

REPORT OF A VISIT
TO
UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA
Cedar Falls, Iowa
February 19-21, 2001
for the
Higher Learning Commission
of the
North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

EVALUATION TEAM

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This is a report of a comprehensive evaluation for continued accreditation at the University of Northern Iowa for graduate and undergraduate programs, conducted on February 19-21, 2001, for the Commission on Higher Learning of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. This report is organized into four sections: *Section I*; an introduction to the context of the comprehensive evaluation, *Section II*; an evaluation of the institution against the General Institutional Requirements(GIRs) and the Criteria for Accreditation, including a summary of strengths and challenges, *Section III*; advice and suggestions to the University, and finally, *Section IV*; formal recommendations with appropriate rationale to the Commission on Higher Learning.

Section I-The Introduction

The University of Northern Iowa (then Iowa State Teachers College) was first accredited as a teachers college in 1913 and has been on the North Central Association's list continuously since 1918. During the 1950s, the institution was granted approval to offer limited types of graduate programs, primarily at the masters level. In 1964 the University of Northern Iowa (then State College of Iowa) was granted full accreditation at the specialist degree level. Following an NCA review in 1971, the University of Northern Iowa was granted continued accreditation for ten years. A focused visit in 1978 resulted in NCA approval for UNI to offer the Doctor of Industrial Technology degree. As a result of an NCA visit in 1981, the University was once again granted continued accreditation for a ten year period. During the intervening years, the University of Northern Iowa received NCA approval to offer the Doctor of Education degree, which did not require a site visit at that time. The most recent comprehensive evaluation for continued accreditation, prior to the current visit, occurred in April, 1991, with a recommendation for

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continued accreditation for another ten year period, followed by a Progress Report in May, 1994; focused on (a) resource allocation, implementation, and evaluation of the new general education program initiated in 1988; and (b) progress and further development of the University's affirmative action policies and procedures.

In conducting the current evaluation, the eight members of the NCA team consulted with the President, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Vice President for Educational and Student Services, Vice President for Administration and Finance, Vice President for University Advancement, Executive Assistant to the President, Special Assistant/Marketing, three members of the Board of Regents, several community leaders and alumni representatives, along with Deans, Department Chairs, Directors, and the leadership of the Faculty Senate, United Faculty bargaining unit and the Professional and Scientific Council. Additionally, open meetings were held with the faculty and staff (approximately 90-100) and students (approximately 50-60), along with a very well organized and enjoyable luncheon hosted by the student government leadership.

The Self-Study report was well written, readable, and informative. It was obvious that the Self-Study was a campus wide effort. The report provided a useful description and a good sense of the University, including strengths and challenges facing the institution. Of particular note was the University's narrative response to twenty-two evaluative comments taken from the 1991 Report, along with a report of progress made and new initiatives undertaken since the 1991 NCA review.

Section II-Evaluation for Continued Accreditation

The General Institutional Requirements

The University's documentation of how the General Institutional Requirements (GIRs) have

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been met are reported in the Self-Study document, beginning on page 151 of the report. Appropriate documents were made available to the team during the visit to verify background materials pertaining to the GIRs. Team members also reviewed catalogs and other materials, along with the Basic Institutional Data(BID) prior to the visit. The current NCA team has concluded that the University of Northern Iowa has met the General Institutional Requirements.

The Criteria for Accreditation

The Self-Study Report of the University of Northern Iowa has documented sufficient evidence to show that the institution has met each of the five criteria for Accreditation. The report makes the case persuasively. Following the teams's evaluation of the Self Study materials and conducting the visit, members of the team were unanimous in their view that the University does meet the criteria for continued accreditation. What follows are observations intended to reinforce good practice, affirm good performance, and stimulate further analysis at UNI.

