provides important baseline information on several cohorts of students, the survey alone does not allow DePaul to assess the "value-added" of a DePaul education or allow the institution to assess its overall success or failure in terms of student retention or graduation. Similarly, studies of attrition and graduation rates have limited utility. Although they can demonstrate the institution's overall ability to retain and graduate students and provide information on which students graduate from DePaul, they do not explain why these students are successful and others are not. DePaul has found that additional power can be added to the usefulness of survey information through linking the survey database to other data collected by the University, (for example, freshmen pre-enrollment survey data, enrollment data, and academic performance data). This more powerful database can be used to develop a comprehensive set of outcome indicators for NCA student outcomes assessment and a model of student satisfaction in order to generate strategies to improve student satisfaction.

Conceptual Framework

Like institutions nationwide, DePaul currently is experiencing pressure to develop useful tools for assessing student outcomes. To meet these challenges, this institution conducts a udent satisfaction survey that supports the institutional planning and quality development. ıe survey includes a broad scope of attitudinal data from DePaul students in order to provide sufficient information to build models of student attrition and satisfaction. The survey measures self-assessments of customer satisfaction both in terms of *institutional affiliation*, by assessing the consumer support of the institutional mission, and the *services and learning environment*, by examining satisfaction with broad academic areas and student services.

In addition, the Office of Institutional Planning and Research (OIPR) uses an integrated approach to student data analysis by linking survey data with other data collected by the institution. Each individual dataset is designed with the larger data collection effort in mind. By linking the freshmen Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) data, student survey data, enrollment data, and academic performance data, the institution can develop comprehensive outcome indicators and a model of student satisfaction in order to develop strategies to improve student satisfaction.

Methodology

- **Student Satisfaction Survey.** DePaul annually conducts student satisfaction surveys during the spring term. The survey contains key sets of questions focusing on programs and services, university environment, educational preparation, transfer intent, general satisfaction, attitudes toward coursework, and descriptive information. In the Spring 1993 survey, all new freshmen were surveyed in order to link the satisfaction data with other University data and to prepare a database for a rising junior and graduating senior study. The overall response rate was 51.8%.

- **Data Linking.** OIPR has developed a long-range survey plan to track freshmen who responded to the student satisfaction survey during their education. This plan, which begins with the tracking of 1992 freshmen survey respondents, includes the following surveys:

    1. *CIRP Survey*—surveys freshmen as they enroll in the institution
    2. *Student Satisfaction Survey*--surveys freshmen in the spring term.
    3. *Rising Junior Survey*—surveys group again in the fall of their junior year.
    4. *Graduating Senior Survey*—surveys group in the fall after graduation.
    5. *Alumni Survey*—surveys group one or two years past graduation.

    In addition, 1992 and 1993 student satisfaction data have been linked to other institutional data, including freshmen CIRP survey data, one-year attrition data, academic performance data, and graduation data. The creation of this larger database allows for a more powerful set of indicators than the survey alone. Combining qualitative data, such

as student attitudes and perceptions, with quantitative data, such as academic performance data, retention and graduation rates, allows DePaul to develop a more comprehensive picture of the student experience.

Relevant satisfaction survey data have also be incorporated into other office reports, for example a residence hall profile and a report on financial aid recipients, to offer additional attitudinal information. In this way, DePaul can draw on the wealth of information it currently collects and can integrate data from a variety of sources to provide a broader understanding of important university issues.

DePaul's Experience

The student satisfaction survey has provided an important source for measuring student attitudes towards DePaul. These findings highlight areas for quality improvement, suggest strategies to improve student satisfaction and are useful as part of a quality enhancement program. Offices have developed action plans that address specific problems identified in the survey. Findings from the 1992 survey demonstrate that student attitudes toward Admissions services have improved; however, attitudes toward class scheduling, financial aid, university facilities, and food services continue to be problematic. However, the satisfaction survey alone does not provide an assessment on which measures are most useful and the best predictors of various types of student outcomes (attrition or graduation) for DePaul students. On the other hand, the linked dataset allows DePaul to move beyond a simple quality assessment instrument and to develop various multivariate models that can help to illustrate which measures are most important for overall student success.

OIPR was able to work with its first linked database in 1992, allowing the office to develop a preliminary model of student attrition. This institution-specific model of freshmen attrition was developed by linking the student satisfaction data with one-year attrition data. The analysis indicated that the three most important variables influencing freshmen attrition were out-of-state status, low cumulative freshmen grade point averages, and low institutional commitment (low agreement that attending this institution was the right decision). Variables that did not significantly influence attrition included pre-college academic performance, the student's college, overall satisfaction or indicators of social or academic integration (Pascarella and Terenzini, 1983). The power of this model, however, was limited. The model was better at predicting students who would stay at DePaul than students who would leave.

In 1993, OIPR developed a more powerful dataset linking the enrollment and academic performance data on the Autumn 1992 freshmen to their Spring 1993 Satisfaction Survey responses, to their first year attrition outcomes, and to their freshmen CIRP survey responses. Our initial intention was to build a model that would integrate multiple sources of data into one dataset that could be used to model student attrition and satisfaction, identifying key indicators for student success for further assessment. Although the overall response rates for the two surveys was quite high (almost 50% for the student satisfaction and over 70% for CIRP), the overlap between cohorts was more limited. We found that linking data from multiple surveys was problematic; however, we were able still to develop two parallel models: one including pre-matriculation indicators of student success from the CIRP survey, admissions information, and

overall student attrition, and a second model of post-attrition indicators of students success. These models will be used as part of the overall student outcomes assessment effort. This allows administrators and faculty to focus on the measures that best determine success and are most useful in any intervention effort, allowing the assessment effort to flow logically into the retention and quality improvement efforts at DePaul.

Implications for Institutional Researchers

1. **Institutional researchers can use satisfaction surveys to assess self-reported student outcomes, especially students' perceptions of the institutional commitment to their academic and personal development.** With increasing emphasis on student outcome assessment, student satisfaction surveys are useful tools to measure self-assessed outcomes. These outcome measures can be used to support NCA outcomes assessment.

2. **Student satisfaction surveys provide information that can be integrated into broader institutional agendas, including the quest for quality and Total Quality Management (TQM).** These surveys build on the themes of total quality management (Sherr and Lozier, 1991; Coate, 1991), focusing on students as important constituents and identifying problem areas within the university. Action strategies to improve satisfaction can be developed and success can be measured via trends in multi-year student satisfaction data.

3. **Integrated data that provide a comprehensive picture of the student experience provide decision makers with more useful information for developing successful institutional strategies.** For example, a comparison of freshmen who re-enroll as sophomores and those who do not re-enroll, which includes attitudinal data (survey data), academic performance data, and enrollment data, provides decision makers with more useful information than simple attrition percentages for developing strategies to increase student retention.

4. **Institutional researchers can link student satisfaction data to other data collected by the university to develop longitudinal databases and comprehensive models of student satisfaction.** By linking freshmen student satisfaction data to other survey data, for example CIRP data and enrollment data, in order to develop a longitudinal database, researchers can develop a comprehensive model of student satisfaction. Although institutional-specific, researchers can use this model to generate strategies to improve student satisfaction and retention. In addition, integrating survey data into other university research reports, for example including student attitudes toward the financial aid process in a quantitative study of financial aid levels, allows for a more comprehensive study of important university issues.

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John Burton is Director of Institutional Planning and Research at DePaul University, Chicago IL.

Liz Sanders is Assistant Director of the National Commission for IIT at Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago IL.

Chapter V

Special Focus on General Education and Faculty Development and Evaluation

General Education in Career Curricula

Carolyn Prager

Undoubtedly, vesting separate responsibilities for institutional and programmatic review in regional and specialized accrediting bodies complicates two-year campus approaches to general education. Despite prevailing perceptions to the contrary, however, programmatic accreditation guidelines are not so prescriptive, in the main, that they preclude greater attention to liberal learning in technical curricula. Through improved distribution requirements, more interdisciplinary courses, and greater extension of general learning outcomes into technical coursework, two-year colleges can rethink general education for associate degrees that prepare people for employment, for transfer, and often for both.

Campus Perceptions about Accreditation and General Education

Historically, institutions of higher education have indicated that specialized accreditation has had a depressing effect on general education in vocational-technical curricula. As a sector, two-year institutions, more than four-year colleges, perceive that specialized accreditation's influence over curriculum hampers institutional attempts to review and revise general education goals, course distribution, and delivery modes (Messersmith and Medsker, 1969; Anderson, 1987). However, programmatic accreditation guidelines may permit more latitude in the attention given to general education in career curricula than is generally thought. Although some specialized accreditors mandate course and credit hour distribution in general and specialized areas, most prefer merely to list technical *competencies* (not courses) which institutions should demonstrate they have introduced into the curriculum in an organized fashion, not necessarily through separate and complete courses. Actual reading of programmatic accreditation policies and guidelines suggests strongly that, in the eyes of the accreditors, decisions about what is taught and where and how it is taught reside mainly with the institutions.

Interpreting Accreditation Guidelines

Most specialized accreditation guidelines exhibit considerable tolerance for how colleges can package technical competencies in ways that theoretically permit whatever credit hour allocations they deem necessary for arts and science instruction. Campus academic leaders

can foster more informed discussion with faculty and with outside evaluators by becoming better versed in program accreditation specifics and the latitude allowed for general education coursework and integration. How accreditation guidelines are interpreted and who interprets them on campus may be critical to assuring that career programs reflect, endorse, and sustain an institution's general education philosophy and design.

Divergent Voices Urging General Education Reform

Two-year colleges experience unique politics that dictate attention to the often contradictory and conflicting concerns of divergent groups including employers, students, faculty, government, the sector as a whole, and higher education at large. The emergence of vocational curricula, each with its own detailed set of occupational proficiencies, has led to a new concept of the major in American higher education dominated by technical rather than liberal learning. By the early 1980s, for example, most community colleges had already dropped more rigorous requirements such as college mathematics and foreign languages and had liberalized student choices within required areas in career *and*, sometimes, transfer programs.

Most community colleges have abandoned the traditional university model of humanistic education as a coherent intellectual experience in favor of one that conceives of general education in terms of derivative skills such as writing and speaking. The reformulation of the liberal arts (and, to lesser extent, the sciences) from intellectual and fundamental to pragmatic but peripheral has lessened the perceived necessity for their in-depth study. Employers, for example, often see the desired skills as the natural outcome of particular courses such as English, mathematics, computer literacy, and economics, as opposed to those like philosophy or fine arts.

The assumption that the arts and sciences are good for students primarily because they help them to think and express themselves better creates several problems for those who seek a more cohesive and balanced curriculum. One problem is the premium put upon the practical feeds the notion that the arts and sciences need not be studied in any organized fashion, because they lack intrinsic value. Another is that this emphasis ignores the extent to which intensive study of the more abstract contributes to a greater capacity for thoughtful application—in the arts, the sciences, *and* in the technologies.

Still another problem is that the assumption that study of the arts and sciences is valid mainly because it improves communication and analytic dexterity ignores the possibility that these essential skills can be taught through content other than the arts and sciences. This posture, in turn, relieves the occupational-technical teacher from most responsibility for reinforcing these objectives in career subjects. Yet another is that the intellectual divide between technical and liberal studies in terms of anticipated academic outcomes deeply fragments the educational experience for both students and teachers.

Integrating and Extending General Education into Career Curricula

What can two-year colleges do to advance general education in career curricula and halt the further "degradation of academic culture" (McGrath and Spear, 1991, p. 63) in two-year

education? They can do much to counteract the "ideology of neutral eclecticism [that] may now be the biggest obstacle to curricular reform" (McGrath and Spear, 1991, p. 63) by focusing as much attention on the general as on the occupational competencies required of graduates.

Successful models integrating humanistic and applied education do exist, at two- and four-year institutions (For the latter, see, for example, the work of the Professional Preparation Network explored throughout Armour and Fuhrmann, 1989). They could provide an objective basis for fruitful discussion within associate degree-granting schools about ways to encourage a more unified vision of two-year schooling that endows vocational programs with more of the strengths said traditionally to derive from liberal study.

The Shared Vision Task Force of the National Council for Occupational Education (NCOE) and the Community College Humanities Association (CCHA) has articulated several different possibilities for integrating the humanities in career programs (CCHA, 1991). These include revision of particular humanities and occupational courses, combination of revised humanities and occupational courses into a new humanities course, and development of a new interdisciplinary hybrid course, among others. The Task Force has funded projects with different strategies at Clackamas, Seminole, and Eastern Iowa Community Colleges as well as at Southern Maine Technical Institute. Concerned about their "cafeteria" approach to the humanities, Kirkwood Community College secured a National Endowment for the Humanities grant to create three interdisciplinary humanities courses on topics of special interest to career students entitled, "Working in America," "Technology and the Human Condition," and "Living in the Information Age" (Eisenberg et al., 1991).

Responding to calls for change from a technical to a more broad-based education, the Accounting Education Change Commission awarded grants to Kirkwood and Mesa Community Colleges in 1991-92 (Ernst and Young, 1992). Kirkwood revised Principles of Accounting by looking at ways to use these courses to improve students' communication and critical thinking skills, knowledge of the business environment's influence on accounting, and grasp of accounting concepts. Mesa achieved similar goals through extensive use of case methodologies in illustrating concepts and analyzing significant accounting and business issues.

These projects extend general education into career curricula in two ways. The first is through increased attention to general education *skills and applications* to be acquired in greater *breadth* across the entire curriculum, including technical courses. The second is through increased attention to general education *knowledge and understanding* acquired in greater *depth* through better structured, more intensive humanities and interdisciplinary coursework.

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Carolyn Prager is the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Franklin University, Columbus, OH.

An Integrated Approach to General Education in Certificate and Associate Programs

Jack Barden
Bev Huber
Mikiel Ottmar

Background

United Tribes Technical College (UTTC) is a Tribally-Controlled Community College located south of Bismarck, North Dakota. Founded in 1969 as a vocational training center for American Indian students, the College granted only vocational certificates for the first 18 years of its existence. In 1987, the Board of Directors authorized the administration to pursue the possibility of offering Associate of Applied Science degrees in selected areas. The Board also authorized a change in name to the current United Tribes Technical College.

In the ensuing four years, four programs were authorized for Associate's degree granting through both a focused visit and a comprehensive visit from the North Central Association. The visiting team noted that if the institution was to expand its degree programs, it needed to put in place a process for curriculum review and approval and a general education program that complied with good practice. It was this finding that provided the stimulus to develop the Integrated Studies program.

It is important for the reader to keep in mind that, at the time that Integrated Studies was developed, United Tribes had been in existence for nearly twenty years as a vocational institution. The changes in operation required to grant degrees was not just a simple change. It involved restructuring large parts of the institution.

UTTC recognized in the early stages of development of its general education programs that this restructuring presented unusual opportunities: other institutions had to change their general education programs in order to make use of the latest thinking in that field. UTTC could develop its entire program around this thinking. In order to take advantage of this opportunity, the institution made extensive use of the report of the Futures Commission of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges.[1]

This document was the result of extensive deliberation on the nature of the community, junior, and technical colleges as they move into the twenty-first century. The report paid particular attention to the idea of general education. Some conclusions related to general education are:

- Strengthening general education is "one of the most urgent obligations community, junior and technical colleges confront"
- The aim of community, junior, and technical colleges must be not only productive careers. They must go beyond narrow interests to broaden student perspectives and prepare students for lives of dignity and purpose
- Students often come to colleges with narrow backgrounds and want only specific job skills. Lack of attention to general education exacerbates this narrowness.
- Some community, junior, and technical colleges offer a coherent program; others offer a smorgasbord with no coherence.
- Institutions need a core curriculum that attends to language, mathematics, the arts, health, heritage, groups and institutions, science, technology, and the environment.
- Students should get essential knowledge but they should also learn to make connections across disciplines and be able to apply their knowledge.

These findings provided the basis for much of the development of Integrated Studies.

Early Development

As a first step, the President contracted the services of a consultant who worked with general education at the University of North Dakota. This consultant prepared a paper about the purposes of general education and discussed a number of approaches that might be used to fulfill those purposes: distribution approaches as well as more integrated approaches. The paper was presented to the United Tribes Board of Directors at a retreat in 1990. Following this presentation, the Board chose to try an integrated approach. The decision was based largely on the cultural appropriateness of an approach that did not draw the false distinctions so often found in mainstream institutions, e.g., the distinction between spirituality and economics. Rather, the integrated approach envisioned by the Board of Directors would see both of these—spirituality and economics—as all of a piece.

A pilot program was operated the spring term of 1990-91. This pilot was taught by volunteer teachers who conducted the program as overload with no additional remuneration. Upon completion of this initial program, those involved agreed that:

- The idea of integrating, although needing a great deal more development, was very much worth pursuing.
- Students in the integrated general education program were able to do work that had heretofore been considered too advanced for them.

- Integrating work provided a significant way to assure that culturally-oriented material was made part of all teaching.

Based on these favorable findings, United Tribes determined to continue the integrated effort and expand it to cover general education requirements for all incoming degree students.

It is important to note that the idea of integrating general education requirements was not restricted to degree students at United Tribes. The integrated concept is now also required of certificate students through an offering entitled English Essentials. While it lacks some features of the integration because of fewer requirements, it has the same spirit.

How Integrated Studies Operates

At United Tribes, students in Associate's programs take all their general education requirements except mathematics, science, and technology in Integrated Studies. The pattern that has emerged is that each fall, the introductory composition course is integrated with the introductory psychology course. In the spring, the introductory speech course is integrated with the introductory humanities course. Since UTTC's general education requirements include six semester credits of communication, three of humanities, and three of social and behavioral science, the Integrated Studies Program fulfills all of these areas. The courses that fulfill mathematics, science, and technology requirements are still offered in a distribution fashion.

Integrated Studies is organized around activities rather than around the more traditional subjects. The format that has developed at United Tribes involves students attending (a) a two-hour weekly program meeting and (b) four hours of small groups with differing purposes that vary as the courses change. The students commit an amount of time that is equal to what they would commit to in a distribution setting.

Each term, the Integrated Studies faculty chooses a theme as an organizing element. The theme in the current semester, for instance, is "Faces and Masks." The two linked courses in the semester are Introduction to Speech and Introduction to Humanities. All Integrated Studies Students attend a two-hour program meeting one day per week, the purpose of which is to present information to them. This meeting takes the form of lectures, discussions, films, presentations by individuals outside the College, and a number of other formats. Since the communication course is Introduction to Speech, twice weekly, the group is divided into three smaller "Presentation Groups" in which students present their oral work. This work is based on the Program Meeting; thus, students hear or see the information in the Program Meeting, reflect in some way on it, and bring the results of that reflection to a group. Additionally, smaller groups of students meet in a fourth group for two hours in which oral discussion takes place around the material that is being read and presented. It is designed to facilitate reflection.

The underlying ideas in Integrated Studies are quite simple: take in information, reflect on it, and bring it to others.

Integration of Native Culture

As noted earlier, the fact that United Tribes serves nearly 100% Native American students in an occupationally-oriented institution is a major factor in the development of its general education.

This framework dictates that culture not be considered an "add on" but that it be considered an integral part of the institution. Thus, UTTC offers very few Native Studies courses. Part of the reason for developing the Integrated Studies idea involves the idea that in this program everything is integrated. It provides an ideal vehicle for the integration of Native culture into most aspects of the general education experience.

One indicator of the fact that this integrative idea permeates the environment is that the group that planned the Integrated Studies Program for the current semester started out with the theme, "Faces and Masks." In the early stages of planning, a good deal of discussion revolved around culture. As planning progressed the idea expanded. Without any conscious effort to select such texts, the group found that its theme could be carried by using four books:

— *Ceremony* by Leslie Silko,

— *Fools Crow* by James Welch,

— *Moccasin Telegraph* by W.P. Kinsella, and

— *Powwow Highway* by David Seals.

All these texts are focused on Native Americans; two of them are written by Native Americans. Two additional texts—Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* and Shakespeare's *The Tempest*—were selected to round out the semester.

In the Speech area, work spins off the texts, i.e., topics that students choose to speak on are most often related to their other work. Thus, the topics for speech are often culturally-related. This same integration of cultural material also occurs in the English/Psychology semester.

Assessment

Programs like Integrated Studies pose assessment challenges. UTTC's philosophy of general education includes content, basic skills, and thinking skills. Beginning with the current semester, the faculty involved in the Integrated Studies Program are making use of classroom assessment techniques as set forth by Thomas Angelo and K. Patricia Cross.[2] These techniques are designed to elicit whether or not students are achieving the outcomes set in the planning for the program. Such techniques as the category grid, the muddies point, and the minute paper are administered depending on the goal for that day.

Angelo and Cross did not develop their techniques with the idea that they would be placed in a system. Rather, their purpose is to improve teaching. Thus, the instruments provide immediate feedback so that faculty can take corrective action. However, in order for this

assessment activity to be useful as part of an institutional assessment program, there must be a provision to enter the results into a system.

