

**Report to the
Faculty, Administration, Trustees, and Students
of
[COLLEGE NAME]
[Location]**

by

An Evaluation Team representing the
[State Higher Education Commission]

Prepared after study of the institution's self-study report
and a visit to the campus from [dates] 2010

Team Members

[Chair and team members]

Assisting the Team

[Client: Staff Assistant to the Chair]

AT THE TIME OF THE VISIT

President:

[name]

Chief Academic Officer:

[name, title]

Chancellor of System:

[name]

Chair of the Board of Trustees:

[name, title, address]

I. Context and Nature of the Visit

Institutional Overview

[outlined here]

Scope of Institution at the Time of the Evaluation

[outlined here]

Self-Study Process and Report

[described here]

II. Affirmation of Continued Compliance with Eligibility Requirements

[Boilerplate affirming continued compliance.]

III. Compliance with Federal Requirements

[Boilerplate affirming continued compliance.]

IV. Evaluation Overview

[Institution] has made significant progress since its last accreditation. Institutional leadership has successfully worked through periods of transition to move the College forward and, most recently, to conduct an effective institutional self-study during the 2010 accreditation process.

As one of NN colleges in the [university system], [institution] benefits from university-wide systems that support administrative functions, such as [examples here]. The College is actively working to implement this complex system in order to streamline financial and other operations. In the meantime, since existing financial management information systems are unable to integrate disparate systems, the College is independently developing an all-funds financial reporting system. We have recommended that the college develop an all-funds multi-year budgeting model.

The College has also made progress toward integrating budgeting and strategic planning processes with the [university-wide] annual budgeting process that produces [name of document articulating measurable goals]. This well done and useful document needs to be disseminated more widely, allowing more people to use it to measure performance. While the College's inclusive administrative model is commendable for its efforts to improve transparency and communication with the campus community, more inclusive assessment will help it move towards even greater transparency, accountability, and commitment.

[Institution]’s planning and budgeting tools keep the institution well focused on its mission, clearly articulated in the mission statement adopted in December 2009. We see strong evidence that the College adheres well to its mission with respect to maintaining a culture of integrity; offering well designed, rigorous educational offerings and outstanding student support services; and expanding facilities such as [examples cited here].

That [institution] remains one of the country’s most diverse colleges is also in line with its mission. [Institution] has increased retention and graduation rates, yet recognizes that there is more work to be done. We recommend that the multi-year enrollment plan now in the drafting stage be widely discussed and finalized.

The faculty is increasingly competitive, yet the College does face some challenges in this area. A growing number are approaching retirement age. To free up tenure-track and tenured faculty for more research may require increasing an already high proportion of adjuncts—a difficult balance. The College has also struggled to increase faculty diversity; we therefore support the self-study report recommendation that the provost appoint a person responsible for diversity.

While commitment to faculty assessment is inconsistent across departments and schools, there has been impressive activity in the past five years with respect to assessment of learning outcomes in academic offerings. In the spirit of faculty ownership of all that is academic, we suggest transferring oversight of the core curriculum from the administration to the faculty. Also, to ensure continued momentum, we recommend that the College work to continue the processes and assessment activities put in place in the last several years.

The College’s varied programs for skill building, career support, continuing education, and international executive training are well developed and successful. A particularly innovative initiative is the Schwartz Communication Institute, whose video oral communications project should be celebrated as a national model in higher education. And the College’s new learning communities appear to be having a positive effect on retention and academic success.

Complementing these special programs are the College’s student support services, which have undergone significant additions and changes over the past five years. Its success in reaching out to at-risk students to encourage more use of support services is paying off with higher graduation and retention rates. (The College’s program for disadvantaged students also has the highest graduation and retention rate of all the programs within its university system.) Staffing has increased in the past few years, but demand continues to exceed resources.

Overall, we see [institution] as an institution that is dynamic, self-aware, and committed to achieving ambitious yet realistic goals that both affirm the College’s mission and solidify its standing within [the university system]. The level of the institution’s continuing commitment and progress on so many fronts is a testament to the quality, competence, and dedication of its leadership, faculty, and professional and administrative staff.

V. Compliance with Accreditation Standards

Standard 1: Mission, Goals, and Objectives

[Institution] meets this standard.

Summary of Evidence and Findings

Based on a review of the self-study report, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard:

1. [Institution] clearly defines its purpose within the context of higher education.
 - a. The College's mission statement defines the institution as a "[direct quote here.]" Its stated mission is to "[direct quote here," notes the self-study report.
 - b. The self-study report states that the College distinguishes itself within the [university] system in that "[direct quote here.]"
 - c. The report emphasizes consistency of faculty perception with respect to mission, particularly in that "[direct quote here.]"
2. The College's new mission statement, approved December 2009, defines whom the institution serves. We feel that it is premature to assess how well the College uses it to evaluate the institution's effectiveness.
 - a. The mission statement states that it offers its programs to "[direct quote here.]"
 - b. It further defines its constituencies as undergraduates, graduate students, and "[direct quote here.]"
3. [Institution] states goals and objectives that are consistent with the aspirations and expectations of higher education.
 - a. The Strategic Plan and Master Plan fulfill this requirement.
4. The Strategic Plan 2006-2011 and the annual [name of document articulating measurable goals] detail what [institution] intends to accomplish, and specify how the College will fulfill its mission.
 - a. The Strategic Plan details specific strategies to meet these goals and objectives:
[listed here]
 - b. [Institution's document articulating measurable goals], developed each year as part of the [university system's review process], addresses the broader [university system criteria] in

the context of its strategic plan's goals and objectives. We believe it would be useful to have this document as an appendix to the self-study report.

This document's value lies in the way it maps [the university system's] system-wide targets to the goals and objectives outlined in the College's strategic plan, and then sets specific measurable outcomes for each criterion. [Example cited here.]

We cite this example to show the degree of specificity to which [institution] strives to hold itself accountable. Most strategic plan objectives—each one tied to a system-wide metric—are measured using equally specific criteria. Whether they are perceived to be realistic by the appropriate constituencies needs to be determined.

5. There is mixed success in [institution]'s development and recognition of its mission, goals, and objectives by the institution's members and governing body.
 - a. Once the recent mission statement was drafted, the committee submitted it to the Faculty Senate, which reviewed, discussed, and approved it.
 - b. The self-study report indicates that the Strategic Plan is well disseminated
 - c. The annual [document articulating measurable goals], is not well disseminated, according to the report.
6. [Institution]'s strategic plan and [document articulating measurable goals] signal that, at the very least, the College's intentions and aspirations are to use its mission, goals and objectives to develop and shape programs and practices.

Significant Achievement

The Strategic Plan developed by the College several years ago was well developed, and significant progress has been made in spite of a leadership in transition.

Suggestion

We suggest that [institution] make greater use of the annual [document articulating measurable goals] as a working document for ongoing program planning and evaluation, as well as yearly institutional planning and self-assessment. .