Criterion One-*The institution has clear and publicly stated purposes consistent with its mission and appropriate to an institution of higher education.*

Founded in 1876, UNI has been known for much of its history primarily as a teacher preparation institution. Over the last several decades, the University has evolved into a multi-purpose institution that offers specialized, accredited graduate programs and a wide range of accredited undergraduate programs. The University focuses on undergraduate education that emphasizes a personalized learning environment and on selected master's, doctoral and other graduate programs that provide students with specialized educational experiences. It is the University's commitment to "Great Teaching" at the undergraduate level that helps to define its

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niche among the three public Universities within the state. The evolution of the institution has also necessitated a concomitant re-examination of its mission and purpose over the course of its history. The University's current mission statement was most recently revised and approved by the Board of Regents in December, 2000 (page 30, Self- Study) and describes itself as.....*a comprehensive institution committed to a liberal arts curriculum and characterized by excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service.* The University embraces the teacher/scholar model, in which teaching and research complement each other.

The character of the University of Northern Iowa, as described in the Self-Study, is embodied in seven values embraced by the University community and described more fully in the institution's *2001-2006 Strategic Plan*: (1) excellence in all of its endeavors, (2) intellectual vitality, intellectual and academic freedom, dialogue and free exchange of ideas, (4) individualized learning (5) an ethical, caring and diverse community, (6) the well being of its students, faculty, and staff, and (7) service to the citizens of the State of Iowa, the nation, and the world. The embodiment of these core institutional values may be noted in the University's efforts to maintain small class sizes, which is intended to encourage stronger faculty-student interaction and more personalized attention for students. Some 90% of UNI classes have 50 or fewer students, and 56% have 25 or fewer students. Additionally, UNI takes pride in providing for the educational needs of most in-state students. Approximately 93% of the University's student body are Iowa residents, representing all 99 counties within the state of Iowa.

While the University's stated mission and core values have highlighted the importance of "an educated person" through the advancement of diversity, global exposure and good teaching, the

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institution remains challenged by its efforts to reach its diversity goals while also providing for the educational needs of its resident student body. The 1991 NCA report raised concern about the University's efforts toward reaching its diversity goals, partly due to the institution's location. However, the University has made important strides toward hiring and retaining minority faculty and staff over the past ten years (Table 1, p11, Self Study). While the University has also made significant strides toward reaching the Board of Regent's diversity goal of recruiting 8.5% minority student body, compared to roughly 4% minority population within the state, the current minority student body of 4.84% represents a record enrollment, even though less than the targeted goal. The University's paradox lies in the challenge of honoring its commitment to resident students, while also utilizing state resources to recruit out of state minority students to meet its diversity goals. While the University's graduate minority student population now exceeds 7%, mainly through partnerships with several Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) in the south and participation in the Graduate Feeder Scholars Program at Florida A&M, the institution's efforts to reach its diversity goal is ambitious but commendable. The challenge of using state resources to reach such goals may be compromised through competing priorities, but every effort should be made by UNI to energize its recruitment strategy as a means of enhancing diversity.

Other goals and objectives of the University are described in the institution's most recent planning document; *UNI Strategic Plan 2001-2006*, approved by the Board of Regents in November, 2000 (Appendix C , Self Study). UNI has a history of academic planning initiatives dating back to its initial Planning Document approved in May, 1990; revised and approved in December, 1996; and its most recent planning initiative gaining Board approval in December, 2000. Each of these

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documents were reviewed by team members and are accessible in hard copy and the Internet. The formalized planning process serves the University by integrating budget, academic program review, and assessment.

The *UNI Strategic Plan 2001-2006* documents the University's description of its culture, values and vision statement. The plan describes eight (8) specific goals of the University, along with achievement indicators associated with the stated objectives. Budget and academic program priorities, on a functional basis, appear to be driven by the planning initiatives, but also remains dynamic and responsive to the environment.