UTTC's Office of Research and Development provides that system. Faculty members complete a brief report to R&D when they conduct assessment activities. These reports are based on the objectives that are being assessed and on the performance of students on particular assessment techniques. Since some of the assessment effort is aimed at basic skills, other effort at content, and still other effort at thinking skills, the familiar issue of comparing apples and oranges arises.

Using a technique called Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS), the differences between apples and oranges is minimized. GAS, developed for use in the Hennepin County, Minnesota, mental health programs, measures progress toward goals; it is immaterial what the goals are. Thus, movement toward goals in a number of areas is possible to measure, analyze, and discuss.

As noted, this is the first semester that such assessment has been used. Some data, more focused on student reaction to the program are available. Findings indicate that only a small minority (fewer than 10%) believed that the program did not benefit them. Because of the high correlation between extent and quality of teacher interaction and student success, students were asked to report on these interactions. The large majority indicated that their teachers took a personal interest in them and that they had a personally satisfying relationship with faculty. They also indicated that the faculty challenged them to work harder but that they also helped out with personal problems and helped to relieve anxieties.

Value Added

While awaiting the results of more formal assessment activities this term, those involved have drawn tentative conclusions:

- Students in Integrated Studies participate more vigorously and more productively in discussions about ideas than in other classes.
- Students in Integrated Studies have more opportunity to exercise particular thinking skills than in other classes.
- Cultural goals are appropriately included in integrated offerings.
- Integrated offerings are an excellent faculty development opportunity.

Perhaps the most important value added is that integration has an impact not only on subject matter but on students. Since nearly all students, regardless of their occupational area, are involved in the Integrated Studies Program, it provides one of the few real shared experiences that make for a learning community on our campus.

1 Commission on the Future of Community Colleges. 1988. *Building communities: A vision for a new century*. Washington D.C.: American Association of Community and Junior Colleges.

2 Angelo, Thomas and K. Patricia Cross. *1993. Classroom assessment techniques: A handbook for college teachers*. San Francisco, Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Jack Barden is Officer of Research and Development at United Tribes Technical College in Bismarck, ND.

Bev Huber is English Instructor, General Education, at United Tribes Technical College in Bismarck, ND.

Mikiel Ottmar is Instructor, Social/Behavioral Sciences at United Tribes Technical College in Bismarck, ND.

General Education: Goals, Design, and Assessment

Dennis Leavens
Candace Young
Garry Gordon
Stuart Vorkink
Kevin Easley
Jack Magruder

"The mission of Northeast Missouri State University is to offer an exemplary undergraduate education, grounded in the liberal arts and sciences in the context of a public institution of higher learning." But what is liberal arts and sciences education? How is it different from general education? What does it mean in the context of a public institution? How might an institution assess the effectiveness of its liberal and general education programs?

The Liberal Arts Tradition

The Liberal arts tradition has always supported conflicting perspectives, from its inception to its contemporary delivery. Broadly speaking, two major strands devolve from the Western European tradition: what Bruce Kimball has called (1) the artes liberales, (see, for example, pp. 37-9) and (2) the liberal-free ideal (pp. 119-22).

The Artes Liberales emphasize support of an existing social order, and therefore the education seeks to induct individuals into their appropriate positions in an accepted social order. Correspondingly, it endorses social virtues and conformity to social norms. It has among its goals the following: (1) "training the good citizen to lead society"; (2) "prescription of values and standards for character and conduct"; (3) respect for such a commitment; (4) the location of those standards and values in a body of approved and "classical" texts; (5) identification of an elite who knew and embodied these standards and virtues; (6) "a dogmatist epistemology"; and (7) thus liberal education supporting the obligations of citizenship becomes an ideal in itself. (37-38)

The "liberal-free" tradition, on the other hand, is oriented toward the individual and individual freedom. This tradition aims at development of the self—its potentials and

interest—without necessary endorsement of community values or social norms. Its goals include the following: (1) freedom, "especially freedom from *a priori* structures and standards" and a corresponding "relativizing of standards and norms"; (2) "an emphasis on intellect and rationality"; (3) a critical and skeptical episteme; (4) tolerance, resulting from the epistemology of skepticism; (5) egalitarianism, especially in regard to values, standards, ideas, and opinions; (6) "emphasis upon volition of the individual rather than upon the obligations of citizenship"; and (7) a program of individual growth, self-fulfillment, and self-development stand as an ideal in itself. (119-122)

The General Education Tradition

Complicating these two liberal arts traditions is another, "general education," which develops as a response and critique of liberal education. Again broadly speaking, general education derived from several disparate elements, including the rise of democratic, economic, and political organizations; the demands of industrialization; and philosophical positions influenced by utilitarianism and pragmatism. As an educational movement, it grew up in the United States in the late nineteenth and early-to-mid twentieth century, and it "was originally formulated as a reaction to what were perceived to be the serious shortcomings in liberal education" (Flexner, in Miller, ix). This deliberate reaction against and rejection of the perceived errors of liberal arts education led to a paradigm for general education, a paradigm "fundamentally different from other conceptions of the curriculum" (Miller, p.5); since instead of knowledge, it begins with the individual and his/her relationship to society as its organizing goal. Its main features include an attitude of inquiry, the skills of problem-solving, an endorsement of the individual and community values associated with democratic society, maintenance of life-long learning in order to "function as self-fulfilled individuals and as participants in a society committed to change through democratic processes" (Miller, p.5). Given advances in information and travel technology, students must now also become effective citizens of their own countries and effective "citizens of the world."

The problem for the contemporary liberal arts and sciences university of the relationship between liberal arts education and general education remains a problem due in large part to basic differences in assumptions, methods, and goals.

One Synthesis for a Public Liberal Arts and Sciences Institution

With these differences acknowledged, Northeast Missouri State University is developing a program that balances the liberal arts tradition and general education, that preserves the predispositions, tendencies, and virtues of each. The program must acknowledge the internal inconsistencies of the liberal arts tradition while still endorsing its rationalist assumptions, its logical methods, its concern with abstract ideas, its presentation (including critique) of "universal truths," and its development of the intellect through such methods and experiences. Simultaneously, the program must incorporate the values of the general education tradition, including advances in cognitive psychology, a concern with experimentation and problem solving, intellectual skills for addressing the problems of present and future societies, and the development of the individual as a whole. The program must attempt to

develop individual talents, skills, and interests, and help students function as responsible members of society.

Such a program will necessarily sacrifice internal consistency for, what Joyce Appleby calls, "that most exhilarating of all intellectual adventures—simultaneously holding contrary positions" (*Liberal Education*, Summer 1993, p.23). The integrity of the program resides in its consideration of contradictory views, with the development of adequate intellectual resources for students to individually locate their positions vis-a-vis these contradictions. Students must encounter experiences designed to expose them to the two liberal arts traditions: to the issues addressed by the great teachers of humankind and to a critical evaluation of those teachers. And, building on their predispositions to self-determination and self-interest, their concerns with their future, their desires to develop the entire individual, the program must expose students to the goals of general education.

As a primarily undergraduate public liberal arts and sciences institution, NMSU must define a particular position. It cannot select the tradition of the artes liberales which, for example, a religious liberal arts institution might choose. Nor can a primarily undergraduate school select the "liberal free" tradition that a major research institution might choose. But as an undergraduate public institution, dedicated to liberal arts and sciences education, it must teach and emphasize both liberal arts traditions.

But it cannot stop there. Heir to a number of general education goals, NMSU seeks to cultivate in its students skills for problem-solving, encouragement for life-long learning, "aspiration toward the best for oneself, one's family, one's society, and the world" (Bulletin 8). And as a public institution of the State of Missouri, NMSU must address the individual and her/his relationship to democratic society. In addition to the liberal arts traditions and in order to fulfill its mission, NMSU must incorporate the goals of general education into the liberal arts tradition.

In order to promote these competing, variant, but finally complementary goals, a curriculum must put these goals into operation on a practice level. The following division of tasks into Essential Skills and Modes of Inquiry offers a context for incorporating the guiding vision and specifying the elements of the curriculum. Accompanying the list are some sample goals for knowledge, skills, and attitudes appropriate to the task.

Essential Skills: Communication, Quantitative, Computer and Information Technology

- **Communication:** principles and processes of human communication; theories, techniques, and practice in speaking and writing; comfort and confidence communicating among people with divergent histories, views, assumptions, and ideas.

- **Quantitative:** basic algebra and trigonometry; basic statistics; systems equations; recognition of the pervasive role of mathematical techniques in contemporary life; confidence in the acquisition and use of mathematical skills for various areas of study.

- **Computer and Information Technology:** competence in word processing, database use, spreadsheet, print/graphics utilities, electronic mail; access to computer-based information sources; models of information organization; ethical consideration and issues related to technology.

Modes of Inquiry: Aesthetic, Communication, Mathematical, Philosophical, Scientific, Social Scientific

- **Aesthetic:** acquaintance with types, models, and examples of genres and techniques of art; consideration of the relation of form and emotion; appreciation for the creative process; interrelation of art and intellectual developments.

- **Communication:** models and theories of organizing ideas, knowledge, information, discourse, presentation; fluency with language and/or signs; confidence in public presentation; tolerance for ambiguity, complexity, and dissent.

- **Mathematical:** functions and relations; linear equations and equalities; instantaneous rates of change, external problems; long-term retention of mathematical knowledge and skills; elementary probability and statistics.

- **Philosophical:** techniques and methods of philosophical and religious discourses; critical-reflective inquiry into assumptions, methods, conclusions; transformation of forces that shape thought and action into objects of thought and action.

- **Scientific:** major models and theories in the life and physical sciences; methods of collection, organization, and analysis of information from the natural world; construction of hypotheses and models with corresponding evaluation of theories.

- **Social Scientific:** (consists of two modes—historical and social scientific) major methods, approaches, and values of historical and social scientific inquiry; ability to collect, organize, and analyze information from the social world; cultivation of curiosity, appreciation, and responsibility toward the social world.

Assessment

As is apparent from the preceding historical review, creating a liberal arts and sciences and general education curriculum poses many challenges for a campus. However, over the last decade the education community has committed itself to an additional challenge—that of demonstrating effectiveness. It is not enough to state intended purposes and claim their effectiveness. Rather the university must develop measures to demonstrate its programs' performance.

Universities typically have several intended knowledge, skill, and attitudes outcomes for liberal arts and sciences and general education programs. To provide patterns of evidence for

performance on multiple objectives it is recommended that the university use multiple assessment methods. In addition, it is imperative that the university develop a culture of use of the collected data in order to achieve improved quality. At Northeast, many assessment efforts focus on our general education/liberal arts and sciences objectives. These efforts include in the use of value-added standardized testing (pre-test, post-test design), surveys, interviews, portfolio, writing and capstone experience assessments. As the university enters the adoption phase of the new liberal arts and sciences/general education curriculum, each of the university's assessment strategies will be adapted as necessary.

- **Value-added Testing:** The intent of this portion of the university's assessment program is to assess growth relative to stated objectives for knowledge and skills. These objectives include development in the basic skills of reading, writing, and math; but also include values clarification, problem solving, and critical thinking. Every student at Northeast participates in value-added assessment. Use of standardized tests has the advantage of providing the university with an external reference point for student achievement. The student's change scores—the difference between students' entering freshman and beginning junior test scores—provide the university with one measure of student growth. Perhaps most dramatic are results that indicate problems. These "red flags" attract attention and proposals for change, especially if they are corroborated by data from other assessments.

- **Surveys:** Students participate in three surveys while at Northeast. They might also be a part of a random sample of graduate students who are asked to participate in alumni surveys. Survey data regarding students' self-perception of their learning as well as their perceptions of the quality of educational processes and facilities are important complements to standardized test scores. By including the same core of questions over a period of years, the university can monitor significant changes in student attitudes, thereby identifying the impact of new initiatives.

- **Portfolios:** The portfolio serves as a locally developed instrument to assess the liberal arts and sciences objectives. This local assessment serves as a complement to the standardized tests and student satisfaction surveys that have been in use on the campus since 1974. Each year the faculty portfolio committee writes the specifications for senior portfolios that are collected in senior seminars and sent to the university portfolio committee for review by faculty the week following graduation. The portfolio gives the university an opportunity to collect and review actual student work in our efforts to assess such learning objectives as critical thinking, interdisciplinary synthesis, scientific and mathematical reasoning, aesthetic appreciation, and co-curricular learning.

- **Interviews:** The university has been conducting student surveys since the mid 1970's. However, the university wanted to develop an assessment strategy that would yield greater understanding of the teaching and learning strategies students find most effective. The interview project allows the university to ask students several in-depth questions that go beyond the information received through the surveys. A commitment to faculty involvement and to limiting the amount of time required to conduct the study are two primary values affecting the design of the project.

- **Sophomore Writing Experience:** The SWE replaced Northeast's previous writing assessment in 1989 and is a required assessment before taking the junior-level composition requirement. The process requires students to compose an essay on one of three contemporary problems, self-evaluate their performance, and follow with an individual conference to discuss their writing. Northeast is unique in its emphasis on conferencing with students individually to discuss their writing.

- **Capstone Experience:** Each discipline program has planned a culminating experience for students in their senior year, which may or may not be the senior seminar course. The capstone experience, similar to the portfolio, serves admirably as an assessment tool for measuring student performance as well as for program improvement. This experience requires reflection on the knowledge gained throughout the undergraduate experience and integrates university-wide learning goals with inquiry in the discipline. Discipline faculty design the experience to reflect university objectives in *knowledge* (discipline content and interdisciplinary connections); *skills* (writing, speaking, and collaborative, and critical thinking—analysis, synthesis, and evaluation); and *attitudes* (ethical and social responsibility, self-confidence, openness, recognition of fact/value distinction, reflection and self-assessment.)

Conclusion

The role of faculty-administration conversations grounded in the data has been vital to developing assessment-based improvement at Northeast. For example, over the last twenty years the president, the VPAA, and the faculty have frequently presented issues for discussion in terms of multiple types of assessment data. Through building cultural expectations for multiple measures, inappropriate reliance on a single standardized test score or other measure is not likely to occur. Similarly, emphasizing the use of assessment for improvement with assurances that the data will not be used punitively is important to obtain faculty support for the enterprise.

Faculty-student involvement is critical to having faculty and students value the results. Faculty are going to be more likely to make change in the classroom if they are the ones who develop the survey and interview questions to be asked, the standardized tests to be used, and the specifications for the portfolios. Similarly faculty analysis of test scores, survey results, and other assessment information needs to be structured into ongoing university processes. Use of assessment data provides the critical difference between assessment as a bureaucratic exercise and assessment for improvement and quality.

Finally, assessment has helped the university to maintain a focus on student learning. As we analyze the needs of our students for liberal and general education, assessment data help us to identify areas of strength and weakness and provide the basis for continued improvement toward stated purposes in the liberal arts and general education as well as other aspects of the university.

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Dennis Leavens is Associate Professor of English at Northeast Missouri State University, Kirksville, MO.

Candace Young is Associate Professor of Political Science at Northeast Missouri State University, Kirksville, MO.

Garry Gordon is Associate Professor of Fine Arts at Northeast Missouri State University, Kirksville, MO.

Stuart Vorkink is Professor of Political Science at Northeast Missouri State University, Kirksville, MO.

Kevin Easley is Associate Professor of Mathematics at Northeast Missouri State University, Kirksville, MO.

Jack Magruder is Vice President for Academic Affairs at Northeast Missouri State University, Kirksville, MO.

Believing Is Seeing: A System Approach to the Evaluation of Instruction by Students

Norine J. Domenico

Many public colleges use some form of student evaluation of instruction as one component of faculty, i.e., instructional, evaluation. Discussions with colleagues around the country have led me to believe that there is a great deal of dissatisfaction with the process and its results. Moreover, faculty and administrators readily admit that they do not know what to do to improve the process and, thereby, to obtain better, more useful results.

One approach, having considerable potential for reversing this situation is that of viewing evaluation as a system having inputs, processes, outputs, and feedback. These components, common to both natural and man-made systems, are interrelated and interact in an integrated fashion to accomplish the purpose of the evaluation system—namely, to use results of evaluation to bring about improvements in the teaching/learning process. Continuous monitoring of individual parts of the system, and their interactions, readily leads to suggestions for change. Thus, looking at outputs in relation to inputs yields information about the potential of results for improving instruction. More specifically, if student responses to evaluation items are viewed in terms of the paradigms, i.e., assumptions, about the teaching/learning process inherent in the items, we are likely to achieve a better understanding of the results and how to use them. In other words, if we believe that students should be active participants in the teaching/learning process, then we will "see" information that leads to judgments (evaluation) as to whether courses are being taught in student-centered ways. Furthermore, we may more readily see what needs to be done if they are not.

The following three-step process should help faculty and administrators to develop new, or to revise old, student-evaluation-of-instruction forms as well as to improve the usefulness of results for suggesting needed modifications in teaching methods. Step one involves the identification of paradigms about the teaching/learning process. Step two focuses on the relationship between these paradigms and statements that might appear on a form intended to gather information about student perceptions of instruction. Step three deals with

examining the feasibility of results for improving the teaching/learning process. That is to say, formative evaluation.

Step one might yield teaching/learning paradigms, such as:

- Students should take responsibility for their learning.
- Students can, and should, determine whether instructors have sufficient subject-matter knowledge.
- Instructor enthusiasm for the subject and for teaching tends to have a positive influence on student motivation.
- Teaching can, and should, be evaluated.
- Student evaluations of instruction are both valid and reliable.
- Students learn best when they are actively involved in instructional processes.
- Students should know what they are expected to learn in the course.

Keeping these, and other, paradigms in mind, step two might begin with listing items often found on evaluation-of-instruction forms and with identifying paradigms that might underlie the statements. For example:

- *Item:* "The instructor is on time for class."

  Paradigm: Students should help college personnel keep track of faculty employees.

- *Item:* "The instructor is available and willing to consult with students outside of class."

  Paradigm: Instructors should give students extra help.

- *Item:* "I received a syllabus for the course."

  Paradigm: Students should know early on how the course is organized, what assignments will be made, examination dates, grading criteria, and learning outcomes.

- *Item:* "The instructor is knowledgeable about the subject."

  Paradigm: Students can, and should, judge the extent to which an instructor knows the subject matter for the course.

- *Item:* "Instructional methods, assignments, and examinations seem appropriate for the learning outcomes for the course."

  Paradigm: Instruction is a system having interrelated parts.

The next aspect of step two is customization. What is involved here is the development of statements about the teaching/learning process that reflect desired paradigms operant at

individual institutions. While a number of evaluation statement-paradigm combinations are possible, the final selection should be based on two notions: one, that students can, and should, evaluate certain aspects of the teaching/learning process; and two, that student responses to the statements can, realistically, be used to improve the teaching/learning process.

To illustrate the first, we can look at one statement, commonly found on student-evaluation-of-instruction forms, pertaining to the instructor's knowledge of the subject. This is a curious item given that students presumably take a course because they know little about the subject involved. If one accepts this premise, then the conclusion follows that students should not be asked to comment on an instructor's knowledge. What students can more validly and reliably assess is the degree to which the instructor's methods help them to achieve intended learning outcomes. Thus, an evaluation form may include a section in which students select from a list the teaching methods most often used in the class and indicate, perhaps on a numerical scale, the extent to which each method helped them learn.

To understand the second criterion for selecting evaluation statement-paradigm combinations, we look to another commonly found item that involves instructor enthusiasm for the subject and, perhaps, for teaching. If the majority of students indicate that the instructor does not seem enthusiastic, we are left with a question about what steps should be taken to bring about greater enthusiasm. Indeed, there is a fundamental question about whether enthusiasm, *per se*, can be taught. Perhaps the most that can be done is to discuss with the instructor the importance of enthusiasm for holding attention and hope that s/he finds some way to show more enthusiasm.

Following is a partial list of the items that seem to have high probability of leading to improvement in the teaching/learning process.

- **Learning Environment**

  I was able to:

  — present alternative points of view related to the contents of the course;
  — ask questions;
  — provide input on matters related to the course.

  The instructor:

  — made me an active participant in the learning process;
  — showed that s/he cared about my learning;
  — spoke clearly;
  — had high expectations f dent achievement.

- **Teaching Content/Subject-Matter**

  The instructor:

  — seemed confident and at ease with the subject matter of the course;
  — provided sources and additional information in the field;

— either answered my questions satisfactorily or provided me with information that helped me answer them for myself;
— was able to create situations that made course topics applicable to my life outside the classroom.

- **Class Facilitation**

  The instructor:

  — informed students about intended learning outcomes of the course;
  — allowed sufficient time per task;
  — made assignments appropriate for accomplishing intended learning outcomes;
  — provided timely feedback on assignments;
  — gave clear directions.

Evaluation is often seen as a costly, cumbersome, useless process. Yet, this does not have to be the case. Forms can be designed so that they are easily followed and take little time to complete. Moreover, new scanning technology, both hardware and software, makes it possible to design and score forms in-house. Student responses can be very useful for improving the teaching/learning process and, ultimately, for making employment decisions. But, evaluation items must be those which assess behaviors that have high probability of changing as a result of appropriate interventions. Institutions that do not have faculty and/or instructional development programs have an obligation to help faculty locate resources for improving teaching performance.

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Norine J. Domenico is Dean, Institutional Research and Development, at the Community College of Aurora, Aurora, CO.

Creative Faculty Development in Times of Diminishing Resources

Don Meyer

Make sure of your teachers and forget about everything else.
— Charles Malik

Introduction

The priorities of an academic institution will always be most evident in its commitment to its faculty. Whether inside or outside the academy, everyone acknowledges that the caliber of the educational process rises or falls with them.

No one would debate the increased need for the development of the faculty in our institutions. In *The Fifth Discipline*, Peter Senge describes the "Learning Organization" as, "the team that became great didn't start off great—it *learned* how to produce extraordinary results" (1990, p.4). Describing the successful corporation of the 1990s, Arie De Geus, head of planning for Royal Dutch/Shell observes, "The ability to learn faster than your competitors may be the only sustainable competitive advantage" (Senge, 1990, p.4). Faculty members of the academy as well as business leaders in the marketplace *must* keep on learning.

Unfortunately, the tuition for faculty development is extremely high and all around us the "cupboard is almost bare" (Altman, 1993, p.29). We have faced (and continue to face) that challenge at our college. At some institutions limited resources can create considerable tension among the faculty and administration (Baker, 1990, p.1ff). The purpose of this presentation is to describe 'creative faculty development in times of diminishing resources.' The topic will be divided into three parts: (1) Institutional Overview; (2) Philosophical Commitments; (3) Creative Institutional Initiatives.

Institutional overview

- **Historical Perspective.** North Central Bible College (NCBC) is an independent, coeducational, undergraduate, primarily residential, college with a strong liberal arts core, located in downtown Minneapolis, Minnesota. Founded in 1930 with a three-year

program, curriculum offerings were expanded in 1955 to include a four-year degree with accreditation by the American Association of Bible Colleges. Growth continued, resulting in regional accreditation by NCA in 1986. NCBC is a church-related college owned and operated by 11 Assemblies of God (a denomination affiliated with the National Association of Evangelicals) districts in the upper midwest in which there are approximately 1600 Assemblies of God churches.

- **Curriculum.** NCBC offers the B.A. and B.S. degrees in 22 different majors as well as several diploma, certificate, and associate programs. The four year degree has three components: the Liberal Arts core, the Bible/Theology core, the Vocational core. Classes are offered days, evenings, and weekends. The Elementary Education Program enjoys certification by the Minnesota Department of Education. Several cross-town agreements exist with other local colleges. We also provide a correspondence degree through Carlson Institute, our non-traditional program.

- **Students.** Fall 1993 enrollment was 1535 (1059, traditional, on campus; 476, correspondence and non-traditional). This represents a growth of 1134 students since 1975. Seventy-five percent of our graduates are presently in church vocational positions in the U.S. and around the world; 85% of our students are from Assemblies of God churches; the median age is 21; 15% are married.

- **Faculty.** The faculty team is relatively young thereby creating unique challenges for faculty development. In 1975 there were only 15 full-time teaching faculty with only one earned doctorate. Today, all of the current 31 full-time teaching faculty, 13 full-time administrative faculty, and four officers have been hired since 1975. The President, who is in his 20th year, leads employee longevity.

  Academically, the faculty have made significant progress: 48% have completed their doctorates or are at doctoral candidacy (nine completed; six candidates). In two years there will be 16 doctorates (52%) with at least four (13%) more on doctoral programs. Four additional administrative faculty have doctorates.

  The college does not have tenure. A modified faculty security program has been operating successfully for more than 15 years.

  We are entering a time of the "graying" of our faculty. Great strides in faculty development have taken place but much remains to be done.

Philosophical Commitments

When the adult learner is discussed, two conflicting views surface. On the one hand, Main Street Americans view the adult learner as less capable than younger learners, as captured in, "You can't teach an old dog new tricks." On the other hand, adult learners are seen by some as super learners. The same two extreme views could apply to faculty development. According to Huey Long, "The truth about adult learners rests somewhere between the negative stereotype and the super learner idea..." (Long, 1990, p.23). Faculty also rest

somewhere within these extremes. We must demonstrate a balanced philosophical commitment if we are to enable our faculty to keep on learning. How can that be done?

- **Board of Regents.** Unless faculty development becomes a priority of the governing board, it will be shuffled down the steps into the basement. The Board demonstrates its commitment by the many practical decisions and symbolic gestures it makes each year. Although our faculty salaries still need improvement, since 1976 there have been increases every year except one, for a total of 97% combined salary increase. Our board warmly reviews faculty promotion and sabbatical requests and has yet to turn down one.

- **President's Cabinet.** The President's Cabinet (President, four officers, one faculty representative) is the primary administrative committee at NCBC. All requests for sabbatical leave, faculty promotion, and other significant faculty development initiatives are processed through the Cabinet. The faculty must feel the Cabinet's prioritization surrounding issues of faculty development.

- **Vice President, Academic Affairs.** The chief academic officer at NCBC chairs the Faculty Development Committee. He seeks to function "hands on" with personal growth. The annual review for all full-time faculty includes a personal, in-depth conference. Hiring practices include primary consideration of faculty with potential for growth. Without his leadership, faculty development, at best, will be very weak indeed.

- **Department Chair.** The department chair provides the day-by-day, semester-by-semester, year-by-year hands on faculty development leadership on the front lines with each faculty member in the department.

- **Faculty.** Our faculty are passionate about their own development and, as a result, they would agree with John Rodes when he calls 'faculty development' as sounding "somewhat uncouth" (Rodes, 1990, p.111). Regardless of our limited institutional resources, the faculty reveal a commitment to personal growth and altruistic service. Unless they identify with their need for development, no amount of programming or resources will help them grow. Even with limited help, however, if they believe in faculty development, nothing will be able to stop them.

- **Constituents.** A growing number of donors are committing themselves to help our faculty grow. Alumni, business persons, and churches are giving significant resources to improve faculty quality.

The academic tide rises slowly. The degree to which an institution is philosophically committed to faculty development will be directly proportionate to the improvement of academic quality within it.

Creative Institutional Initiatives

If faculty development occurs, an institution needs to articulate the principles and programs that make that a reality.

Principles Behind Faculty Development Efforts

1. **Clear Purpose:** Individual faculty development *must* be consistent with the statement of mission of the institution.

2. **Lots of Flexibility:** Adequate freedom should be given for each faculty member to evolve and grow according to one's unique needs.

3. **Holistic Balance:** Optimum faculty development occurs when the whole person is involved in the developmental process.

4. **Measurable Goals:** Without measurable goals, faculty development aims everywhere and nowhere and accomplishes little that is significant.

5. **Creativity:** Innovation and experimentation blossom when personal creative dreams are cultivated.

6. **Cooperation:** The faculty grows collectively and individually. The classroom, faculty lounge, or the Pizza Hut become places of mutual meaningful exchange.

7. **Ownership:** Faculty development designed by the faculty will be owned by the faculty. If they do not own it, they will disown it.

8. **Accountability:** One of the realities of '90s is the emerging accountability of faculty for their performance to the numerous institutional constituents. A working faculty development program convinces constituents of the growing contribution of the college.

9. **Relevance:** Never has there been a greater demand for faculty to be relevant than today. Our world is in the midst of enormous change as can be noted by the words of Jayne Bryant Quinn, "If you are not confused by what's going on today, you don't understand it." (Harvard, IEM, 1992). Faculty development must keep faculty relevant.

10. **Reward:** Institutional culture should be permeated with symbolic celebrations of progress. Even though the 'cupboard is almost bare,' faculty development must somehow be rewarded. As Covey has said, "What grows is what gets watered" (Covey, 1992, p. 97).

Kinds of Faculty Development at NCBC. NCBC has designed a faculty development program that is intended to provide a full-orbed catalogue of services to address the various needs of our faculty. The program is managed by the Faculty Development Committee, administrative and departmental leadership.

The Faculty Development Committee is comprised of five members, one appointed (Vice President/Academic Affairs), and four elected by the faculty. Its objectives are to provide:

1. **New Faculty Orientation and Mentoring:** The new faculty member is thus introduced to the college and initial questions are answered. Human and material resources are provided to aid in achieving a successful first year. The program

involves a Welcome Workshop, Faculty Host/Hostess assistance, and Veteran Faculty Mentoring services.

2. **Campus-Based Faculty Development:** This component of the program is designed to provide on-campus, in-service education, training, and enrichment opportunities, such as the annual Faculty Retreat, Faculty Development Seminars (two/semester), special lectureships, library and computer lab services, hosting national and international leaders who are campus guests, etc. A required daily chapel service also cultivates a world view consistent with the values of the college. Many faculty take each other's classes at no cost to the institution.

3. **In-Service Stipends:** $350 per full-time faculty member (as budget allows) is provided to assist with in-service tuition, professional travel, or other expenditures (as approved) for professional or personal advancement.

4. **Professional Membership Stipend:** Valuing faculty members' continual growth and contribution in their respective professional fields and valuing their representation of the college to these professional constituencies, the college provides $100 per full-time faculty member (as budget allows).

5. **Part-Time Faculty Benefits and Security:** Because of the strategic role of our part-time faculty, numerous benefits have been established, i.e., Annual Part-Time Faculty Workshop, Adjunct Status (salary adjustment, pro-rated benefits, priority consideration in hiring, etc.), secretarial support, etc.

6. **Sabbatical Leaves:** Contingent upon the recommendation of the Faculty Development Committee, President's Cabinet, and Board of Regents, each full-time faculty member is granted a sabbatical leave, of one kind or other, following each sixth year of teaching, or at a time to be arranged among faculty members that would be more workable. There are several types of sabbaticals available.

   — One semester off at full pay
   — Two semesters off at one-half pay
   — Two semesters in-residence at full pay but with no responsibilities beyond teaching nine credits per academic year
   — Four semesters in-residence at full pay but with no responsibilities beyond teaching nine credits per semester
   — Four semesters in-residence at one-half pay but with no responsibilities beyond teaching credits per academic year

   The full-time faculty benefit package continues during the sabbatical leave.

7. **Faculty Promotion:** Desiring the faculty's continual growth, the college rewards professional accomplishments with promotion in academic rank. Objective and subjective criteria must be met and documented in a Promotional Dossier prepared by the faculty member for institutional approval.

8. **Annual Evaluation:** Annual evaluation is necessary and desirable as a platform for discussion concerning the faculty member's effectiveness and personal ambition.

Student, Departmental, Administrative, and self-evaluation are all included in this process.

9. **Faculty Growth:** Desiring the continual growth and expansion of each faculty member, the college makes its resources available to help in the achievement of personal and professional goals. An annual personal conference with the Vice President of Academic Affairs aids this objective.

Conclusions

In 1974 the Group for Human Development in Higher Education wrote these words (Astin, et al., 1974, p. 86).

> The next decade will not be easy for professors. Economic and social pressures will require a new level of resourcefulness. Faculty will seek to protect their economic interests in a variety of ways, including group action; but ultimately their well-being depends on support for higher education by tax payers, potential students, and donors. Whatever self-defensive measures are required, faculty should place their main hope in programs for professional development. To the extent that faculty development thrives, colleges and universities will have more to offer the public and professors will at the same time find greater satisfaction in their work.

Twenty years later those words remain applicable. In spite of the diminishing resources available to faculty, creative faculty development has never been more important.

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Don Meyer is Vice President, Academic Affairs, North Central Bible College, Minneapolis, MN.

Institutional Effectiveness: Faculty and Staff Development as a Part of Keeping Abreast of Trends and Meeting the Changing Needs of Higher Education

Richard Humphrey

People are the most important resource of any organization and that is no less true for higher education. In this discussion an attempt will be made to illustrate how important people are to higher education and the efforts of three community colleges within the North Central Association to address the special needs within their colleges.

Institutions of higher education face many challenges in the 1990s. Not only do industry and business view higher education with cynical eyes, but estimates indicate that about 40% of the professors in higher education will retire by the year 2000. In view of these challenges, higher education must take its people seriously and make every effort to respond to the challenges of the 1990s. Here are some examples of how these challenges are being met.

Peter Drucker has said, "During the worst of times, organizations have the greatest possibilities for change." Crises need not be viewed as insurmountable, but, rather can become opportunities through which organizations are willing to make the changes they need to make to survive. These critical times can even become opportunities for real, permanent changes, which most organizations fight because they represent change and organizations tend to prefer status quo.

Highland Park Community College (HPCC) is the second oldest community college in Michigan and a predominantly Black community college in an area of Detroit undergoing economic trauma. Tom Lloyd, President of HPCC, hasrecognized that change must occur at the college, and that faculty and staff development must engage in an aggressive effort to help make faculty aware of the change the college faces and the need for innovation and creativity to help weather the current financial crisis. Part of his plans for faculty and staff development include tapping into the resources of the Detroit area higher education community. In addition, the Board, which is shared with the local school district, recognizes its leadership

role and seems willing to give President Lloyd the tools and support he needs to conquer the current problems.

HPCC plans to involve its faculty in this change process. Both the faculty association and the senior faculty recognize the need for change and the opportunity that currently exists. Plans have been made to conduct an in-house needs assessment and as a result of this assessment, to construct a faculty/staff/administration development plan. The interesting point of this effort is that organizations can survive crises, and that an aggressive faculty and staff development plan can be part of the solution to the college's problems.

Illinois Central College (ICC) is a strong small city community college in East Peoria, Illinois. Peoria has undergone economic change through the industrial changes experienced by a major local industry, Caterpillar. Students, once largely transfer- or vocation-oriented, now need to prepare not only for the changes in the local economy, but also to go out into the larger work world, outside of Peoria, where the jobs of the future are.

Tom Campbell, currently Vice President for Instruction at ICC, has been a leader in its faculty and staff development program at ICC. Not only did he lead the faculty, staff, and administration in a college-wide needs assessment effort, but he also has led the college through quality institutional improvements through such programs as Total Quality Management (TQM), Great Teachers and Great Staff Workshops, etc. He helped set up a model faculty, administration, staff recognition program, while serving as a national leader in faculty and staff development as an officer and, two years ago, as President of the AACC National Council for Staff Program and Organizational Development.

In a model role as a faculty and staff development leader, Tom Campbell, has delegated the leadership of ICC's faculty and staff development efforts. As new ideas, (such as the Chairperson's Academy) emerge, Vice President Campbell makes sure that ICC and the entire midwest enjoy the benefits of these new human resource growth activities.

Hans Kuss, Dean of Instruction at Garden City Community College in Kansas, represents another approach to using faculty and staff development activities to enhance the human resources of a college. Kuss is concerned with assessment models and what impact they have on the quality of an institution. He focuses on the institutional culture where assessment of student achievement is as basic as teaching and learning. Organizational culture must adapt to such a model in order to achieve its desired outcome —documenting student achievement. Clarity of purpose is central to any assessment model.

Evaluation is critical if outcomes are to be understood and measured. This permits the comparison necessary of faculty and staff to review, update, and renew teaching methods, services, equipment and facilities. Kuss cites Peter Ewell's definition of institutional effectiveness "as the comparison of the results achieved to the goals intended."

Human resources are indeed the most important parts of institutional effectiveness if assessment of student achievement is an important goal. Above are three different attempts

to develop and utilize human resources. One institution is undergoing dramatic change and is using faculty and staff development to go through that change. Another institution is established but undergoing changing goals and outcomes. The third community college shows how developing an institution-wide assessment plan can keep that college effective in meeting the needs of students, faculty, staff, and the community.

Richard Humphrey is a Professor at Harold Washington College, Chicago, IL.

Chapter VI

Special Focus on Organization/ Management

Target Specific Negotiations: A Non-Adversarial Problem-Solving Process that Works

James D. Backlund
Katherine A. Grosser

Introduction

During the 1992-93 academic year, Kirtland Community College's administration and faculty utilized the target specific negotiation process to write successfully a three-year agreement. Negotiation sessions were stimulating and often times humorous substantive discussions that focused on mutual problem-solving.

This paper will provide an overview of that process, what it took to initiate the process, and what made it a successful process. The discussion will conclude with a summary of the problems that were encountered as well as the unexpected positive outcomes of the process.

What is Target Specific Negotiations?

Target Specific Negotiations (TSN) is an information-based process that focuses on problems rather than proposals. It relies heavily on the use of data as a common starting point for discussion and is built upon the premise that negotiations can truly result in a win-win situation for both parties concerned.

This process begins with the development of problem statements that provide an opportunity for all members of the faculty and administration to voice their concerns relative to labor/management issues. The leadership of both the faculty and administration work with their members to develop problem statements that address these issues. It is important not to confuse a problem statement with a proposal. Proposals are requests, demands, or possible solutions to problems. Problems are concerns and issues. Problem statements must be clear and concise and provide rationale for the problem. Additionally, problem statements must be stated in such a manner that it allows the negotiating teams to identify the type of data necessary to solve the problem.

The type of data needed to solve each problem is mutually agreed upon by both the faculty and the administration. Data teams, consisting of members of both management and labor are identified and assigned to each problem. All data are jointly gathered, validated, and displayed in a format that is agreeable to these teams. As a result of this data-gathering process, faculty and administration begin to establish trust, which in turn allows for a non-adversarial approach to the negotiation process as a whole.

Once all data are gathered, but prior to sitting down at the bargaining table, the faculty and administration meet one last time to review the existing problems, to add any new problems, and to review the list of data that has been requested. A recorder for the negotiation sessions is also assigned and the physical site and format of the sessions determined.

At the outset of the negotiations, the sequence for addressing each problem is finalized. This sequence may be changed as need dictates. Each problem is then revisited, data teams present their information, and constructive discussion ensues until a consensus is reached. It is important to note that federal mediators are available throughout the negotiation process and are excellent resources when trying to reach consensus on difficult problems. All changes in language and interpretations are immediately recorded and displayed via an overhead computer screen projection system so that all members of each team can view and review what has been agreed upon. This immediate feedback avoids misunderstandings later and assists in finalizing decisions.

Two documents are actually created as a result of these negotiation sessions. One is the contractual document; the master agreement. The other is a noncontractual document. This document contains possible solutions to particularly complex or long term problems. It is not subject to grievance or arbitration but is a commitment by the faculty and administration to solve the problems identified.

At the completion of the negotiation process both the contractual and noncontractual documents are brought to the union membership and the board of trustees for review. The contractual document, which is subject to ratification, contains the original language as well as the revised. Since the noncontractual document provides many solutions to the initial problems identified by both parties, it is important that this document also be shared as part of the ratification process even though it does not require formal approval by either.

The noncontractual document becomes a living agreement between the faculty and administration. Quarterly meetings are held to discuss the progress of each problem identified in this document. The outcome of each quarterly meeting is recorded and shared with the faculty membership and the administration as well as the board of trustees. Decisions made relative to the noncontractual document may or may not have an impact on the master agreement.

Initiating and Implementing the Target Specific Negotiation Process

Kirtland Community College's decision to utilize the target specific negotiation process would seem an unlikely one in view of the college's past negotiation history. Bargaining at Kirtland was often times adversarial and gridlocked extending, well beyond contractual

expiration dates. A change in the administration combined with a change in union leadership set the stage for a new approach. Both groups were seeking a method that would enhance this new relationship between labor and management rather than create division. This method was found in target specific negotiations.

Negotiators for the faculty were elected by the membership; administrative representation was determined by the board of trustees. In order to be successful in the selection of negotiators it was important to look for individuals who did not have a personal agenda, were able to set personal feelings aside during spirited discussions, were committed to the process, and perhaps most importantly, possessed a sense of humor. Three individuals were chosen to represent the faculty; two administrators represented the board of trustees. These five individuals made up the negotiating team.

Prior to the decision to utilize the TSN process it was necessary to educate the negotiating team, the faculty membership, the administration, and the board of trustees about the process. The negotiating team received their training first by attending a workshop on TSN offered through Michigan State University. For three days all members of the team traveled together, ate together, relaxed together, and learned together. This workshop was an important first step in building the relationship that would be necessary to implement TSN successfully. Throughout the negotiation process the team continued to relax and eat together; to set aside a time each day when members could simply enjoy the company of one another and forget the problems and issues on the table. Meals provided a much-needed respite and enabled everyone to return to the bargaining table refreshed and ready to address the issues at hand.

At the completion of this training, federal mediators were invited to make a presentation during a meeting of the Board of Trustees. Faculty were invited; attendance was near 100 percent. Following the presentation, the Board of Trustees made a motion to enter formally into the process, the faculty membership did the same. In order for TSN to be successful it is imperative that individuals at all levels understand the process and commit to the process. That commitment and understanding was achieved as a result of these preliminary activities. The negotiation team was now ready to proceed.

The faculty negotiators began meeting in small groups with the faculty membership to discuss common issues and problems and to solicit individual problem statements. Negotiators were responsible for clarifying problem statements prior to bringing them to the bargaining table. During this same time period the administrative negotiators met with members of the administration to assist them in the development of their problem statements. It is important to note that each individual who submitted a problem statement received an answer to that problem statement. In TSN there are no trade-offs or giveaways; each individual's problem is addressed and answered. For this reason it was necessary for each team member to keep track of the origin of each problem while maintaining the author's anonymity at the table; all problems were submitted without names. Approximately five weeks were set aside for this first and most critical step.