The institution's mission and goals are made open and accessible through the presence of a strategic plan, information on the World Wide Web, and the UNI homepage (<http://www.uni.edu>). Team members were easily able to access the University's Strategic Plan through the UNI homepage and found it both readable and informative. The University utilizes other methods of sharing its mission and goals with the campus and community, such as its Constituency Relations Management Group formed in 1995. Chaired by the Director of Public Relations, with membership from outreach-oriented offices such as Admissions, Alumni Relations, Development, Career Services, Governmental Relations; and Continuing Education, this group assists the University in its efforts to develop coordinated, comprehensive and consistent communications to enhance the awareness of UNI, both on and off campus.

Additionally, UNI has described the success of its "Community Visitation" program over the past several years, involving the President, Cabinet members, faculty, staff, and students, aimed at promoting the University's presence in selected communities for a day. It focuses on community

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connections to UNI and on local service activities. Students were especially proud of the opportunity to return to their hometown and share their university successes with the community, former teachers and potential students. The presence of University faculty and the administration at these events have been especially rewarding to the students and community leaders. The President, along with the Marketing and Public Relations Office, have also led another successful state-wide outreach effort started in 1998, called "Envisioning Education" presentations. The presentations made by senior-level administrators to service and civic organizations have focused on educating the community about the role of the University within that community and the future of higher education.

Criterion Two-The institution has effectively organized the human, financial, and physical resources necessary to accomplish its purpose.

The University of Northern Iowa has the legal authority to award degrees in accordance with Chapter 262 of the Code of Iowa, which authorizes the Board of Regents of the State of Iowa to legally serve as the governing body for UNI. Iowa State University, University of Iowa, the Iowa Braille and Sight-Saving School, and the Iowa State School for the Deaf also fall under the authority of the Board of Regents. The nine member governing Board is appointed by the Governor for six year terms with Senate confirmation. State statute provides for gender balance on the Board and no more than five members may be of the same political party. One of the Board members must be a full-time student enrolled at either the graduate or undergraduate level at one of the state universities.

The Board of Regents both governs and coordinates the functions of the state institutions under its jurisdiction. Pursuant to this authority, the Board establishes the institution's mission,

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adopts long-range plans, makes educational policy, appoints presidents and other institutional officials, reviews and approves budgets for submission to the Governor and State General Assembly, establishes the annual operating budget and personnel policies, oversees the business operations of the University, reviews and approves academic programs, adjudicates disputes, and advocates for the Regent institutions with other State agencies and with the general public. Additionally, the Board Office, located in Des Moines, Iowa, also keeps the Regent institutions apprised of national trends and issues and is headed by an Executive Director. The Board President and two other Board members attended a luncheon hosted by the UNI President on campus. At least one of the Board members was a UNI alumni and all three members were passionate about their commitment to the University and their enthusiastic support for the UNI President. Their knowledge of University initiatives and long range plans for UNI and other Regent institutions was impressive.

The Board exercises its full authority and fiduciary role by delegating appropriate authority to the university presidents. The current UNI President, Dr. Robert D. Koob, was appointed by the Board and became the University's eighth president in 1995. UNI has enjoyed a stable and very capable administration, although one of the Vice Presidents is currently serving in an interim capacity and another has served just over a year in her current position. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Aaron Podolefsky, formerly served the University as Dean of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences and was appointed interim Provost in 1998 and assumed the permanent position in 1999 following a national search.

The Vice President for Educational and Student Services, Renee Romano, assumed her current position in 1999 following a national search. This new Vice President had served the

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University in another capacity some years earlier and is well respected and viewed as proactive with a high energy level. The interim Vice President for Administration, Eunice Dell, has served in this position since November 1, 2000 while a national search is underway, but has served the University for many years as Budget Director prior to this appointment. The Vice President for Advancement, William Calhoun, also is a very capable administrator who is currently heading one of the largest capital campaigns in the history of UNI; intended to raise \$75 million by 2005. Other members of the President's cabinet, Patricia Gadelmann, Special Assistant to the President/Director of External Relations, and Carol Bodensteiner, Special Assistant to the President/Marketing, are also very capable and highly respected administrators.