Once all problem statements had been collected by the faculty and administrative negotiators, the team met for one day to share the problem statements with one another. When necessary,

individuals were invited to present complex issues directly to the team, in an effort to clarify the problem statement. Problem statements were then categorized and grouped with like problems. Through this categorization, 61 problems were ultimately grouped into nine topics.

As previously stated, the TSN process is an information based problem-solving process; one tremendously dependent upon data. Following the presentation of all problems it was then necessary to determine what type of data would be needed in order to solve each problem. The negotiation team spent two complete days reviewing each problem and listing types of data that would be helpful in solving that problem. Data teams were then assigned to each problem and charged with the responsibility for collecting and collating the data and arranging it in a format that could be easily understood by others on the negotiating team. Mutually collected and agreed upon data prevented surprises at the bargaining table and provided a common starting point for all discussions relative to any specific problem. Data collection was extremely time consuming; approximately five weeks were set aside for this task.

Preparation is the key to successful bargaining. Following the identification of all problems and the collection of data needed to address each problem, the team was ready to begin negotiations. A retreat-like setting was chosen for the negotiation sessions, a rustic lodge in northern Michigan, famous for its serene atmosphere and satisfying family-style meals. Negotiations began at 10:00 a.m. on Monday morning and concluded at 3:00 p.m. on Friday afternoon. Six days later and two months prior to the expiration of the existing master agreement, the contract was ratified by both the faculty membership and the college's board of trustees. The weeks of preparation that resulted in well-defined problem statements and mutually agreed upon data were the key to this success.

Positive Outcomes of Target Specific Negotiations

Although TSN is a time-consuming and labor-intensive process, the positive benefits derived far outweighed past adversarial approaches to negotiations.

As previously stated, all members of the administration and faculty participated in TSN by submitting problem statements relative to labor and management issues. This component of TSN was viewed by faculty and administrators alike as being one of the most positive aspects of the process. For the first time, everyone had the opportunity to be heard, to have their problems systematically reviewed, discussed, and answered.

Additionally, having faculty and administration working jointly in the collection of the data not only fostered trust between the two groups, but it allowed for an improved awareness of issues pertinent to the respective parties. Hidden agendas and surprises at the bargaining table were nonexistent because of the cooperative atmosphere created by the TSN process. Also, because of the cooperation involved, personality conflicts were minimized.

Some may look at the amount of data to be collected as a negative aspect of TSN. However, some problems were actually solved as a result of this data gathering. Additionally, each of

the bargaining participants, federal mediators included, were responsible for gathering data. Consequently, no one participant was left with more or less work to do than any other.

Another positive aspect of the TSN process was the development of a written daily synopsis that was distributed to all members of the faculty and administration. This synopsis provided a detailed account of the problems that were addressed during that day's negotiating session. As a result, administrators and faculty not directly involved in negotiations could see what progress was being made. The distribution of these daily reports also contributed to the atmosphere of trust and cooperation.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, because of TSN, Kirtland Community College's faculty and administration have a living document that allows for change throughout the tenure of the contact. Meetings are held on a quarterly basis to address both old and new problems that may arise. Because of this living document concept, certain complex problems and issues could be set aside until a later date and did not impede the negotiating process.

Problems Associated with Target Specific Negotiations

Problems associated with target specific negotiations can best be summed up in just one word—time. Problem identification and data collection took a tremendous amount of time and commitment, not only on the part of the negotiating team but also on the part of many members of the college community. Surveys were distributed, meetings were held, and databases accessed during this five-week period. Some individuals were tapped several times by different data teams; the demands placed on the business office were at times overwhelming.

Time was also a problem during the negotiation week. The length of the negotiation process limited feedback from labor and management at a time when critical decisions were being made that would affect them. Every effort was made to communicate these changes to individuals involved while negotiations were in progress. These attempts were not always successful.

The last problem encountered regarding time was experienced during the ratification process. The contractual and noncontractual documents were extremely extensive; it was unrealistic to expect individuals to read and comprehend these documents in just one session. While ratification did occur following the initial presentation of information, in retrospect it would have been in everyone s best interest to postpone the vote for two or three days. This additional time would have given individuals the opportunity to reflect on the impact of the proposed changes, prior to voting.

Conclusion

One year has passed since the negotiating team first sat down at the bargaining table and utilized the TSN process. Significant progress has been made relative to issues within the noncontractual document and actual changes have been made to the master agreement that

have required ratification by the faculty membership and board of trustees. While no one method is perfect, Kirtland's administration and faculty continue to be very supportive of the process. TSN strengthened the relationship between the administration and faculty and created an atmosphere of trust.

James D. Backlund is President of the Federation of Teachers at Kirtland Community College, Roscommon, MI.

Katherine A. Grosser is Dean of Business Services at Kirtland Community College, Roscommon, MI.

Leadership for the 21st Century: Assessing Needs, Developing Models

Nancy Sederberg

The purpose of this paper is to enhance the reader's awareness of and respect for the emerging diversity of leadership styles in higher education. I would like to begin with a story.

> The second grade school teacher posed a simple problem to the class: "There are four blackbirds sitting in a tree. You take a slingshot and shoot one of them. How many are left?"
>
> "Three," answered the seven-year-old European with certainty. "One subtracted from four leaves three."
>
> "Zero," answered the seven-year-old African with equal certainty. "If you shoot one bird, the others will fly away."

Which is the "right" answer? It depends on your point of view. And your point of view is derived from your cultural values.

As we move toward a more diverse population, we will find more diversity in our schools, our colleges, and our universities. As we encounter diversity among our students, faculty, staff, and administrators, we need to recognize it, to understand it, to value it, and to manage it.

The Changing Workforce

Depending on which sources you read, by the year 2000, women will make up about between 46% and 48% of all workers. Minorities and immigrants will hold 26% of all jobs. White men are expected to account for only about one-third of the entering workforce.

Using various projections, other demographic "facts" include: the population and the workforce will grow more slowly than at any other time since the 1930s; the average age of the population and the workforce will rise; and the pool of young workers entering the labor market will shrink.

According to a recent article (Walker, 1993), 25% of the current U.S. population are people of color. These diversity statistics include 12% African American, 9% Hispanic, 3% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 1% Native American. If current growth patterns continue, according to Walker (1993), by the year 2050, whites will constitute only approximately 53% of the U.S. population, Hispanics 21%, African Americans 16%, Asian/Pacific Islanders 11%, and Native Americans 1%.

The cumulative impact of the changing age, ethnic, racial, and gender composition of the labor force will be dramatic. The small net growth of workers will be dominated by women, blacks, and immigrants. White males, traditionally the mainstays of the economy, will compromise only 15% of the net additions to the labor force between 1985 and 2000 (Johnston and Packer, 1987).

The labor market will not only look different, it will be different. For companies that have previously hired mostly young white males, the years ahead will require major changes. Organizations will be forced to look beyond their traditional sources of personnel for new hires. In order for American business, industry, and education to have a competitive edge in the 21st century, they will be challenged to effectively attract and manage this new work force and these new students.

Our school systems will play a key role in determining whether or not our labor force will have the basic skills to meet the requirements of the jobs that will become available.

The quality of our workforce is a broad concern to employers, educators, and the workers themselves. But quality goes beyond skill level. Quality is also related to the management of a diverse work force, one that has varied cultures, backgrounds, values, and perspectives.

A new kind of leader is required. Most of our potential leaders are already in our schools and colleges. It is the responsibility of our educators now to teach tolerance for diversity, especially in regard to differences in culture, gender, age, race, and value systems.

Although emphasis on curriculum is important, what takes place outside of the classroom is crucial. How students, staff, professors, and administrators treat each other should be consistent with what they say they value. Educators, not just by their words, but by their actions, become role models for the leaders of tomorrow.

Leadership has concern for people, the process, the informal alliances, the human element. The spirit of the new type of leadership fosters human growth, not the bottom line.

Effective leadership must meet the needs of the people who work today and who will be working tomorrow. Not surprisingly, many leadership qualities that are being put forth as needed for the future typify "female" values.

Historically, business, education, government, law, medicine, and technology have been shaped by male ideas, values, structures, and concepts. Education and training in private institutions especially have promoted values in addition to knowledge. But often those values have been white, male, and European.

The new workplace, and the new educational institutions, with their diversity of cultures, racial and ethnic backgrounds, shifting gender and age balance, need to have leadership that nurtures and fosters respect for the individual and concern for the human connections.

Diversity must be valued and supported especially in our educational institutions. The global workplace, even now, requires tolerance and understanding. The voices, the values, and the contributions of the diverse world population must be incorporated into the curriculum and the structure of our educational organizations. Their respect for diversity can be used to help shape the educational "vision" for the future.

Implications of diverse cultural values are found in the math problem with which we started. For the first seven-year-old, the birds represented a hypothetical situation (structure) that required a literal answer. This is really a "task." For the second seven-year-old, the birds had a relationship to each other with known behavior that could be expected to occur if one was shot. The organizations that learn to respect and value the perspective both cultures bring to problem solving will be ahead in the 21st century.

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Nancy Sederberg is Associate Professor of Sociology at Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, IN.

Chapter VII

Special Focus on Planning

Planning: The Key to Effective Use of Resources

Daniel J. LaVista
Julie Weissman
Donald R. Holland

The College of Lake County, a community college located north of Chicago, is engaged in a comprehensive planning process that results in enhanced efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources. The planning process provides information and insights into the college's past and present conditions that guide decisions on future courses of action. It leads the institution to establish priorities and provides a broad perspective on the college's future direction. The planning process is based on four assumptions as follows.

1. **Planning is an integral part of existing organizational structures.** It is not considered something separate that occurs once a year, but is an ongoing process. It is the responsibility of all managers.

2. **Planning is based on research.** To develop its plan, the college uses several sources of information: enrollment reports, program review data, cost and revenue analyses, budget and enrollment projections, and findings from extensive environmental scanning.

3. **Planning is participative.** The staff members of the college are responsible for carrying out the plans. Therefore, they are involved in formulating the plans. In addition, the college is accountable to its community, and, therefore, members of the college's district participate in establishing the college's plans.

4. **Planning is linked to budgeting.** Through planning, resources are directed to the highest priorities as defined by the college's goals and objectives.

When designing the planning process, one of the first major decisions made was that planning would be incorporated into the institution's culture; that is, a process would be established that utilized the existing organizational structures and system of governance. The college

would not establish separate planning and operational decision-making structures and processes. The planning process is coordinated by the Director of Institutional Research and Planning who reports to the President. Planning enjoys the full support of the President and the Board of Trustees.

Through the planning process, the college establishes goals and objectives for three years, that are reviewed yearly. The formulation of the goals and objectives is based on extensive research. This research involves analyses of patterns of student enrollment, progress, and outcomes; review of academic and student support programs and services; cost and revenue analyses of academic programs; budget and enrollment projections; and findings from comprehensive environmental scanning of the college's service district. Essentially, research informs planning and results in the identification of challenges and opportunities for the college.

The planning process relies on extensive participation by both internal and external college constituencies. Workshops are held yearly with the college's Board of Trustees, staff, students, and advisory committees to review the findings from an environmental scan in the context of the college's goals and objectives. Topical areas of the scan typically include analyses of the demographic characteristics and social, economic, and educational environments of the district. Participants examine the information and provide input on the appropriateness of the college's plans for the coming years. Through the workshops, the staff and other constituencies gain an understanding of the institution as a whole and their contribution to moving the college forward. The consensus reached on the goals and objectives engenders a set of shared assumptions that create a context for budget decisions.

Once the goals and objectives are approved by the Board of Trustees, administrators meet with their staff, including faculty, to formulate program plans and budgets for the fiscal year. The program plans must be tied to the goals and objectives. In addition, department budgets must be tied to the program plans. At the division level, administrators engage in an open "give-and-take" process for planning and allocating resources.

Linking planning to budgeting is viewed as one of the most difficult tasks of higher education institutions. It requires a great deal of trust among administrators and agreement on the nature of the institution and the strategic direction of the college. Some argue that a budget is already a plan because it indicates the programs to be funded and the level of funding. Therefore, there is no need for an additional planning process. This argument is refuted in a special issue of *Planning for Higher Education*, the relationship between planning and budgeting:

> One might inquire, if the budget is already a plan, why the interest in linking a separate planning process with budgeting? The answer is simple: the setting of budget priorities needs to be informed by plans established with the cooperation of campus citizens closest to the programs and activities included in the budget. A budget established without the aid of program plans is an ill-formed financial plan.[1]

In addition, it is essential that a strategic plan be founded in research and participation by those who will implement it.

The planning process developed at the College of Lake County is critical to the success of the institution. Through planning, the strategic direction of the college is set by establishing goals and objectives that define and communicate to the college community the direction and values of the college. Resources are directed to the highest priorities as expressed by the college's goals, objectives, and program plans. The planning process builds consensus on the future of the college and commitment to that future.

[1] Meisinger Jr., R. J. 1989-90. Introduction to special issue on the relationship between planning and budgeting. *Planning for Higher Education*, Vol. 81, No. 2, p 4.

Daniel J. LaVista is President at College of Lake County, Grayslake, IL.

Julie Weissman is Director of Institutional Research and Planning at College of Lake County, Grayslake, IL.

Donald R. Holland is Associate Dean, Business Division at College of Lake County, Grayslake, IL.

A Look at Strategic Planning in a Self-Study

Ivan Frick

Introduction

The context for this exploration of strategic planning is the self-study for regional accreditation. Strategic planning at a college should be a comprehensive, continuous, institutional-wide process, touching on all segments of the college. (I am using the term college as shorthand for all postsecondary institutions.) The planning process should be built into the organizational structures, life, and mission of the college. To succeed, the planning process needs broadly-based representation from campus groups and the commitment of key campus leaders, particularly the commitment of the president.

To sharpen the focus of this look at strategic planning, the following questions are proposed and answered: (1) Who are the planners? (2) Why do planning? (3) How to do the planning? (4) How can and why should the allocation of resources be tied to planning? (5) Why is it so important to have a good database for planning? (6) Why spend time developing a timetable for planning and building into the planning the assessment of the outcomes of that planning?

Who are the Planners?

The full range of planning at most colleges should include representation of trustees, administrators, faculty, and, if possible, students.

The commitment of time and the interest of key campus leaders in planning, especially the commitment of the president, are absolutely essential. I believe that the president of the college must and should be the chief planner. The actual responsibilities of members of the college community—that is, who handles what tasks, will vary from campus to campus. If an institution has an office of planning, that office will do the administrative tasks, such as writing reports, doing financial modeling, preparing projections, and coordinating the planning activities. One should hope that these planners would bring some creativity to their tasks. Even where there is such a planning office, the president should play a central role in planning. In addition, I believe that the director of planning should report to the president. The involvement of all members of the president's cabinet in planning is important to the

president, but in the interest of limiting the size of the planning committee and providing campus-wide representation on that committee, not all members of the president's cabinet need serve on the college-wide committee.

There are special problems in obtaining the appropriate involvement of the faculty and trustees in planning.

Governance processes on each campus will determine the way in which faculty are included in planning. Faculty involvement may run from a token association to flirting with veto control. If the involvement of faculty is token, chances are that either the trustees or the president desire it to be so. Where this is the case, the trustees and the president are shortchanging the institution. Certainly, it is highly critical that the faculty be primary players in academic planning. If the faculty has veto control of the planning process, it will most often be *de facto* rather than control that is actually written into the college bylaws. I think that veto control, even *de facto,* is undesirable and inappropriate.

I have witnessed four major problems that must be solved in order to include faculty in planning. Somehow and by some means the faculty should recognize the need to: (1) reach closure in the decision-making process in a reasonable amount of time; (2) delegate authority to faculty representatives to represent the faculty; (3) be willing to agree to the type of planning that identifies priorities for the college; and (4) sharpen the focus of the planning process. The most constructive way to solve these problems is for representatives from all groups to talk through the issues.

The issues of involving the trustees in planning differ from those that apply to the faculty. All groups involved in planning need to understand and accept the fact that ultimate responsibility for planning resides with the trustees. In some cases, even trustees need to understand this fact. At the same time, however, trustees need to appreciate how a faculty thinks and functions—faculty normally take more time to reach decisions on anything than do trustees. Trustees must find ways to work with campus leaders in the process of planning. Most significant of all, trustees must make a commitment of time to meet once or twice a month if they are to be full participants in planning.

In my own experience, I have found the creation of a college-wide task force, composed of trustees, administrators, faculty, and students a constructive way of bringing all groups to a planning table.

It is desirable to include students in the planning process, but often students find it difficult to find time to be full participants.

Why Do Planning?

Unless colleges pass out of existence, they will function and operate. The question is, how are the colleges functioning? Only with systematic planning will colleges control and guide their own futures. The goal of planning is to provide an organized, continuous, comprehensive set of strategic directions by which the college achieves its mission and purposes.

How to Do the Planning?

Ideally, planning is a continuous and systematic process that touches all the operations of the institution and is built into the organizational structures of the college. At few colleges is the planning process so neat and tidy. Some have described colleges as 'organized anarchies.' Even if one does not fully accept this metaphor, most colleges are decentralized in their operations with the academic department being the locus of academic activity and trustees, presidents, and senior administrators holding considerable control over financial decisions.

If a college-wide task force is created, it may have to negotiate relationships with existing campus councils and committees. The existing councils and committees often reflect the decentralized character of the campus.

There is no quick-fix solution to this problem. Ideal planning is comprehensive and systematic and reaches consensus and agreement. Planning can only be done well as the institutional drive toward unity and the fact that the college is decentralized are brought together. The organizational values that arise from decentralization must be developed in such a way that the institutional values of unity, cohesiveness, and coherence are supported and achieved. Tension, stress, and some ambiguity will develop in reaching appropriate adjustments.

How Can and Should the Allocation of Resources Be Tied to Planning?

Planning is much, much more than budgeting, but resource allocation must be a part of the planning process. In fact, resources have to be allocated in order to achieve the goals of any strategic plan.

At this point, I am not describing the fact that some funds will be needed to do planning. The use of consultants, the holding of planning retreats, and the development of databases are cost items that planning introduces into a budget. These items may be included in existing budgets of administrators, especially the expense budgets of the president and the board.

I am addressing the fact that funds must be provided to achieve the goals outlined in planning. Linking resource allocation to planning often goes against a campus-wide belief that raising issues of how an item will be funded places severe constraints on thinking about and imagining the future. Sometimes planning committees see their job as providing the ideas and believe that someone else should provide the money—perhaps God. While there may be a place for "blue-skying," in the end, funding must be provided if strategies are to be achieved. And in the difficult 1990s, proposals most often will be funded by substitution, or the reallocation of resources from one activity to another. My own impression is that not enough persons on college campuses understand this reality. The policy perspectives, produced by the Pew Higher Education Roundtable Program with the leadership of Robert Zemsky, professor and director of the Institute of Research on Higher Education, University of Pennsylvania, have explored these problems over a several-year cycle. The policy perspectives on this issue published by Pew Charitable Trusts have been given wide circulation.

Why Is it Important to Have a Good Database for Planning?

It is important to remind ourselves that a college plans not for the sake of planning itself, but for the sake of improving and strengthening the college. It is for this reason that planning is an important component of the self-study process for accreditation. As you know, both the college and the visiting team are to evaluate the planning process.

Longitudinal information and data about recruitment, retention, and alumni activities require the development, at least, of a modest database on students from the point when they apply for admission to the time they give as alumni. This database should tell us why students apply, enroll, remain, and give to the college. Only as this information and data are available will a college be able to plan well and, also, assess its effectiveness—another important component of the self-study process.

One way to develop an institutional database is to have in place or set up an office of planning, or an office of institutional research. If such offices are not in place, many smaller colleges may find it impossible to set up those offices at this time. Another way to develop the institutional database is to use outside firms to conduct selectively identified research projects and to develop software packages for data collection that an office of records and registration may be able to manage. Whatever the form for developing the database, there is the need for guidance and direction in the collection of institutional data. It should be tied to the planning and assessment processes.

Why Spend Time Developing a Timetable for Planning and Building into the Planning an Assessment of the Outcomes of Planning?

The overriding reason a timetable for planning needs to be developed is this: to serve as a constant reminder to "academic types" that closure must be reached on the decision-making process. In some instances, even the timetable needs to be negotiated. There are other reasons for developing such a timetable. It is one way to manage time spent in planning. It is, also, a signal to boards that the tasks are being approached responsibly.

After the timetable has been developed, someone must be assigned the task of checking to see to it that the timetable is being maintained, or even to anticipate whether it needs to be revised.

Periodically, planning groups should step back and assess the process of planning. As was mentioned earlier, there are no quick-fixes for planning. Some determination needs to be made regarding whether planning proposals have been successfully achieved and whether the directions set by strategic planning are appropriate directions.

[1] Cohen, Michael D. and James G. March, *Leadership and Ambiguity*, Ch. 3, pp. 29-40. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company.

Ivan E. Frick is President of Elmhurst College, Elmhurst, IL.

Strategic Planning into the 21st Century

Loma R. Meyer

Background

The survival of the small liberal arts college has been a topic of concern as portrayed in the media and as felt on the individual college campus.

The call for increased services to and by students; mandates from local, state, and federal governments; and new criteria utilizing technological advances have added to the cost of providing a quality education for today's and tomorrow's students. There is great pressure and need for higher education to plan for institutional improvement by utilizing its limited resources in an effective and efficient manner.

It is unfortunate that in times such as these, the financial restraints become the tail that wags the dog. The budget becomes the "monster." We pay more attention to resource allocation than to program initiatives. Conversely, we know that program initiatives cannot go forward without the dollars to support the initiatives.

In a time of declining resources, strategic planning can be an aid for institutions to keep the mission of the institution, program quality and effectiveness, and other institutional priorities in focus in the decade of the 90s and into the 21st century.

History of Strategic Planning

1. Business in the 1960s
2. Higher education in the 1970s
3. Specific small liberal arts college in the 1990s and beyond

George Keller in his *Academic Strategy: The Management Revolution in American Higher Education* of one decade ago urged higher education institutions to utilize strategic planning for their own needs. He did not call for a carbon copy for higher education of what was

happening in business but urged institutions of higher education "to behave like an organism that must feed itself, change, and adapt to its environment."

Keller saw barriers to strategic planning as turf-protection of the disciplines coupled with the skepticism of faculty regarding the "role of the administration." His vision included a need for a strong administration that works with the faculty in academic planning while at the same time retaining authority for the overall planning.

Higher education has always been involved in planning, but, until very recently, has not done strategic planning with a new focus. Increased importance is placed on the external environment with its cultural, economic, political, social, and technological factors and the impact, pressures, and new challenges this brings to the campus community, the internal environment.

There is a need to identify markets, a concept that was looked on with chagrin in much of higher education as recently as a decade ago. "Find your niche" is a common slogan on the campuses of the 90s.

The purpose of the presentation is to portray one institution's process of strategic planning, with the caveat that there is no "one way" or "best way" to do strategic planning. Each campus must explore the benefits of strategic planning and tailor it to fit its external and internal environments, its particular campus personnel, culture, needs, budgets, and mission.

- **Purpose of strategic planning:** The purpose of strategic planning is to give direction to the institution for its future in terms of an optimal relationship with both internal and external environments. The planning process is to help the institution assess its present status, to identify new challenges and opportunities, and to plan for the use of its resources effectively and efficiently in carrying out its mission.

- **The planning process:** The planning process begins with a review of the mission statement and statement of purpose of the institution. Is there a need for revision of the mission statement of the institution? Is the institution accomplishing its purpose as set forth in the mission statement? Will it be able to accomplish its purpose as it moves into the 21st century? What changes need to be made? Why? How? When? By whom?

  These and other questions are prime targets for discussion in the planning process. As an example, a major new focus at my institution is to equip students to serve "in the world." This can happen most readily if students are on a campus that fosters diversity. The process of planning calls for decision-making so that changes such as the one cited can be realized.

- **Application of strategic planning:** Strategic planning involves utilization of human resources, communication with all units on campus, and, if at all possible, limitations on the amount of paper work required.

  An overall planning group gives leadership to the planning process. In some institutions the president gives direct leadership to the group. In other institutions, because of the increasing off-campus demands of the president, it is more helpful

if a presidential designee, such as the executive vice president, can give leadership to the process.

On the Concordia campus, the executive vice president chairs the Strategic Planning Commission. Eight members were selected from a list of nominees submitted to the president by campus personnel. These eight members were given official appointments of one, two, and three years of service by the president (three faculty members, three staff members, and two students). The Commission includes the vice president for fiscal services who serves as an advisory member.

The functions of the Commission include reviewing all planning documents, prioritizing objectives, and making recommendations to the President's Cabinet. The functions of the Commission are carried out in consultation with campus unit leaders to obtain background information necessary in the decision-making process when making recommendations to the President's Cabinet.

The following are some of the assumptions that gave parameters to the planning process:

1. Strategic planning flows out of the mission statement of the college. The formal process begins with reviewing and updating SWOTS—strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities—by the Board of Regents.

2. Strategic planning is a way of thinking and making decisions based on the mission and vision for the future of the college. It involves long range goals for the next five- to six-year period of time (or more) with update planning done each year of the cycle using a continuing prioritization of policy and procedures.

3. The academic and support units and students are key in the planning process. Alumni and other constituents serve in an advisory capacity. The Strategic Planning Commission and the President's Cabinet make and act on recommendations based on campus-wide input.

4. The academic and support units complete an evaluation process of programs, services, and resources each spring quarter, under the leadership of the area vice president. The executive vice president gives direction to the evaluation process.

5. The planning and budgeting process is completed within the timeframe established by the President's Cabinet. The timeframe remains constant from year to year.

6. The college operates each fiscal year with a balanced current operating budget.

7. A specific percentage of the total current budget is allocated annually for funding of growth objectives.

8. Efforts are made to solicit special gifts through the office of development, as resources permit, for a limited number of high priority growth objectives that cannot be funded through the current operating budget.

9. Upon recommendation of the strategic plan and budget by the President's Cabinet to the President, the President approves the plan before submission of the plan to appropriate committee(s) of the Board of Regents and to the Board of Regents.

10. A planning document is prepared and published annually for the campus community.

11. The strategic planning and budgeting process is evaluated annually. This includes key on-campus questions and includes North Central accreditation questions:

    a. What is the evidence that the college is accomplishing its purposes?

    b. How does the college know that it has effectively organized its resources?

    c. Was the college able to attain its desired results and goals during the past year? How is this determined?

    d. Will the college be able to continue to accomplish its purposes during the next years, through 1999 and beyond? What evidence supports the conclusions?

The Board of Regents is involved in the planning process beginning in June. A one- to two-day workshop is held, with the leadership of the executive vice president (in consultation with the president and chair of the Board of Regents). A review of the previous year's plan is part of the day's agenda. The Board updates its SWOTS (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) and identifies a number of strategic opportunities and then prioritizes the top five or six for the coming year.

The presentation will include detailed information and steps regarding timeline, policies, and procedures used to implement strategic planning as well as the identification of barriers to the process as experienced on one college campus.

Loma R. Meyer is Executive Vice President Emeritus at Concordia College, St. Paul, MN.

Chapter VIII

Special Focus on Collaborations

The Decade of the Consumer in Higher Education

David Justice

Kenichi Ohmae, in his challenging book, *The Borderless World*, asserts the 90s will be the decade of the consumer, a decade in which the demands and expectations of consumers for better goods and services at lower costs will drive businesses to achieve unparalleled productivity in order to remain competitive in a global market. But the rules of productivity have changed under the demands of the new market, argues Tony Carnevale, Vice President of ASTD, and now a member of the Clinton Administration. It is not enough to be productive. The new economy demands quality, variety, customization, convenience, and timeliness. The customer is demanding (and companies are providing) high quality goods and services, competitively priced, available in a variety of forms, customized to meet specific needs, and conveniently accessible.

What are the implications of this new consumer role for higher education? Will the consumers of higher education also demand better service, higher quality, at lower costs? If they do, how will higher education respond? What are the dimensions of quality from the consumer's perspective? And how should the practice of accreditation change in the face of new customer demands? How might customer expectations for quality influence the definition and measurement of student learning outcomes, and faculty work load? How might the practice of accreditation itself change to adjust to the decade of the consumer?

The same pressures that are at work in the business sector—consumer demand for high quality at low cost with additional elements of speed and convenience of delivery—are emerging as critical forces in higher education. The growing recognition of the importance of education to the economic vitality of the society in a post industrial world combined with raised expectations of learning for services in times, places, and formats that are convenient place a host of new demands before higher education. No longer viewed as ritual passage that is part trial, part post-adolescent integrum, education is now widely viewed as the necessary credential to job success and personal development. And its relevance to wider sectors of society is now accepted. Because of its economic impact, higher education is being asked to deliver its services in modes that are drawn increasingly from the economic sector. Thus, the same demands for efficiency, effectiveness, and productivity are being applied, particularly by employers who are paying for an increasingly large portion of the tuition of adult learners.

More than most in higher education, faculty and administrators in programs for adults have begun to adapt to these new pressures. As a result the practices of adult degree programs may offer useful insights about the directions in which higher education more generally might be heading. The expectations of an increasingly sophisticated and demanding adult learner population have required new and creative solutions in programming for adults, especially in degree programs for adults. Delivery of courses at times and locations convenient to working adults, the provisions of day care services, and "one stop shopping" arrangements for student services as well as the use of various distance learning technologies, are all avenues that have been explored by institutions interested in serving the adult market in ways that respond to new consumer needs. In addition, the curriculum, the identification and allocation of faculty, and uses of assessment have also been reconfigured to serve adults more effectively. And accelerated programs, credit for prior learning, competence-based degree programs, and the wider use of part-time faculty have characterized many adult degree programs. Significantly, in recent years, these programs are beginning to be expanded and adapted for traditional-aged students too.

There are additional innovations on the horizon, including innovative workbased learning arrangements, the integration of work and learning in novel settings and with more flexible pacing, alternative measures of learning that depart from the Carnegie unit; and new definitions of quality, all of which are being used in experiments in one form or another in adult degree programs. Together, these innovations have led to new expectations about the way institutions can become and remain competitive in the new, customer responsive environment. They have also, however, raised a host of questions about quality. Shortened time degrees, fewer hours of classroom contact and the increased use of part-time and less credentialed faculty all threaten the traditional standards of higher education. And yet, these traditional standards do not appear to respond adequately to the new expectations of consumers and funders of higher education.

New demands by the federal government for regional accreditation to move beyond collegial self-regulation into rule-based regulation bespeak a loss of faith in the ability of higher education to insure its own quality. New measures to protect the consumer are being demanded and, if not voluntarily adapted, they may be imposed.

Higher education, in order to define and meet these expectations of quality, will have to respond by including a consumer's perspective in its self evaluation. It will need to change its definitions of quality and reexamine its relationships with its users. In the midst of this change, it must become even more clear about its values and how it fulfills them.

Less Time, More Options

One of the most difficult demands for higher education to meet will be the expectation to teach more in less time. Over a decade ago the Carnegie Commission of Higher Education issued a report entitled, "Less Time, More Options," calling on higher education to provide alternative modes and paths to earning degrees. Today the demand for more learning in less time bespeaks both the need for different options for different clientele (the essential impetus of the original Carnegie report) and the expectation that higher education must be more

productive in its use of both faculty and student time to achieve greater learning outcomes in less clock and or calendar time. The four-year residential learning experience is working for a smaller part of the college attending population than ever before, while its cost is increasingly beyond the affordability for many, even those solidly in the middle class. There is much unexplored territory in the realm of improving efficiency of learning. The continuing heavy reliance on the lecture method in most colleges and universities, in spite of its evident and often demonstrated shortcomings as an efficient or effective method of instruction, is indicative of the problem. But there are many other areas in which productivity gains can be realized.

Higher education has been relatively slow to incorporate the potential of technology to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of learning. Now, with the explosion of databases and networks through which to gain access to information, it is increasingly incumbent on institutions to alter curricula to increase the use of electronic media and to instill both the skills and attitudes toward learning to learn that such systems demand, if they are to be incorporated and their potential for learning realized. If they are used they could significantly increase both the speed and efficiency of learning. Peer learning, experiential learning, and collaborative learning are current ideas in adult education programs that have potential for increasing effectiveness while holding down costs.

There is much that higher education can do to respond more effectively to the expectations of its "consumers": students and prospective students, employers, parents, and the tax paying public in general. In the past, definitions of quality were largely determined by the producers (often, but not always faculty) because they were the experts who presumably were in a unique position to know quality and define it for the consumer. Unfortunately, that stance has not worked in the market for other goods and services and it appears that increasingly it will not work for higher education either. The quality of an institution of higher education in the eyes of the faculty member is dependent first and most importantly on the depth, significance, rigor, and recognition of the scholarship of the faculty. Tenure and promotion decisions are the key to incentive systems at most universities and colleges. The forums, as a consequence of this value system of faculty generally, inevitably focus on the quality and quantity of a faculty member's research. As long as quality is measured primarily by the faculty, therefore, research and scholarship will inevitably be emphasized over concerns for serving the student. For the tuition paying student, particularly a working adult learner, the quality of a program is more often measured by the treatment she receives as a learner, and what skills and knowledge, as well as prestige, she acquired for the money she paid. While the two may be related, as we frequently argue, it is not always clear to the student how they relate (nor is there convincing research to demonstrate the relationship). More significantly, depending on which definition you begin with, very different kinds of institutions emerge from the two models. In recent years we have begun to see the emergence of successful institutions that focus clearly on learner satisfaction as the measure of their quality, not to mention their financial success.

Higher education has always espoused quality and it has used the watchword of quality often to defend prerogatives and sometimes to exclude applications, but it has never agreed fully on the meaning of quality even when defining it in terms of the inputs into the educational process. GPAs, SATs or ACTS, everyone admits, measure only a narrow range of potential

and, for older students, even that range is of limited validity. The scholarly qualifications of the faculty are clearly important, but beyond a certain rather modest level they do not correlate well with student learning either. Libraries, facilities, location, and student services programming all matter, but only indirectly and only at a certain scale of operation. In trying to determine quality through outcomes or results, higher education vacillates between insisting on the validity of a GPA as a summative statement of individual worth, to claiming bragging rights for the individual successes of its graduates. Neither of these carry much weight when it becomes clear how weak the correlation is between the two.

More recently with the urging of regional accreditation associations like the North Central Association's Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, as well as growing public demands for accountability, institutions have begun serious efforts to assess, in a more reliable and meaningful manner, learning outcomes that can be attributed to the teaching efforts of the institution. And among the encouraging developments are the large number of institutions that are trying to link such assessment to externally validated indicators, including employers' expectations for their college educated employees.

What we have not yet done, in any significant way, I believe, is to use the wisdom and judgment of our customers to assess the quality of our programs. We tend to dismiss student evaluations of faculty teaching as being superficial or rewarding the "entertainer." Similarly we often do not take seriously assessments of the overall program provided by students, including assessments of their own learning. This is due, I think, to a misguided perspective on the function of higher education. We discount student assessment of teaching as well as their own learning because we believe that only those who know can determine when or what others have learned. And while it is true that experts are better judges of the quality of knowledge produced in their field, they are not necessarily the best judges of the learning that has taken place in the mind of the student. Thus judgments about the quality of faculty research ought to be made by experts in the field, but judgments about the quality and extent of learning should at least include the views of those in the best position to know—the learners.

Adult learners are both pragmatic and direct in their definitions of quality. They expect first, a learning environment that is supportive but challenging, subject matter that is relevant and meaningful, and a pedagogy that engages them and their lived experiences as fundamental to the process of learning. They expect an institution that is efficient, flexible, and customer friendly, courses that are offered at times and places convenient to them, financial aid, and associated services that are easy to access and use. They expect the same level of technological sophistication they experience from banks, airlines, or medical facilities. And they expect that they will acquire knowledge, insight, skills, and perspectives that will enhance their career chances, personal quality of life, and ability to understand and make meaning from the world in which they live.

Employers expect higher education to equip their employees with both the knowledge and technical as well as general skills that enable them to be productive in diverse situations and settings, and to be adaptive to rapidly-changing conditions. They want their employees' education to equip them to "self-manage" their careers, innovate on the job, and bring creative and original thinking to the problems they encounter in business.

Our larger society desperately needs citizens who are able to understand and make responsible decisions in a turbulent environment about issues ranging from environmental degradation to international trade to local community involvement in schools, violence, and drugs. And it needs college graduates who are able to participate in such decisions respecting and engaging the diverse and divergent values of multiple ethnic and cultural groups. The definitions and measurement of quality that these expectations suggest should provoke both new thinking about the processes and products of higher education, and new ways of organizing our resources in support of the new quality.

If faculty performance were measured by the quantity and quality of learning they engendered in their students, there would be significant reallocation of faculty time. If faculty behavior could be more closely related to student learning, faculty development would become a better investment. If students were systematically rewarded for the quantity and quality of their learning, learning would increase. To a greater degree than is usually acknowledged in higher education, we can assess learning, and, by extension we can, within reason, determine who has learned what in what time frame. The technical barriers to measuring learning or of satisfying learning expectations of customers are relatively trivial. What is a major barrier, is the acceptance, by those of us in higher education, of a larger role for consumers in the definition of our quality and the mission of our enterprise.

Higher education is, with reason, slow to change. It draws upon the past for its content of study and one of its principal societal functions is the transmission of culture from one generation to the next without undue distortion. The challenge is to retain the reflective, deliberative approach necessary for sound scholarship and reasoned inquiry while, at the same time, functioning as a teaching/learning organization that is flexible and adaptable to changed and changing needs and expectations from the society it serves.

There are programs and institutions that have responded in varying degrees to the new conditions of the market of the adult learner. They have, for example, used a largely or exclusively part-time faculty, hired with the minimum credentials to fulfill requirements, and charged with teaching a prescribed curriculum in a predefined manner. Courses and materials are designed centrally by curriculum experts and modifications are made as a determination of market conditions suggest. Following the lead of Malcolm Knowles and others, these institutions make a financial virtue out of the rhetoric of self-directed learning, placing more responsibility on the learner for attaining the prescribed outcomes of the course, encouraging student led "study groups" that substitute for in-classroom-based learning, thereby effectively eluding the requirements of the Carnegie unit as the measure of teaching (although by force of convention, they must measure the outcome in terms of credits earned). By severely reducing faculty involvement into the decisions about curriculum, scheduling, awarding of credits, and the assessment of prior learning, these institutions have become more flexible and responsive to the new market for adult learners. Have they, however, retained a significant measure of quality? Here the record is decidedly mixed. Some have embarked on massive and impressive assessment programs measuring all significant aspects of the program and relying heavily on measures of student satisfaction, and, to some degree, of student learning. Others have not taken the responsibility of evaluating the results of their shortcuts to productivity, insisting, instead that absent traditional forms, they can still claim the traditional role for faculty in ensuring quality.

If higher education is to become more consumer responsive, as I believe it must, then it must also evolve some new measures of quality and success. My own suggestion is that a first step would be a program of "full disclosure" to learners and their employers. Full disclosure might include reliable information about admissions requirements and data describing the students enrolled, the educational goals they bring, and the number who proceed to graduate in specified time frames. And it should include information on the careers they pursue in which they use the learning they acquired during the time of study. Reports on the nature and level of learning of each graduate are also important and possible.

The process of assessment of quality might be enhanced if we took a page from the Consumers' Union, publishers of *Consumer Reports*. As the name suggests, their singular goal is to protect and inform the consumer. They are not protecting the producer, nor are they interested in the larger industry. Clearly higher education is not able to play the role of representative of the consumers of the services we provide. We could, however, learn from the approach this organization uses as we try to define quality in terms that respond to consumer needs. Although it is not limited to surveys of consumer satisfaction, the Reports, do rely heavily on the direct experience of users of products and services to determine both the shape of the evaluation and the dimensions of quality worth measuring. They also use the information gained from consumer surveys to inform consumers themselves of what others think and have said about the service.

Such a consumer-centered approach might be useful for us to consider during this period of reassessment of the value and role of regional accreditation. How might we, for example, gain better information about the needs and expectations, as well as the satisfaction of our consumers? What elements are employers most concerned about? What do parents want for their children? What do students need and expect from their college learning? We have all asked these questions on one level, but we have failed, I think, to ask them as a meaningful part of the evaluation for accreditation. We should.

We began by suggesting that the future of higher education is going to be strongly influenced by the "consumer movement"; that the pressures for high quality, lower prices, flexibility, and convenience would come to higher education as they have to other sectors of the economy. We have explored the ways in which this has already had an impact on the highly competitive market for adult learners and we suggested some ways in which the movement might have an impact on definitions of quality and ways of measuring quality in the rest of higher education. There are, of course, real risks involved in responding too quickly to the demands of consumers. Some dimensions of quality require time to develop. Some knowledge needs to be aged. Consumer tastes can be fickle and without substance, or it can be misread. But pressures for the democratization of information and knowledge as well as demands for wider access to knowledge all argue that the role of the consumer in shaping higher education will grow rather than recede. It will be incumbent on all of us to heed prudently the voice of the consumer.

David Justice is Dean of the School for New Learning at DePaul University, Chicago, IL.

High School–College Partnerships

Virginia Kampwerth

While serving as Aca .mic Vice-President of Ancilla College, a liberal arts associate's degree-granting institution in north central Indiana, I worked with high schools to increase their high school graduation rate and the college-going rate of students. In an attempt to talk to the right people I wrote letters to area superintendents and principals asking for an appointment. In those letters I indicated the intent of my visit.

During the initial visit I also gave information, in written form, that could be used by the superintendent and/or principal in working with local communities.