Members of the President's cabinet demonstrate a level of mutual respect that is productive and beneficial to the campus. The President provides able leadership for the executive team and delegates appropriate levels of responsibility. Each of the executive officers also appear to have the necessary level of authority and resources to administer their respective areas of the University, and have the respect of faculty, staff, and students. The leadership provided by the Office of the Provost is generally well received across the campus. The Provost's previous role as Dean and colleague of long standing has helped the administration and faculty toward an understanding of historical campus issues and appropriate strategies to address them.

University Governance

An open forum with the faculty and staff was well attended, nearly 100 participants, and most were supportive of the administration and strongly committed to their students and the University. Faculty were particularly vocal about their role and primary commitment to teaching, although

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research and scholarship were recognized as important secondary responsibilities. Faculty spoke of the need for more travel funds, office space and laboratory facilities, but generally felt that the administration provided sufficient resources to do their jobs. Several faculty expressed concern about the true nature of faculty involvement in "shared governance", but others countered by stating that faculty did, indeed, play a legitimate role in decision-making. The faculty clearly has primary responsibility for the University's curriculum, including program development, program review, standards for degrees and academic credit, and most academic policy matters. Faculty involvement in the University's governance process is formalized through a structured collective bargaining mechanism, guided by a Master Agreement between the State of Iowa Board of Regents and the UNI-United Faculty and the Iowa Code. The Faculty Senate also plays a vital role in the university governance structure, although there exist clear areas of governing responsibility between the United Faculty, Faculty Senate, Graduate Council, Professional and Scientific Council (P&S), and several other governance councils.

Faculty, staff and students have at their disposal a variety of avenues, within the current governance structure, of participating in the decision-making process. The Student Government (NISG) has a track record of strong leadership and active involvement in student and campus related governance; student leaders who met with NCA team members were bright, well informed, and passionate about the University (e.g. UNI students, during spring 2000, were the first in Iowa to vote on-line in student government elections); Faculty may participate through the Faculty Senate, Graduate Council, United Faculty; some staff are represented by the Professional and Scientific Personnel (P&S) bargaining unit, the Merit employees by the Merit Personnel Advisory Committee

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(M-PAC); and the clerical and supervisory clerical personnel represented by the UNI-SCMP in areas not covered by collective bargaining laws. Each bargaining unit, or Council, has its own constituency and mission, but also serves to strengthen the process of shared governance. For example, faculty serving on the Senate have the opportunity for more in-depth dialogue on matters of particular concern to them. Ofcourse these are issues which transcend the boundaries of any single entity. The campus discussion of early retirement is such an issue. The informal group, "Campus Voices" has demonstrated the advantages of opening lines of discussion, with the chairs of each of the governance bodies sitting together to discuss matters of mutual concern. Some have raised the question as to whether or not this body should become more formalized. There is campus interest in finding more opportunities for discussion on broader topics of mutual concern.

Enrollment Management

The Department of Enrollment Management has a dedicated staff that works diligently to further the mission of the University and to meet changing student needs. The University takes pride in its student body of 93% Iowans. One third of the UNI student body are transfer students and three-fourths of those come from Community Colleges. The enrollment staff is proud of its long-term working relationship with other Iowa Colleges and Universities.

Current enrollment projections(Table II.2, p50, Self -Study) have suggested that the University's enrollment will stabilize around 14,000 students over the next decade, although a slight enrollment increase is expected to occur over the next five years. The University's enrollment is primarily driven by residents in the State of Iowa, so as the size of Iowa high school graduating class rises or falls, so does the UNI enrollment trends.

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Institutional Development

The UNI Foundation serves as the primary fund raising unit at the University. Created in 1959 with somewhat of a passive beginning, the Foundation undertook its first capital campaign in 1970, resulting in the current UNI-Dome. Institutional development and the success of capital campaigns since that time should be commended. The Foundation is well along in the largest capital campaign drive in the history of the University; seeking to raise \$75 million by 2005. Income producing funds in the Foundation approximates \$40 million and the assets from all sources is \$68 million.