An additional piece of information was available for the guidance counselors or senior teachers of the schools. By senior teachers I mean not only those who teach seniors but also the teachers who are considered the senior members of the faculty as opposed to those most recently hired.

The partnerships were worked on, one at a time. Some of them were the result of visits to similar schools in other parts of the country, such as the one designed for a neighboring county. This partnership was funded by a foundation with additional funds from the college and the high school corporation.

The president's work consisted in the public relations arena of influence. After my appointment to the presidency I continued my involvement in this program because recruitment is a hot issue in any small, private college.

The program can be administered effectively and efficiently if all players are aware of their roles. The responsibility for the quality of the program rests with the college because it grants the degree.

Students benefit because high school juniors and seniors can avoid needless duplication. Because state requirements for high school graduation differ, good articulation is key. More and more students encounter some degree of frustration when they take college courses that cover much of the material already studied in high school. Granted, the material is on a higher

level and some students may need remediation, but we all know students for whom there is curriculum duplication.

One-third or more of the subject matter covered during the first two years of college is a repetition of what was taught in high school: English, mathematics, science, and social studies. **This overlap should not continue.**

A plan of action for the success of a high-school college partnership will be the subject of the session, "High School-College Partnerships, What Works and Why." The speaker will detail ten years of experience with the concept of high school-college partnerships, what works and why it works both for the high school and the college. Areas to be discussed include:

1. overview of a program
2. administration of the program
3. key players
4. what to do when the response is negative
5. how to sell the program
6. how to find other approaches that work
7. how the high school benefits
8. how the college benefits
9. how to finance the program
10. how to involve faculty from both school settings
11. how to market the program
12. how to know if the program is a success

Key concepts:

- Partnerships defined
- Personnel involved
- High School Boards
- College Boards

Information on programs:

- What courses to offer
- What students to attract

- How an administrator can make or break a program
- How to get additional funding
- How to work with other colleges and universities for transfer of credits

Obstacles to overcome:

- High school principals who do not understand the value of a partnership
- College faculty who are doubtful of the program
- College transfer decisions
- What the cost to the high school student should be
- When the courses should be offered
- Who should be enrolled in the courses
- What high school guidance counselors can do to help or hinder
- What college admission officers can do to be of assistance
- Why the president should be involved
- Why the principal must often be sold by his/her peers
- When to begin such a partnership

Virginia Kampwerth is President Emeritus, Ancilla College, Donaldson, IN.

Vocational Technical Institutions and a Career Ladder to Baccalaureate Degrees

Rita Meyer
Dennis Cabral
Judith Neppel

Overview–University of Minnesota, Crookston

Associate degree graduates from technical and community college occupational programs may receive ninety (90) credits upon transfer to the University of Minnesota, Crookston (UMC). This career ladder approach implies that the student will normally be able to complete a baccalaureate degree in a comparable program by earning an additional ninety (90) credits. UMC personnel determine which additional courses are required to complete the baccalaureate degree. Transfer students may also explore the Bachelor of Science Degree in Technical Studies if that degree more closely meets their educational goals.

University of Minnesota Vision for Crookston

The University of Minnesota has a long history of serving the state and seeking innovative ways to serve the citizens of Minnesota better. The University created the first technical college in Minnesota in 1965 at Crookston. The University demanded high quality programs and the University of Minnesota, Crookston responded with associate degree programs that had

- strong general education components,
- links with business and industry,
- required internships,
- faculty with strong educational and technical expertise.

A New Mission

After extensive planning that involved gathering input from students, parents, high school counselors, parents of high school students, technical college graduates, alumni, and employers, it became clear that there was a critical need for a polytechnic institution with career-oriented baccalaureate programs. The University Board of Regents responded to the need for a polytechnic institution and in July 1993 UMC became the first polytechnic institution in the state. The programs offered will be unique not only because of the applied skills, but also because of the incorporated technology component and the other core components that will enable faculty to identify the transferable skills and abilities that graduates will have and to share this information with employers.

The Regents applauded the UMC planning effort because of its vision, accountability measures, focus on preparing the work force of the 21st century, and its intent to serve a group of citizens that are presently underserved.

New Student Profile

The UMC student profile as a polytechnic institution would be to serve:

- students with a preference for career oriented programs,
- students from technical and community college occupational programs,
- adults presently in the work force seeking to upgrade skills,
- employers seeking to upgrade the skills of their work force.

Five Key Strategies Guide Program Development

It also should be noted that UMC would have an open admissions policy and that five key strategies were an outcome of the Regent's resolution. They are:

1. Focus on customers and their needs.
2. Deliver quality products and services.
3. Seek out and establish collaborative partnerships.
4. Incorporate technology.
5. Be accountable for delivering the outcomes sought by customers.

Maximizing Student Degree Completion and Building Career Ladders

UMC, as a two-year institution, served as the entry point to higher education for many students. For millions of students, community and technical colleges serve as that entry point

and the avenue to intellectual growth. Entry to four-year colleges and universities by community college Associate in Arts graduates is a documented reality. Associate in Science programs also lead to effective transfer in specific programs, but transfer opportunities are severely limited for technical college and community college graduates who attain the Associate in Applied Science degree.

Students who choose an occupational course of study, graduate with an AAS degree, and enter the work force sometimes discover that they need advanced knowledge. They are interested in lifelong learning and/or career advancement, so they explore the options they have to continue their education and often find that transfer opportunities are severely limited. In the worst case scenario, transfer is limited to general education courses; in other instances, a specific number of courses transfer according to some state agency mandate; in still other cases, agreements are developed on a program by program basis that permit the transfer of specific courses.

One Approach Does Not Fit All

Educators at all levels realize that the majority of the population will never earn a collegiate-level baccalaureate degree, but a baccalaureate degree program is certainly the road to excellence for many individuals, and our schools and colleges must help these students prepare for this direction in life better than ever before if our nation is to be competitive in the 21st century. In comparison with other advanced industrialized nations, the U.S. vocational, technical, and technological work force is not as well prepared as competitiveness demands.

To maximize transfer opportunities and degree completion, the University of Minnesota, Crookston decided:

- to establish a firm commitment to all associate degree holders, and
- to recognize the value of an associate degree by awarding 90 credits toward a baccalaureate degree in a comparable field; not on a course by course evaluation but through the effective development and use of programmatic articulation agreements.

All UMC baccalaureate degrees contain 180 credits; thus, the institution determines which additional 90 credits the transfer student must complete in a comparable program or the B.S. degree in Technical Studies if that degree fits the student's educational goal.

- **Strengthen and expand academic relationships between institutions.**

  UMC policy will encourage students to acquire the associate degree of their choice. Because transfer is a function of teaching and learning, generally, and not simply a procedural matter of dealing with program articulation and credit transfer, faculties will be encouraged to meet regularly and to work together toward common understandings about academic achievement, transfer skills, and program coherence across institutions. They will be encouraged to develop and appreciate the

varying curricular contributions of each institution so that a true curricular ladder may be mapped out that represents continuity of coursework within and between institutions. The quality of these agreements will be judged not by the paperwork that is in place but rather by the genuine give and take that results between colleges.

- **Assign high priority to transfer success; strengthen all dimensions of transfer activity.**

To build a true curricular ladder from admission to the two-year college through the receipt of a baccalaureate degree in a specific discipline will require attention to all aspects of transfer. Even thinking about transfer will be different for many technical college faculty, but first efforts by UMC indicate that many technical college faculty are excited about the prospect of transfer for their graduates. They welcome the opportunities for dialogue and discussion of effective career ladder programs.

UMC adopted the comprehensive definition of articulation put forth by Con and Hardy in the *North Carolina Association Quarterly* (1978). This definition describes articulation as a process, an attitude, and a goal:

> As a process, articulation is the coordination of policies and practices among sectors of the education system to produce a smooth flow of students from one sector to another. As an attitude, it is exemplified by the willingness of educators in all sectors to work together to transcend the individual and institutional self-interest that impedes the maximum development of the student. As a goal, it is the creation of an educational system without artificial divisions, so that the whole educational period becomes one unbroken flow, which varies in speed for each individual, and which eliminates loss of credit, delays, and unnecessary duplication of effort.

Achieving the Goal

Crookston has developed a number of career ladder programs and collaborative efforts have increased to the point that Technical College personnel are working with UMC personnel to develop new programs that embrace the career ladder concept. The exchange will benefit the institutions and the faculties in many ways. Ultimately the students will benefit most.

University of Minnesota, Twin Cities

Maintaining both a responsive and responsible commitment to our students, employers, and community, the University of Minnesota serves as a change agent for the State. The University accomplishes this by creating high quality learning opportunities for diverse populations and by delivering them through convenient and unique approaches, systems, and locations. Similar to the needs that have emerged in the Crookston area, it became apparent that special needs existed in the Twin Cities. Many of these emerging needs could be met through special collaborative partnerships. Thus, in January 1993, the Twin Cities Higher

Education Partnership agreement was signed by the President of the University of Minnesota and the heads of the Minnesota Community College System, the Minnesota Technical College System, and the Minnesota State University System, as well as the Executive Director of the Minnesota Higher Education Coordinating Board.

A major focus of the partnerships was to develop new baccalaureate programs that had a special, applied aspect embodied in them. To date, two programs have been developed and approved. These programs are:

- Bachelor of Information Networking; North Hennepin Community College and University of Minnesota, Twin Cities.
- Bachelor of Applied Business; Inver Hills Community College and University of Minnesota, Twin Cities.

The need for other programs is being explored and a comprehensive planning process is underway that, when completed, will enable the University to serve even better the citizens of the State.

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Rita Meyer is Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at the University of Minnesota, Crookston, Crookston, MN.

Dennis Cabral is Associate to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN.

Judith Neppel is Vice President for Academic Affairs, Northwest Technical College, Bemidji, and Campus Vice President, East Grand Forks, East Grand Forks, MN.

Higher Education and Business Involvement: A Win-Win Opportunity

Lucille G. Ford

Introduction

Only ten years ago, such staples of everyday life as the personal computer and the telefax did not exist. Most agree that developments now taking place in genetic engineering, telecommunications, sea exploration, and the like will result in fundamental transformations. Business and, therefore, education must deal with these lasting and pervasive changes. It is not a time of business as usual. If higher education is to play its rightful role in the world of tomorrow, we must prepare students to understand, to work in, and to lead this changing world. There is no better way for us in higher education to do this than to join hands and minds with the business community. Some would call this a plea for relevance; I call it a charge of opportunity.

This paper presents one university's attempt to maximize the talents and expertise of both business and higher education for the benefit of both as well as the greater community.

Institutional Philosophy

Our heritage and philosophy came first: Ashland University believes we are part of the whole—not separate from it. The founding fathers of the university in 1878 proclaimed the institution's obligation:

> to offer courses in the arts and sciences and in the professions to 'all those who would educate either themselves or their children for usefulness and contentment therewith.'

Today's revised mission includes:

> We provide quality education in the liberal arts and in selected professions to prepare persons to lead meaningful lives in the world community.

This philosophy has been imbued in the fabric of the institution. The community speaks to us and we listen. Our common purpose, to improve the human condition, is approached together.

Educational Niche

Ashland University provides a balanced blend of a professional and liberal arts instruction on campus and at 19 different locations. We go to the students. More than 3,500 of the approximately 5,500 Ashland University students are non-traditional; working men and women in business of all kinds. It makes a great deal of sense to take one professor to 30 people, rather than the other way around.

The 19 degree-granting sites, some graduate, some undergraduate, some both, are of different character. For example, there are those open to the public; others are industry specific (i.e., General Motors), others are limited corporate participation (five companies in a business partnership or two hospitals in a consortium), some are prison programs for selected inmates; others are continuing education courses for elementary and secondary teachers. The principle is to respond to what the business at hand needs and take the appropriate programs, all of which are offered on campus, to them. This is done with full-time campus faculty. There is one standard for all Ashland University programs.

Gill Center for Business and Economic Education

The Gill Center was established by the University in 1968 for the express purpose of creating a linkage of the University with business. The Center is affiliated with the Ohio Council on Economic Education and the National Council on Economic Education in New York.

The center coordinates the following business-related programs:

- Economic Education Program
- The Dialogue Program
- The Gill Center's Research and Development program
- The Executive-in-Residence Program
- The Cockroft Forum
- S.C.O.R.E. (Service Corps of Retired Executives)

The ***Economic Education Program*** at Ashland University recognizes that economic literacy is vital for the maintenance of an informed public. Therefore, faculty from the Center take graduate courses to teachers in 11 counties. These courses direct teachers to economic concepts with teaching applications for their students in elementary and secondary schools. More than 4,000 teachers have received this instruction. The multiplier of their students reached through this program is in the hundreds of thousands.

The ***Dialogue Program,*** started in 1969, the Business/Student Dialogue Program brings together Ashland University students and business leaders for three programs each semester. More than 3,700 students and 400 panelists have participated in the more than 100 individual dialogues.

Participants include up to 30 students from all divisions of the school, one or two faculty members, and approximately four panelists. A student chairperson presides over the informal round-table discussions, which often focus on social problems, business responsibilities, and career opportunities.

The ***Research and Development Program*** is integrated into the primary educational objectives of the center. The program's hallmarks are providing information to the community and problem-solving for the college and local business.

The ***Executive-in-Residence Program*** enlists the services of a business executive (retired on loan) to spend time on campus to provide hands-on business enrichment activities. The executive consults with professors on current business practices and policies, helps with classroom lectures, consults with students on career options and opportunities, and holds seminars with students, faculty, and area business people.

The ***Cockroft Forum*** is a one-day visit to campus by an outstanding business leader. A major lecture for students and faculty, several classroom visits, a 30-minute TV interview aired on Channel 2 and a dinner/lecture for the business community are included in the forum. The program was endowed by the William B. Cockroft Forum for Free Enterprise. This event takes place once every semester.

S.C.O.R.E. (Service Corps of Retired Executives) was formed in cooperation with the local area chamber of commerce. S.C.O.R E. offers, through its cadre of experienced members, help to new or troubled businesses, at no charge. Chapters are nationwide under the auspices of the U.S. Small Business Administration.

School of Business and Economics

Besides the Gill Center, the School of Business engages in a number of programs to link the campus with business:

- **Business Advisory Board:** The purpose of the School of Business Administration and Economics Advisory Council is to consider issues relevant to the School, present recommendations to the faculty, administration, and Board of Trustees; and assist in the implementation of new projects and programs. The objective of the Council is to enhance the School through creative study, observation, and dialogue.

  Sample contributions of the Council:

  - Initiated and assisted in a focus group survey of Ashland University business graduates for strengths and weaknesses of the Ashland University program.
  - Was instrumental in the redesign and reactivation of the Internship program with the School of Business Administration and Economics.

- The **Center for International Business Services** provides consulting and assessment services for area businesses to help them broaden their markets and expand

manufacturing activity resulting in an increase in their competitive position in the international marketplace. The Center provides Ashland University students with real-world experience in the area of international business.

- **Malcolm Baldrige Quality Award Winners:** The Epsilon Beta Chapter of the Delta Mu Delta Business Honorary sponsors the campus visit of a Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award recipient. This award, established by an act of Congress in 1987, promotes quality awareness, recognizes quality achievements of U.S. companies, and publicizes successful quality strategies.

- **Students in Free Enterprise Program (SIFE):** The national SIFE organization goal is to facilitate student-generated free market economic education programs that offer Americans a better understanding of the American market system. Sample student activities are:

  — An Annual International Marketing Competition of student-prepared business plans, involving research into all aspects of a foreign country and the creation of a new product and its respective operationalization.

  — A "Halt the Deficit" project, a grass-roots program designed to reach politicians and decision-makers in government to encourage responsible spending.

- **Small Business Institute (S.B.I.):** The S.B.I. has approved Ashland University as a case site. S.B.I.'s goal is to conduct five cases per semester. There are three to four students assigned as a consulting team to each case. Forty students and ten small business owners are served per year.

- **Field trips:** The Epsilon Beta Chapter of the Delta Mu Delta Business Honorary sponsors field trips to area business. On these visits students have an opportunity to learn about the operations of the business and find out about job and career opportunities.

- **Internship opportunities for students:** Students have opportunities to work in their area of academic interest through these typical programs:

  — *Student Internship Grant:* Monies are provided, from a special fund, to a faculty member for arranging and supervising student internships. The internship also funds the student's work.

  — *Hospitality Administration Internships:* The faculty assists students in securing positions related to their career goals. Assistance includes developing resumes and cover letters and making contact with the companies that are of interest to students. Students receive academic credit for these internships, if properly documented.

  — *Small Business Institute Internship:* Internship opportunities are made available to students through the Small Business Institute. Funds to help small businesses are used to pay students who act as consultants to these businesses.

Faculty Support

- Senior Faculty Study Leave
- Doctoral Degree Summer Writing Grant
- Professional Discipline Experience Grant
- Conference Grant Student Assistants Program
- Publication Expense Grant
- Innovation Grant
- Internship Grant

While all these development projects will not be discussed, the Business Innovation Grant and the Professional Discipline Experience Grant, especially important to the link of businesses and education, are presented:

- The **Business Innovation Grant** is an endowed partnership of business and higher education to solve business problems. The purpose of the grant is three-fold:

  — Business gains by the assistance given by faculty and students in the solution of its problem.

  — The faculty member gains practical experience and professional skill in helping the business solve the problem.

  — Students gain practical experience helping to solve business problems.

  A business problem for one is a new, practical, and applied research opportunity for a faculty member, who has the willingness and expertise to learn from and to solve problems. The earned income from the endowment funds the faculty effort.

- The **Professional Discipline Experience Grant** allows a faculty member to work half-time for one semester in an applied discipline area while teaching half-time and maintaining a full Ashland University salary. Professional service during the summer may be substituted. This grant is funded by an endowment from the Gund Foundation.

Conclusion

Students, faculty, and business, alike, gain very much from business/education linkages. Dimensions of this gain are enormous, from simple awareness to statistical quality control; from student practice to problem solving; from curricular change to economic literacy, and on and on.

It is time consuming, but it is exciting to join hands with business. As we appreciate and learn from them, they appreciate and learn from us. A not unwelcome spillover is greater financial support of higher education by the business world.

Lucille G. Ford is Executive Assistant to the President at Ashland University, Ashland, OH.

ACE's Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction

E. Nelson Swinerton
Ivan J. Lach
John C. Wilkinson

The Commission on Institutions of Higher Education has adopted a Policy and Joint Statement on Transfer and Award of Academic Credit (Appendix I of *A Handbook of Accreditation, 1992-93*). A section of this policy concerns the validation of extra-institutional and experiential learning for transfer purposes. This section suggests that transfer-of-credit policies should encompass educational accomplishment attained in extra-institutional settings as well as at accredited postsecondary institutions. It goes on to say that in deciding on the award of credit for extra-institutional learning, institutions will find the services of the American Council on Education's Center for Adult Learning and Educational Credentials helpful.

This presentation discusses one of the Center's programs to determine credit equivalencies for various modes of extra-institutional learning. The program is: The Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction (PONSI). This presentation explains how PONSI works and why collegiate and non-collegiate institutions, students, and consultant-evaluators will find PONSI helpful.

A great deal of high-quality, formal learning occurs outside the campus environment. A major share of the learning takes place within business and government organizations and professional associations, where some 13 million people engage in formal training each year. For many this participation sparks interest in further study at institutions of higher learning.

Assessing noncollegiate learning and deciding on credit awards is an expensive and difficult procedure for most colleges and universities; all too often, they are frustrated by the lack of effective and economical means to accomplish these tasks.

The American Council on Education's Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction aims to facilitate the college's task by establishing a system for relating formal course work taken elsewhere to the programs of colleges and universities. Through PONSI, college and university faculty evaluate the workplace training offered by business, industry, labor unions, professional associations, and government agencies and make credit recommendations accordingly.

The Center for Adult Learning and Educational credentials maintains evaluation programs for formally-structured courses offered by the military and civilian noncollegiate sponsors, such as business, corporations, government agencies, and labor unions. The results are published in a guide series. *The Guide for Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services* (commonly referred to as the ACE Guide) is well known. Less well known is the Guide produced by PONSI.

PONSI began in 1974 at the recommendation of the Carnegie Commission on Nontraditional Study that the Council extend the military evaluation system to course work sponsored by civilian organizations. The results are published in *The National Guide to Educational Credit for Training Programs*, a companion publication to *The Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services.*

The National Guide to Educational Credit for Training Programs is widely disseminated to registrars, admissions officers, and other college officials. In addition, the *Registry of Credit Recommendations* was established to provide a permanent record of students' ACE-/PONSI-evaluated educational accomplishments. The registry gives students access at any time to their records, which are kept on computer file in a central location. The system is intended to make records of noncollegiate study easily accessible and readily interpretable by postsecondary institutions. A reliable record issued by a recognized educational organization provides colleges and universities with transcripts in a familiar format, thus facilitating decisions on the awarding of credit.

At the present time there are state affiliate offices in Illinois with the Illinois Community College Board, in New Jersey with Thomas Edison State College, in Oklahoma with the University of Oklahoma, in Vermont with Vermont State Colleges, in West Virginia with Davis and Elkins College, and in Wisconsin with Lakeshore Technical College and the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay sharing responsibilities. Ten more state offices will begin operation in 1994, and additional states will be added each year over the next five years as colleges and universities meet selection criteria.