The annual campaign produces about \$500,000 in unrestricted dollars which is important to the flexibility of the Foundation. Currently there are 14,000 donors from all sources and the base of living alumni is 84,291. The Foundation is headed by a Vice President who has had many years of experience and is well-equipped to carry out the responsibilities of his assignment.

Financial Resources

UNI is a fiscally sound and well managed university. The state appropriation of \$7497 per FTE student in 2000 represented 53.9 percent of the unrestricted budget. Tuition of \$2515 per FTE student represented 23 percent of the unrestricted budget. The Board of Regents requires UNI, as well as other Regent institutions, to develop strategic plans and to tie budget requests to strategic goals.

The decentralized budget process is highly participatory, beginning with requests from individuals and/or groups. Decentralization of the budget process has been implemented only within the past few years, so Academic Deans are still adjusting to a new level of empowerment.

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Deans and other members of the Academic Affairs Committee spoke favorably of the decentralized budget process, but emphasized the importance of timeliness in flow of information. In Academic Affairs, there are two tracks; an individual or group may submit a program initiative through the College Senate to the University Senate and then to the Provost and Academic Vice President, or an individual or group may submit a program initiative through the department, College Dean, and then to the Provost and Academic Vice President. In other divisions, individuals or groups, including students, submit through their directors to the division vice presidents. The vice presidents prioritize the requests from their divisions and submit them for discussion and review by the President's Cabinet. Once the budget is prioritized by the Cabinet, it is placed on the Web for review and feedback by the entire campus community.

There are several sources of funding for program initiatives. As mandated by the Board of Regents, UNI has established a budget reallocation amount of at least two percent (2%) of the University budget each fiscal year. Tuition increases are committed to program initiatives. The UNI Foundation has transferred increasing amounts of funds to the University. Funding from the Foundation for scholarships has increased from just under \$1 million in 1996 to \$1.75 million in 2000, for designated projects from \$1.75 million in 1996 to \$4.75 million in 2000, and for capital projects from \$0 in 1996 to \$7.75 million in 1999.

UNI has had good success with legislative appropriations. The University has been supported by the State in a manner that has allowed it to maintain relatively small class sizes, address course availability, and continue to develop new program initiatives without significantly large tuition increases. Over the last decade, appropriations (in constant dollars) have increased 7.8 percent.

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Constant dollar tuition has increased, over the same decade, by 10.9 percent. In the most recent year, dollars spent for faculty and staff professional development have increased, student academic planning and availability of required courses to meet students' programs of study have been significantly enhanced.

While auxiliary enterprises are managed as essentially self-supporting activities, the General Educational Fund provides support to certain auxiliaries where the emphasis is on student and public service rather than full reimbursement of all costs. The major auxiliaries operate under formally approved budgets which, in the case of auxiliaries funded by bond issues, provide all mandatory transfers to improvement funds and debt service funds. Plant Fund reserves are maintained at levels adequate to properly maintain and improve auxiliary facilities through renovation, alteration, and equipment replacement.

The University is currently in the midst of implementing a multi-year new and more efficient management system of financial and human resources; the Modern Executive Management and Information System (the MEMFIS Project). The primary intent of this initiative is to replace many of the existing core administrative systems, including; financials, budget development, purchasing, accounts payable, cash management, fixed assets, stores inventories, grants and contract administration, non-student accounts receivable, and human resources and payroll. The administrative and financial functions of the University are moving from an internally-written Legacy system to Oracle, a web-based applications, in order to provide current and necessary decision-making information. Oracle should provide a usable data base and an effective integrated system.

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The Office of the Auditor of State is required by Chapter 11 of the Code of Iowa to annually audit all departments of the State. The financial statements of UNI are audited annually by the Office of the Auditor in accord with generally accepted auditing standards and Chapter 11 of the Code of Iowa. Additionally, the Office of Auditor of State conducts a single audit under the requirements set forth in the Single Audit Act and OMB Circular A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations. The most recent audit, as of June 30, 2000, indicate that the financial statements of the University of Northern Iowa *...present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the University of Northern Iowa at June 30, 2000, and the changes in fund balances and the current fund revenues, expenditures and other changes for the year then ended are in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles.*

Physical Plant

UNI has a physical facility that is supportive of teaching and learning. While there is a five-year plan for additions and renovations in place, there are some facilities that are not addressed in the plan for which there is concern. The most recent Campus Master Plan was revised and updated in 2000. The Campus Master Plan is supportive of the University's Strategic Plan. It maintains a pedestrian-oriented compact, park-like campus with the Library and Union in the center of concentric circles, academic and administrative buildings in the next circle, and athletic and residence facilities in the outer circle.

Since the last accreditation review, a 60,000 square-foot fourth floor was added to Rod Library, providing needed room to accommodate an intended enrollment of slightly over 14,000 students. Curris Business Building, the new Performing Arts Center, the Residence on the Hill,

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CEEE, Field House, and Wellness Recreation Center have been completed. Renovations on Latham, Wright, Seerley, Commons, and Lang Hall are completed, or near completion. New facilities in planning include an Arena Athletic Facility and a Human Performance Center, both to be funded from private dollars. An addition to the McCollum Science Building has been funded by the legislature and is in the design stage, and will help address the need for new laboratory space. Other renovations, including East Gym, Price Laboratory School, and Physics, which are part of a five-year plan for future capital requests.

The Curris Business Building provides excellent facilities for faculty offices, classroom space, teaching and research technology in all classrooms and faculty offices, and computer laboratories and distance learning space and technology. The majority of the faculty offices and classrooms for the College of Education are housed in Schindler Hall. At present, every tenured or tenure-track faculty member has a private office, but some temporary faculty share offices. Any increase in the number of Education faculty to serve increased enrollment will cause office space to become an issue. The Faculty of the School of Health, Physical Education, and Leisure Studies occupy space in the new recreational complex.

The technology plan includes wiring for all classrooms in Schindler Hall; however, there is a lack of adequate presentation equipment in the classrooms. There are three labs in Schindler and a number of stations located elsewhere, as well as public terminals. There is concern in the College of Natural Science about inadequate space for classrooms and for laboratories and about the general condition of the existing space. Some facilities in Natural Sciences are of the 1970 vintage with little remodeling to accommodate what modern equipment and laboratory experiments require. The

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addition to McCollum Science Hall and renovation of Physics, to occur by 2004, should alleviate the problem.

The College of Humanities and Fine Arts generally enjoys good to excellent facilities, including an attractive Performing Arts Center. In two areas, however, renovation is badly needed and indeed is slated in the future. Russell Hall and the offices of Modern Languages are in serious need of work and funds are being collected to support the improvements. The Dean of Humanities and Fine Arts is responding to space needs creatively and intelligently.

Criterion Three-*The institution is accomplishing its educational and other purposes.*

In an effort to identify patterns of evidence relating to *Criterion Three*, team members reviewed materials in the Self-Study and evaluated specific areas of the University relating to its educational programs, teaching effectiveness, assessment of student academic achievement and student academic support services. Many changes across the University and within the external environment have occurred since the 1991 NCA visit, many of them having direct implications on the delivery of educational programs and services at the institution. The University, however, has remained committed to excellence in teaching and learning throughout a decade of successes and challenges.