Most employers want their employees to receive credit recommendations at local colleges, and, thus, local/state affiliates can work with local colleges and universities to make sure they understand the PONSI process and how these credit recommendations can help colleges to place students at appropriate levels in college courses without repeating other courses. State offices will draw upon faculty from across the state as well as faculty from other states. State offices will follow national guidelines and work closely with the national office to provide a high quality level of services to sponsoring organizations and to local colleges and universities. In most cases, both the national and state offices provide advisory services to students and advocacy services on behalf of students with colleges and universities. Many employees appreciate the opportunity to have a college staff working with them to set educational goals and accomplish them.

By administering a State/PONSI office, a college or university may find additional opportunities to work with employers and employees to build new higher education-industry partnerships. For example, the college and organizations can identify knowledge and skill competencies necessary to keep abreast of changes in society and the work environment.

Also, the school can identify new programs for developing credit and noncredit courses to serve business, industry, state, and local government on campus and on site. All course reviews from the state office will go to the national office so that the credit recommendations can be reported annually in the *National Guide to Educational Credit for Training Programs*.

The Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction (PONSI) builds on the work of the American Council on Education over the last 30 years to provide college recognition for formal military education and training.

E. Nelson Swinerton is Director of the Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction (PONSI) at the American Council on Education, Washington, D.C.

Ivan J. Lach is Senior Deputy Director of Programs, Illinois Community College Board and PONSI Coordinator for the State of Illinois, Springfield, IL.

John C. Wilkinson is Director of Military Programs at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, Carbondale, IL.

Chapter IX

Special Focus on Technology

Mobile Computing— Reducing Time and Space Barriers

Donald Sargeant

Introduction

Many colleges and universities continue to face enormous challenges regarding the implementation of computer technology for academic and administrative purposes. Numerous publications have been written about the advantages of using technology to enhance learning and to provide better customer services. Employers expect graduates to be computer literate and students desire to use the computer as part of their educational experience. Yet, colleges and universities are reluctant to provide or to require computers for all students.

As part of a very intense strategic planning process, the University of Minnesota, Crookston (UMC) concluded that its vision was to create self-directed learners via select polytechnic baccalaureate programs. Priority was placed on the implementation of a technology strategy. In Fall 1993, UMC initiated the technology strategy by providing all full-time students with notebook computers.

Technology Strategy

As part of the planning process benchmarks were established for each strategy. The technology benchmarks include:

- All full-time students, faculty, and staff are provided computers.
- Computer technology is incorporated into all courses.
- Students, faculty, and staff communicate via E-mail on the LAN and Internet.
- Off-site dial-in access is utilized to facilitate the use of the UMC library and other electronic libraries for databases including PALS, ERIC, Academic Index, Magazine Index, and Gopher.

The essential factor to accomplishing the technology strategy involves providing computers to all students. Often this is accomplished by placing computers in a classroom or laboratory.

The big disadvantage to this solution is that students become tied to a space and, even worse, access to that space is often closed to students for large periods of time both during the day, for classes, and throughout the night as doors are locked. Also that solution entails the purchase of more computers than students because colleges usually are not using all seats or all classrooms each hour. Additionally, students also need access to computers outside the classroom. Thus, this solution has huge financial implications.

Mobile Computer

The solution chosen by UMC was to purchase mobile, notebook computers and provide them to all full-time students as part of their tuition and fees. This would allow each student to have a personal computer to use whenever appropriate for them. By providing the computer and software as part of the tuition and fees it qualifies as a financial aid expense because it is a mandatory fee. Providing the computer and select software also standardized what would be taught, which is very important in the educational program.

Overcoming Challenges

Numerous discussions involving all aspects of the campus were a part of the decision-making process. This was important because all on campus would ultimately be affected. These discussions were the basis for the evolution of financial models, the review of hardware and software options, and the development of various policies concerning part-time students, warranty, security, inventory procedure, distribution method, faculty and staff development, and expected learner outcomes in each course. In the long run, the active participation of students in the process was most important as they were part of the presentation to the University of Minnesota Board of Regents in seeking approval to increase the student fees and to expend more than one and one half million dollars to purchase the computers.

- **Students.** Early in the planning it became apparent that UMC would not have the resources within the existing budget to purchase a computer for each student. The most viable solution involved increasing student fees to purchase the computers. No one wants their fees increased unless it is demonstrated that there will be an increase in value of the service being provided. Therefore, dialogue with students was initiated focusing on the possibility of implementing a technology access fee that would provide each full-time student with a personal notebook computer. Nearly all students liked the idea of having their own computer. Reviews of position announcements and employment surveys indicated to students that nearly every baccalaureate career required computer literacy. So, the value added question was fairly easy to document.

  The discussion then focused on the amount of the fee increase. Students examined many models whereby the computers were provided and paid for by fees. The models included expenses related to warranty, bad debt loss, insurance costs, software purchase and upgrades, network access related expenses, printing, and interest expense. Students were involved on a technology planning committee. The Chancellor responded to questions

at the monthly Student Senate meetings and held open forums quarterly; faculty and staff presented materials in various classes, at club meetings, and in residential life facilities, indicating what might happen if the fee were implemented. It was a valuable learning experience for all. In the end the students became very strong proponents for the change as they saw this as very important to enhancing their educational experience and, in turn, enhancing their careers.

- **Faculty.** Comments from faculty concerning implementation of the technology strategy were quite varied. Some were very excited about the possibility of implementing the technology strategy. They saw the potential of incorporating the use of the computer in their teaching and importance of the student utilizing the computer. Others indicated that it was not needed in their courses but could see how it might help students in other courses. Some were sure that the increased cost would be a detriment in recruiting students and UMC would see a decrease in enrollment if this technology access fee were implemented. Then, there were questions about the obsolescence of the computers and the various software programs, followed by questions about need for faculty development and the time required to incorporate technology effectively in each course. Over time it became apparent that this was really an opportunity rather than a threat to the institution.

There were many unanswered questions and there continue to be unanswered questions. In the past, answers were more important than questions. This issue was the first where it became evident that the idea was bold enough to implement without all the answers. Continued dialogue is a must in the process of responding to change and unanswered questions that, more than ever before, is in the future for all of us.

Support Services

- **Faculty and Staff Development.** Obviously, faculty and staff development was a key component in implementing the technology strategy. Like most colleges, UMC has continually provided training for faculty and staff related to improving computer skills. There were varying degrees of computer literacy and use. Therefore, training was intensified and sessions were offered nearly every week throughout the past year and continue to be offered on a regular basis. Last summer, more than 75% of the faculty volunteered to spend one week in August in training sessions to enhance their computer competencies. In spite of the training, faculty found it difficult during fall quarter to perform their usual responsibilities while revising courses to incorporate new learning experiences involving technology.

- **Help Desk.** Another key component in the plan was the development of a student help desk. This was created to provide a place for students to go for help related to hardware and software problems they might encounter and a place to access the LAN and Internet and to print materials. The desk also provides maintenance and warranty service and is a distribution point for computers to students enrolled on a part-time basis. Four students and two staff were hired on a part-time basis to staff the help desk. During the first week more than 100 students per hour visited the help desk. By the end of the quarter, about 25 students an hour were visiting the help desk. The help desk and IMS core course were

very instrumental in providing students with the support they needed to be successful in this new environment.

- **Campus Infrastructure.** Last summer two classrooms with a capacity of 45 were remodeled by lowering desks, inserting wiring outlets for the computers, and providing connections for ethernet cards to the LAN. A computer and audio video teaching station was installed in the back of the room and a large projection screen and two 35-inch television monitors in the front of the room. Faculty offices that were not on the LAN were hooked to the system as were additional ports in the library, the help desk, and residential life facilities. Thus, every faculty office and every building was on-line. Server capacity was doubled to handle the additional usage. The number of computers on-line at any one time increased by 500% when compared to the previous year. Library access of the on-line card catalog system increased significantly. The next step was the development of off-campus access to the network because of faculty and student demand.

Outcomes

Throughout the process, the focus has been on the use of technology to support key organizational goals versus just promoting technology itself. Since the project was initiated only last fall, the institution is in the early stages of documenting various outcomes. However, some comments to date are as follow:

- **Access.** The notebook computer solution did more than just provide each student with equal access to a personal computer any time of the day or night. The notebook computers brought students access as they had never experienced before. They had access to their course instructors and their academic advisor; academic and student support offices; other students, both on and off campus; and the library and other on-line information resources. They did not have to go to the classroom to turn in an assignment (even though they often still did) or to the financial aid office or to their advisors office to get an answer to a question. Less telephone tag, less going to an office and waiting—more access to people and information.

- **Computer Proficiency.** There were great variances in individual computer proficiency. All new students were required to enroll in a management information system course (IMS 1010) and by the end of Fall quarter the individual differences in computer proficiency had been narrowed. Nearly all returning students also enrolled in the course. Thus, UMC had more than 80% of the full-time students in this one course fall quarter. Faculty from all departments taught various course sections. The remodeled classrooms were used to teach the course using multimedia instructional material. These instructors met each week to revise the course outline and to ensure consistency from section to section. Most of the course assignments and student responses were received on the LAN. Students were observed helping each other throughout the campus in all settings. The computer encouraged collaboration among faculty and students. Thus, access to computers was neutralized and it became a matter of individual effort rather than who entered with previous knowledge or who had the resources to purchase a computer.

- **Communications.** Undoubtedly, the biggest change for everyone was access to E-mail. For nearly all students and some faculty and staff, this was their first experience with this mode of communication. An E-mail directory listing all students, faculty, and staff was published. Students in the IMS 1010 and other courses sent and received messages on campus and off campus through Internet. Checking E-mail for assignments and messages was soon common practice. Within the first week some students had exceeded their assigned capacity in the computer server and were requesting that more space be allocated. After the first Student Senate meeting last fall, the students sent the Chancellor an E-mail message with suggestions for improving the campus. This has continued on a regular basis.

- **Teaching and Learning.** At the end of fall quarter, five faculty shared their experiences concerning student use of computers during a campus workshop. They were faculty from accounting, biology, communications, natural resources, and hotel and restaurant management.

  — In accounting, the faculty member indicated that he was teaching more accounting and less math, that students received 30% fewer D grades than the previous fall and that students were much more interested in doing accounting problems in the computer than listening to a lecture and then trying to do the problems in the book.

  — In biology, the laboratory assignments were computer generated.

  — In communications, the student papers were presented in a more professional manner.

  — In natural resources, students were involved in simulation and modeling of wildlife populations as determined by food, water, and climate factors, recording bird counts and water quality monitoring, and development of a woody plant database using leaf color for landscape planning.

  — In hotel and restaurant management, students participated in using programs in and out of class that allow learning by using "what if" scenarios in resizing menus, cost analysis, nutritional analysis, and shopping lists.

These are just a few examples of how the student learning experience has changed at UMC since the implementation of the technology plan. The plan has hastened the use of some type of computer software in nearly every course and provides the opportunity for incorporating current technology, information, and systems. The computers also readily accommodate learning and individual differences. The end result is that faculty become managers of instruction by providing opportunities for more personalized learning. This typically leads to increased learning and increased student satisfaction.

Summary

In Fall 1993, UMC provided all 850 full-time students with IBM Thinkpad 350 notebook computers bundled with Microsoft Window, Word, and Excel. Students pay a technology

access fee of $235 per quarter in addition to their tuition and other fees. This fee provides students with the notebook computer and bundled software, access to the LAN for printing, additional on-line site licensed software and card catalogs, Internet, and Gopher. Using the notebook computer and software, students have increased access to library and other on-line resources, enhanced communication capabilities with faculty and students both on and off campus, more opportunities for cooperative and collaborative projects, intensified experiences for dealing with constant change, and advanced skills for employment in the "information age." Technology will continue to change dramatically how we live and how we interact in the world in which we work.

The morale of the story. Students pay more but receive value. Students are utilizing technology to learn more as they prepare for their career. Faculty and staff are working smarter and becoming more effective by using "new" ways. Mobile computers were the focal point for responding to change. They not only reduced the barriers of time and space but they also enhanced teaching and learning and campus support services.

Donald Sargeant is Chancellor of the University of Minnesota, Crookston, Crookston, MN.

Quality Education through Interactive Instructional Television: Some Guidelines for Evaluators

David L. Caffey

We live in an age of fascination with technology, particularly with new and emerging technologies perceived as providing opportunities for innovation.

In education, many of us—and particularly many who grew up before the era of mass distribution of computers and computing skills—tend to be easily bedazzled by demonstrations of computer multimedia displays, machines that can read aloud from printed texts, and systems that allow students and teachers to see and hear each other via two-way interactive television. The technologies we marvel at may be commonplace in the neighborhood supermarket, where barcode scanners blip us through the check-out line while maintaining up-to-the second inventories, but they are not common in most schools. So, schools tend to pursue these gadgets, led by educators who possess a vague sense of urgency to be "on the cutting edge."

In education there can be no such thing as a technology project that is just that. Any worthwhile innovation must be, first of all, an educational project, with a clear purpose and solid educational content. Second, it must be a people project, since most educational technology efforts are dependent upon successful collaboration among teachers, administrators, and technicians. With these requisite conditions in place, new technologies can be adapted to serve the enduring purposes of increasing educational access and enhancing learning.

Why Interactive Instructional Television?

In eastern New Mexico, interactive ITV provided a solution for small rural high schools pressed to provide advanced courses for their college-bound graduates. The six county area served by the Eastern Plains Instructional Television Consortium includes four of the most sparsely settled counties in the United States, areas one author described as America's "contemporary frontier" (Dayton Duncan, *Miles from Nowhere: America's Contemporary Frontier*, 1993). With fewer than two persons per square miles in these counties, the communities are too far from neighboring cities for school consolidation to be a practical

solution. With ITV, districts with as few as 49 students in grades K-12 can offer their high school juniors and seniors advanced mathematics, foreign language, an array of social science electives, and freshman English, all taught by Masters-prepared college teachers in live classes, in which instructor and students can see and hear each other at all times. The concept of shared classes via ITV received a boost in 1990, when the State of New Mexico adopted a concurrent enrollment plan, whereby qualified students may enroll for both high school and college credit, with both the public school and the college receiving full reimbursement for instruction. With the potential now in place for rural students not only to take advanced courses, but also to receive college credit through concurrent enrollment, it made sense for Clovis Community College to become the primary provider of classes offered to the rural schools. The rural schools also share some elective courses, such as art and physics, among themselves, maximizing their limited teaching staffs. The system has also been used to offer graduate level professional development courses to teachers in the rural schools.

For the Eastern New Mexico Rural Telephone Cooperative, which built the system in 1991 and continues to provide transmission facilities and technical support, the project is an attempt to strengthen rural communities and maintain rural population by providing increased educational opportunities to residents where they live.

In other institutions, interactive television may provide the means for small numbers of students who are widely scattered geographically to participate in a specialized class. It may provide the means for placebound adults to complete baccalaureate degree programs. Whatever the impetus, it should be readily apparent to evaluators that ITV somehow meets an identified need and increases student access.

Quality Factors in Interactive Instructional Television

The following are questions visiting team members may wish to ask as a means of assessing the effectiveness of an interactive ITV project.

1. How are curricular offerings determined? Is community input sought in the remote locations? How do the courses taught fit into students' academic programs? Are complete programs offered on the ITV system so that students in remote sites can complete a training program or degree?

2. What services are available to ITV students and how are services delivered? Do ITV students have access to academic advisement, career and personal counseling, and placement testing? Are services provided by telephone; if so, must the student pay long distance charges?

3. What provisions are made for transmittal of course syllabi, handouts, and examinations? Are there designated contact persons and/or class monitors in each remote site? How is test security maintained?

4. What support is provided for instructors teaching on the system? How are instructors trained? Are released time or other provisions available for instructors to adapt

courses for ITV presentation? Is special compensation awarded for teaching via ITV?

5. How are teaching assignments for ITV classes determined? Are full-time and part-time instructors assigned to ITV classes in approximately the same proportions as for regular classes? If not, what accounts for the difference?

6. To what extent are library, laboratory, and computer resources essential to classes offered via ITV? Where needed, what provisions are made for these functions? Does ITV delivery require undue compromise of resources and requirements for classes offered?

7. If full programs are offered via ITV, are any normally required activities waived for ITV students or otherwise modified significantly?

8. How well does the system function technically? Can instructor and students see and hear each other clearly? Can the instructor concentrate on teaching without being preoccupied with system controls? How frequently do technical problems interrupt class activities? What support is available to the instructor during class time?

9. How is ITV instruction evaluated? Do students in remote sites have the opportunity to evaluate their classes? Does the institution have assessment data to indicate that the ITV project is effective?

10. Is the system adequately administered? What communications take place between transmission sites and reception sites? Is enrollment information accurate and is it distributed to sites in a timely manner? Can ITV students easily access services of the admissions office and other college offices?

The experience in eastern New Mexico indicates that instruction can be delivered successfully via ITV and that students in rural areas greatly appreciate the opportunities that ITV delivery affords. Instructors indicate that student participation and performance in the ITV remote sites are comparable to those of their students on campus. Several instructors have noted particularly high levels of maturity and motivation among students in the rural sites.

ITV delivery does not and cannot replicate the on-campus experience in its entirety. If evaluators approach a distance learning program with the idea that resources and services at remote ITV sites must be identical to those available on campus, no program is likely to measure up. Certainly comparability of experience and resources is desirable, and institutions should demonstrate their efforts to approach this ideal. The evaluator should consider the extent to which a distance learning program is based on a thoughtful rationale, the extent to which resources are reasonable to meet the objectives of the program, and the extent to which institution personnel are aware of and responding effectively to relevant issues.

Credible efforts to extend access through interactive instructional television should be supported by the accreditation process. If the institution offering such a service can demonstrate that the courses it offers via ITV provide remote students opportunities to

acquire knowledge and skills comparable to those available to on-campus students, then the evaluator's role should be primarily one of raising relevant issues or questions relating to possible improvement of ITV services. By offering observations, qu :stions, and recommendations, the evaluator can help the institution prioritize needed enhancements.

Clovis Community College is pleased with its experience in the use of interactive instructional television to extend educational services to rural areas. We are gratified and encouraged with the interest and success demonstrated by ITV students, and we look forward to the growth and improvement of distance learning opportunities in the future.

Accrediting agencies and their evaluators can and should be supportive and helpful in the development of quality ITV distance learning projects. The use of new telecommunications technology to deliver educational services to previously underserved areas is a logical, desirable, and affordable extension of the perennial values of American education—access, equity, and opportunity.

David L. Caffey is Dean of Instruction at Clovis Community College, Clovis, NM.

Rogers State College and the Electronic University Network "The Best College Education at a Distance"

Richard H. Mosier
James Hess

Rogers State College is not an institution that possesses national name recognition. **Claremore, Oklahoma,** is not a large community.

Yet, Rogers State College (RSC) in Claremore, Oklahoma, has made a major commitment to distance learning and has transformed a strong regional program into one of the nation's most promising and innovative new approaches to distance education.

With the aid of a federal grant, Rogers State College constructed a full-power UHF television station that began broadcasting in 1987. The station, KRSC-TV, from its inception, has been dedicated to providing quality distance education to the citizens of Northeastern Oklahoma. In addition to broadcasting a large number of traditional, commercially-produced telecourses, the college has greatly expanded telecourse offerings by producing a number of its own courses. In the fall semester of 1987, four new RSC telecourses were developed. Fifteen telecourses have now been produced on the Rogers State campus, and another 11 are in various stages of development.

In the spring of 1992, KRSC-TV constructed a new 849-foot tower and boosted power to 2.75 million watts. The station's signal now covers the entire northeastern quadrant of Oklahoma. Additionally, KRSC is carried on more than 65 area cable systems. As a result of the increased broadcast coverage area, the college felt the need to make the transition from a provider of telecourses to a provider of degree programs. Two degree programs were made available in 1992 through a combination of traditional and RSC telecourses: the Associate of Arts in Liberal Arts, and Associate of Arts in Business Administration. The Associate of Science in Computer Science was added in 1993.

In the fall of 1992, the college also began to explore the possibility of national distribution of its distance learning programs through a joint venture with The Electronic University

Network. Since the college follows total quality management principles, a team was initiated to develop the virtual campus concept and to address issues such as test monitoring, student participation, and student/faculty communication. The primary membership of the team was full-time faculty who had considerable experience in the development of curriculum for alternative delivery systems. The team spent a full semester developing curriculum and establishing guidelines for faculty and student participation in the program. Given the fact that the college had considerable faculty experience in distance learning programs, the college was able to seize this unique opportunity on the run and redesign existing products to address new markets. After the curriculum and communications systems had been designed and developed, the faculty team determined that a pilot project with a limited number of students would constitute a most appropriate test of the technology as well as acquaint both faculty and students with the utilization of wide area networks as virtual classrooms. The pilot project consisted of six faculty members and 70 students, enabling faculty to receive feedback to improve curriculum design and execute software modifications. After a summer pilot, a complete program was launched in the Fall 1993 semester with three Rogers State College associate degree programs available to students on a nation-wide basis.

The Electronic University approach is particularly unique in that it replicates classroom instruction. The lecture segment is provided by a telecourse that is either leased or produced at RSC. The student is provided a complete set of the video lecture tapes and is guided through the course by a teleguide that is written by the RSC instructor. Students communicate with their instructor and other students by using their computer, modem, and the America Online computer network, an explanation of which is contained in the teleguide. Classroom discussions take place on electronic bulletin boards. Questions and answers regarding class content are posted to bulletin boards as well. For private conversations, students and instructors utilize E-mail. Homework assignments come to the instructor via E-mail; monitored tests are handled by prearranged monitors in the students' home towns. Utilizing this technology, the college is truly able to provide our students, "a college degree, at their time and at their place."

Inherent in the Electronic University Network is the underlying theme of student interaction with faculty and other students. The very nature of computer conferencing necessitates that students interact with faculty and others enrolled in the course. An additional benefit of this technology is its contribution to social justice in higher education. Utilizing this technology, students all start on an equal basis, and students may only be evaluated by their ability to articulate thoughts and concepts in written form as well as to articulate their point of view to others in computer conferenced class discussions. The technology does not allow external factors such as race, sex, age, or physical limitations to be recognized in evaluation of performance and truly acts as a means of negating social and economic barriers to higher education.

This innovative program has been assembled by a creative union of existing resources. The Electronic University Network, headquartered in San Francisco, provides enrollment, counseling, and technical services from its facility. Rogers State provides instructors, courses, credit, and degrees from Claremore, Oklahoma. Telecourses are produced all across the nation. Tapes are provided by College Video in Virginia. Books are shipped from an

independent book seller in Chicago. America On-line is located in Alexandria, Virginia. This combination of suppliers has allowed us to move to national distribution with a surprisingly small financial investment.

Rogers State College and the Electronic University Network are making quality associate degrees accessible to all Americans. The key to the program's success may be found in the commitment of the faculty and staff to the quality of the educational product delivered and an enthusiastic willingness to utilize technology to expand educational opportunities.

Richard H. Mosier is President of Rogers State College, Claremore, OK.

James Hess is Vice President for Academics and Operations at Rogers State College, Claremore, OK.

The Challenge of Meeting Accreditation Standards in an Institution Employing an Interactive Distance Learning Component

Roger Wess

Introduction

Chadron State College is a public four-year institution located on the high plains panhandle of northwest Nebraska. The College's service area covers the western half of the state and is the equivalent in surface area of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and four-fifths of New Jersey. The population in this region is about 128,000, sufficient by national standards to support a senior level institution. However, this population is scattered in many small rural communities with varying information needs in education, government, health, transportation, communication, business, and agriculture. Chadron State College has a long history of providing services to this area through correspondence courses as well as extension classes offered by traveling faculty or adjunct faculty located at a distant site. The biggest barrier to extension courses was small numbers that at times caused classes to be canceled. Wide use of adjunct faculty had a tendency to disrupt the continuity of courses in a program of study because of lack of contact with the main campus.

Now we are using technology to meet many of th needs of distance students, because technical support of instruction, especially interactive distance learning, is expanding and improving rapidly. Chadron State College now averages more than 30 distance learning classes each semester and is part of a statewide conferencing system supporting coursework, seminars, and meetings. Almost every state in the union has installed, is installing, or is planning to install such a system. Some postsecondary institutions are planning or installing distance learning systems using their own resources. Citizens are demanding that information services be brought to their communities and homes.

Accrediting agencies must prepare for an instructional environment in which much of the instructional potential of the world will be available to almost any community in the world.

Chadron State College is working with the university, state, and community college systems as well as the public and private infrastructure to develop a quality statewide instructional environment in Nebraska. Chadron State College offers a full array of undergraduate and pre-professional programs in the Schools of Business and Applied Science, Humanities and Social Science, Mathematics and Science, as well as Education and Graduate Studies. Most of the graduate education programs at the master's and specialist's level are available within the School of Education and Graduate Studies. Recently, doctoral programs in educational administration and instruction began a pilot phase in cooperation with the University of Nebraska in Lincoln. Programs leading to other graduate degrees, some aspects of undergraduate education, and specialized professional programs are offered in cooperation with the University of Nebraska in Lincoln, University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha, University of Nebraska Learning Center in Scottsbluff, and Western Nebraska Community College in Scottsbluff. Lincoln and Omaha are located in the eastern part of Nebraska more than 400 miles distant. Scottsbluff is 100 miles south of Chadron. Two-way interactive audio and video links on T1 digital telephone lines and the Nebraska satellite allow Chadron State College to offer a Master's of Business Administration; pre-medical programs with guaranteed acceptance into the University medical, dental, and pharmacy programs; as well as specialized resources to support range management, criminal justice, and foreign language programs. A compressed video satellite link along with a telephone voice and data link to the University of North Dakota support a recently-launched airways science program.

Courses and, in a few cases, total programs are taught using this same distance learning system to meet information needs of Nebraska citizens residing in small scattered communities. Interactive distance learning classrooms have been installed in seven western Nebraska communities. Alliance is 60 miles south with two classrooms; Scottsbluff is 100 miles southwest with two classrooms; Sidney is 140 miles south with one classroom; Wallace is 235 miles southeast with one classroom; Sutherland is 215 miles southeast with one classroom; North Platte is 235 miles southeast with one classroom; and Callaway is 270 miles east with one classroom. Chadron State College supports these locations with three interactive distance learning classrooms connected to the digital T1 system and digital satellite link. Using a digital switch with the T1 telephone system, any combination of sites can be combined for a class and the instruction can originate from any site.

With this background information, one can readily see interactive distance learning serving two purposes. The first is the ability to share scarce instructional resources in a large western state with a total population of just over a million people. The strengths of the university, state, and community college systems are combined with strong basic programs at Chadron State College to build total programs of quality education in western Nebraska. In turn, parts of and, in a few cases, total programs are then provided to the present seven distant learning sites in the Chadron State College service area as their needs dictate. Distance learning courses are usually taught by college faculty and the small numbers of students in several communities can be combined through technology. Using interactive distance learning technology, the faculty of Chadron State College is augmented by the faculties of the university, state, and community college systems. The campus might be defined technically to include much of western Nebraska. North Central Association accreditation in this situation begins to take on regional characteristics and include more than one institution.

Accreditation Concerns

I believe there is only one major concern regarding North Central accreditation of this or a similar program; "Is the interactive distance learning program an integral part of the institution?" Being an integral part of the institution means it is not a separate administrative unit that begs the main campus administrative units for faculty support and funding. Interactive distance learning locations are operated at the same quality level as the main campus during the scheduling of classes, allocation of funds, advising and support of students, provision for library support, class requirements of students, and assessment of learning. Students at the distance learning sites should never, never, never utter the phrase; "We are second class students!"

NCA accreditation should adhere to the same 24 General Institutional Requirements (GIRs) and five Criteria for all institutional programs and include any interactive distance learning component as part of the total program. This integration should be indicated clearly in the Self-Study Report and the NCA team should be prepared to observe interactive distance learning classes, travel to some of the remote sites, and collaborating institutions to meet with students and staff, as well as observe the facilities and resources. The Self-Study Report and NCA team should document quality instructional programs with the distant learning sites and collaborating institutions being equal in quality to the campus seeking accreditation. The barriers of distance should be addressed through technology, human support services, and duplication of materials.

- **Mission Statement.** The mission statement should include interactive distance learning as part of the fabric of the institution. The courses taught using this system should have equal footing with those taught on campus when considered for degrees or transfer to other institutions.

- **Authorization.** Interactive distance learning should be recognized as a legitimate means to meet the degree requirements of the institution seeking accreditation. This should be clearly defined in the legal documents of the institution.

- **Governance—Criteria One and Two.** The administrative responsibility for interactive distance learning is primarily the responsibility of the academic officers of the institution who routinely keep the governing board of the institution informed about the delivery system. The academic officers are responsible for providing the resources necessary for quality instruction; therefore, they should be responsible for the quality of all instruction. Office, library, and classroom space, as well as computer and network access, is essential at remote locations. These facilities can often be found in public schools, community colleges, and similar facilities and may be used in exchange for the opportunity to obtain classes for students and citizens from the surrounding area as well as using the system for their own courses and meetings. A memorandum of understanding, drawn up by the legal representatives of each institution, should specify the conditions, times, and support to be available for NCA inspection.

- **Faculty–Criteria One and Two.** Standards for faculty teaching on the interactive distance learning system should meet the same standards as those employed on the

campus and in most cases will be the tenure track institutional faculty. The administrative structure of the institution will need to provide the incentives and support necessary to maintain faculty support and enthusiasm for this system. A training program should be in place to prepare first-time instructors to use the system effectively as well as to provide experienced instructors an avenue to review and upgrade instructional skills. A faculty committee with student representatives should exist to advise the administration regarding instructional and technical concerns. There should be a formula in place to take into account the number of remote sites and the number of students in the combined class to determine when classes need to be split or numbers limited. There should be support personnel available to assist with faxing, mailing, production, and distribution of instructional support materials. There may need to be a formula in place to reimburse faculty for extra time needed to prepare for distance learning classes.

- **Educational Programs–Criteria Two, Three, and Four.** The educational program offered through interactive distance learning should be based on the needs of students at remote locations and on the ability of the institution to support class meeting standards equal to that of the main campus.

  Three primary concerns should be addressed regarding the educational program at remote sites. The first is equal access to visual scenes, verbal exchanges, hard copy, and realia during a course. The visual and verbal components are technical issues and they are solvable. The use of fax machines, package services, and the U.S. Mail save the latter with a little planning. The second is access to resource materials such as library holdings, lab facilities, computer support, and networks. Some library materials may need to remain at a remote site during all or parts of a class. Others can be located in libraries on the main campus and elsewhere using computer networks and ordering the material through interlibrary loan. Lab materials may be packaged in kit form or the remote site may have the necessary facilities. One issue will be meeting safety standards to avoid liability concerns. More students have access to personal computer equipment, but access is necessary for all students. A major concern with software is to obtain the licenses necessary for use in remote locations. Third is the ability to interact with the instructor and other students outside of class. This can be accomplished by visits to the main campus, the instructor teaching from different sites, E-mail, and the use of "800" telephone numbers.

  The interactive distance learning programs should be evaluated by the same assessment plan as that employed on the main campus. There also should be an assessment program in place to determine student and instructor reaction to the system and an opportunity of offer suggestions for improvement.

- **Finances–Criteria Four and Five.** The institution should support an office at each remote location staffed with personnel who will survey the needs of students, advise students, prepare and receive materials, proctor tests, as well as monitor the technical support systems, and provide a pleasant inviting classroom setting. Affordable quality personnel for sites with a few students can often be recruited from retired residents, alumni residing in the community, and persons with young children who wish to work part-time. These offices need to be networked into the

main campus computer system to process student information, registration, E-mail with faculty and other students, and obtain library resources.

Interactive distance learning programs will be more expensive than traditional campus programs because of carrier costs, shipment of materials, and personnel and facilities at remote sites. To provide quality programs equal to those on campus, these funds should be part of the on-going institutional budget. These can be offset by considering the cost of adjunct faculty, the cost and hazards of travel for campus faculty, the cost and hazards of travel for placebound students, and costs to student earning power when unable to obtain higher education services. Are these variables factored into the cost formula for contributions from the campus and from students at a distance?

- **Public Information–Criterion Five.** The catalog, class schedules, student handbooks, faculty handbooks, and similar documents should list the policies for interactive distance learning with other academic policies and information. The class schedules should clearly list distance learning classes with the campus offerings. These documents should clearly state the equal status of distance learning classes with campus classes.

Conclusion

Again, the accreditation of interactive distance learning programs should be based on inclusion in the campus curriculum, provision for effective instruction, and inclusion in the assessment programs to determine student learning. To make the accreditation process even more interesting, the packaging of courses and information in multimedia modules is on the horizon. With the establishment of the Information Highway System and the competition among commercial vendors to provide educational products to use on this system, we may have many opportunities as well as a very exciting, threatening, and uncertain future ahead of us. Personally, I think the opportunities and exciting aspects far outweigh the other two.

Resources

Source of documents relating to students, staff, training, support, evaluation, and technology:

Deanna Trowbridge, Director of Title III Distance Learning, 1000 Main St., Chadron State College, Chadron, NE 69337.

Gwen Nugent, Administrative Director, NETCHE, Inc., Box 8311, Lincoln, NE 68501.

Source of documents relating to support and staff training:

Thomas E. Cyrs, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM 88001.

Roger Wess is Professor of Education and Coordinator of the Distance Learning Program at Chadron State College, Chadron, NE.

Chapter X

The Effectiveness of Peer Review

Is Accreditation Working? The Results of the Assessment of the Effectiveness of Regional Accreditation in the New England Region

Lynette Robinson-Weening
Charles Cook

Regional accreditation is at a critical crossroads. Until very recently, the regional accreditation associations generally had been bypassed or ignored in the public debate over how to improve the quality of higher education in America. In the past several months, however, accreditation has been featured more prominently in these discussions and the attention has often not been flattering. Many attribute the revisions to the Higher Education Reauthorization Act of 1992 creating State Postsecondary Review Entities and proscribing specific standards for regional accreditation associations as a reaction to the perceived failure of regional accreditation to function as a guarantee of academic quality. Unfortunately, the regional associations have had little more than anecdotal evidence to document their effectiveness in assuring institutional quality and promoting improvement in affiliated institutions.

In 1991, the president of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges challenged its members to devise:

> a strategy by which we might learn from our member schools what they know about the accreditation process and its relationship to quality education and what they think about whether this Association is doing an effective job.

In 1992, the Commission of Institutions of Higher Education accepted that challenge by undertaking an external study of its effectiveness. The Commission was interested in evaluating its processes to determine whether they had a significant impact on affiliated institutions as well as learning how those processes could be improved. It was also interested in providing empirical data that could inform the current national debate on the relevance and future role of accreditation. This report is a summary of the results of that study.

In contrast to its public credibility, regional accreditation as it is practiced in New England was found to make a substantial difference in the educational quality of affiliated institutions. Although the survey and interviews indicated that some institutions felt greater impact from the process than did others, there was a strong belief among all types of institutions that there was no better system of quality assurance for higher education and a genuine commitment among most participants to using the process to bring about needed institutional improvements.

In the following few paragraphs, a brief overview of the methods and results of this study will be presented. A summary of the study with recommendations for Commission action as well as the complete report are available from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

A questionnaire addressing the goals, effectiveness, and impact of regional accreditation was sent to the presidents of all colleges and universities accredited by the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. Of those 197 regionally-accredited colleges and universities, 174 completed surveys. The very high response rate of 88% provided a broadly representative sample of the diverse institutions affiliated with the New England Association. The survey was followed by a series of 33 interviews with presidents, provosts, and self-study chairs at 12 institutions, which supplemented as well as provided strong validation of the results of the data gathered from the questionnaire.

When looked at in the aggregate, member institutions clearly found accreditation as practiced in the New England region to be in excellent health. Members indicated both on questionnaires and through interviews that they believed that the Commission's processes and criteria were very important and effective in measuring quality and in encouraging improvement. They perceived no other external group having the amount of positive impact on the educational quality of their institutions as did regional accreditation, except for that of sponsoring denominations for sectarian institutions. The process was seen as generating at least moderate and often a great amount of desirable institutional change and rarely causing any undesirable change. A sizable majority reported that the benefits of accreditation to its institutions outweighed the costs.

The membership agreed with the current emphases given to various aspects of the accreditation process. There was some discontent with the amount of documentation required for the self-study. Although this was felt by different types of institutions, it was particularly problematic for institutions with smaller budgets, staff, and enrollments. In addition, there was a significant group of institutions, primarily two-year, comprehensive, and liberal arts-II institutions, that felt that they had insufficient voice in designing the focus of their self-studies.

There was a very high degree of relationship between satisfaction and impact for all aspects of the accreditation process. The more impact the process is perceived to have, the more satisfied are institutions. Of the various parts of the accreditation process, the self-study had the greatest impact for most institutions. This was not true for research universities that indicated that the team visit had the greatest impact. This finding was validated in the

interviews done at research institutions. All aspects of the process were reported to have at least moderate impact to the great majority of institutions.

Respondents strongly approved of the manner in which the Commission conducted its activities. Institutions overwhelmingly endorsed the Commission's treatment of individual institutions, its fairness and equability in applying standards and making decisions, and its ability to hear and represent accurately and appropriately the concerns of New England higher education. There were presidents representing both sectarian institutions and smaller institutions, however, who felt that the particular concerns of their institutions were not sufficiently understood by the Commission.

Generally speaking, accreditation in New England was found to be functioning extremely well. The areas in which improvement may be warranted are linked with how seriously the Commission wants to take its goal of encouraging institutional improvement for all types of institutions and what efforts it can undertake to encourage institutions to become more effective in measuring and communicating the quality of their educational program.

Differences in Impact

In order to understand the impact of accreditation thoroughly, responses to all questionnaire items were analyzed by several institutional characteristics to learn if there were differences in the perceived effectiveness. Several patterns emerged. Statistically significant differences in responses were frequently found to be associated with institutional type, size, selectivity, accreditation history, and whether or not the president had served on accreditation teams. To a lesser extent, differences were also related to institutional control and to whether or not the president had been at the institution at the time of the last accreditation visit.

Generally speaking, respondents from institutions that tended to be smaller, less selective, and with non-routine accreditation histories, (e.g., focused visits, required annual reports of finance and enrollment, show cause, probation, etc.) reported higher levels of impact, greater improvement, and greater impact resulting from the Commission action.

Conversely, respondents from highly selective, private institutions, regardless of size of the institution, and large public research institutions perceived less impact from the accreditation process and reported less improvement as a result of the process than did presidents representing others classifications of institutions. One of the primary purposes of the interviews was to better understand the causes for these differences.

Factors Affecting Effectiveness of Accreditation

Through the interviews, a set of common variables emerged that appear to have a strong relationship to the effectiveness of the accreditation process at all types of institutions. Although there are clearly characteristics that larger, research institutions share that may mitigate the impact of a process that focuses on the whole institution, when accreditation has greatest impact and when it can be seen as potentially leading to institutional change and

improvement at research and liberal arts-I institutions, it is most often because of the same factors that make for a successful process at other types of institutions. These factors are related to:

- **timing of the accreditation process in the life cycle of the institution;** institutions undergoing a transition or change, whether externally induced through fluctuations in enrollment or funding, or internally produced because of new leadership, changes in mission, curricular revisions, etc., are more likely to use and benefit from the process in meaningful ways than do institutions experiencing periods of perceived stability.

- **the actual and perceived leadership role of the president;** presidents who were committed to making the accreditation process a meaningful and useful one and to using the results of that process to move the institution in positive directions were more likely to generate institutional improvement than were less involved presidents. What may be most important in this observation is that having academic deans and provosts committed to accreditation is not sufficient. Presidents must be committed as well if significant institutional improvement is to occur.

- **the inclusiveness of the process;** institutions that experienced the greatest improvement were ones that focused on real issues of institutional-wide concern in the self-study (first year experience, relationship between graduate and undergraduate education, diversity, mission redefinition), whose processes were perceived as being open, genuine, and broadly representative, and whose products (self-study and team report) were widely disseminated and discussed throughout the college community.

Future Role for Accreditation

There was a consensus among members interviewed that federal and state intervention in accreditation should be avoided at all costs. There are some members who felt that accreditation may be partially responsible for the increased skepticism of and growing federal and state attention to higher education today. Part of the lack of public understanding of the importance of self-regulation to postsecondary education in the United States may be inherent in the process itself. In order to encourage meaningful self-evaluation and candor in the peer review process, accreditation is removed from the public arena. Public disclosure is limited to the accreditation status of an institution. Most remain unaware of the process by which that status was achieved. One President remarked that, *"the public needs to know that the watchers are really watching."*

Among the comments included on questionnaires and that came up in interviews were suggestions that more publicity about the results of the accrediting process may help the public to see that it is more than a *"closed club process"* or *"old boys network"* and would provide *"greater visibility and awareness about the accomplishments of members institutions."* Although these concerns are certainly not on the minds of all of those interviewed, many believe that now is an appropriate time for the regional accrediting associations not

only to take more leadership publicly on these issues, but also to rethink some of its policies about self-disclosure to determine if there are ways to promote candid and honest self and peer appraisal while at the same time providing the public with a better understanding of what member institutions are achieving. If accreditation improves the quality of higher education in New England, *"the public ought to know it."*

These are the major issues to emerge from the study. During the presentation, additional results from the survey and interviews will be presented and recommendations for improving the effectiveness of regional accreditation will be discussed. The response from the Commission to the recommendations will also be discussed.

Lynette Robinson-Weening is Teaching Fellow of the Higher Education Program at Boston College, Boston, MA.

Charles Cook is Director of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Boston, MA.

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