Academic Programs

The primary educational programs at the University are administered through five undergraduate colleges; the College of Business Administration, the College of Education, the College of Humanities and Fine Arts, the College of Natural Science and the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, along with selected graduate programs offered through the Graduate College

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and outreach courses and programs offered through Continuing Education and Special Programs. Off campus educational programs are administered by the Continuing Education unit and are mainly taught by campus-based full time faculty. The Bachelor of Liberal Studies (BLS) degree program is also administered on the UNI campus by Continuing Education, but the program more accurately represents a collaborative external degree program between UNI, the University of Iowa, and Iowa State University. UNI students enrolled in this program may pursue their course work through correspondence study, World Wide Web classes, telecourses, or through the Iowa Communication Network (ICN).

The University of Northern Iowa indicates in its Self-Study document, and other publications, that it aspires to be the finest public comprehensive university in the nation. Excellence in its academic programs, as an institutional priority, must be reflected in its academic program's content, structure, and integrity if its vision is to become a reality. To that end, the University must continue its current efforts to operationalize its commitment to high quality teaching and learning. The institution's most recently approved *Strategic Plan 2001-2006* (December, 2000) provides a reasonable mechanism for approaching its long term vision through a set of well defined goals and objectives (Appendix C, Self-Study). For example, the University is strongly committed to maintaining small class sizes where 75% of its core educational offerings are taught by full-time tenured, or tenure-track faculty (now at 65 %). Several of its academic programs have also received national recognition for excellence, e.g. the Speech-Language Pathology program is ranked fourteenth in the nation for terminal M.A. programs, according to the most recent rankings by *U.S. News and World Report*.

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The organization and structure of the University's educational program and support areas, are in alignment with the institution's mission and purpose; driven by a well defined Strategic Plan and supported by a sound financial base. Academic programs are well defined with rigor and standards of excellence serving as beacons of academic integrity. The assessment of student academic achievement and program review provide the faculty with standards to benchmark principles of good practice. Faculty are provided the opportunity for Professional Development Leaves (PDL) through stipends, including appropriate fringe benefits, of full salary for one semester or one-half salary for the academic year. Additionally, the Office of the Provost provides for the faculty a number of Academic and Curricular Planning Mini-grants, Faculty Research Grants, and support for the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching (CET). While scholarship and good teaching is encouraged and rewarded, it is clear that the emphasis on education is learning. The University's commitment to a broad liberal education that serve as the foundation for professional education is reflected in the structure and content of its general education curriculum.

General Education

The 1991 NCA visit initially raised several concerns surrounding the... "broadly-based" 47 hour set of general education requirements"(1991 Report, p. 35) and the adequacy of resources allocated to the program, which was not fully in place at the time. The team's recommendation for a Progress Report, due in May 1994, was to address several areas of concern, one of which was "resource allocation, implementation, and evaluation of the new(at that time) general education program. An NCA staff analysis of the UNI Progress Report, in August, 1994, requested the University to submit another report in one year and (1) provide data showing increased funds

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specifically allocated to the General Education program, (2) clarify what individual or group is in charge with conducting the periodic reviews of the General Education program, (3) state the standards to be used in evaluating General Education courses in each area, (4) provide information regarding the results of reviews already implemented, and (5) address how expected outcomes for student learning in General Education will be measured.

In a report dated May 30, 1995, the University responded to each of the five items from the staff analysis and the UNI Report on General Education was accepted by NCA at that time. The essence of the 1995 report was to place oversight responsibility for the program under the jurisdiction of a General Education Committee and restructuring of its curriculum. The 47 hour General Education curriculum is distributed across six (6) major areas: Civilization and Culture (I); Fine Arts, Literature, Philosophy, and Religion (II); Natural Science and Technology (III); Social Science (IV); Communication Essentials (V); and Personal Wellness (VI). A common core of 22 semester hours consist of courses in humanities, writing, oral communication, mathematics, personal wellness, and a two-credit capstone course entitled "Environment, Technology and Society" which requires junior standing. The University's current General Education program has been in place since 1988 and segments of the program are reviewed and revised periodically.

The NCA team noted evidence of changes that have taken place in the General Education program growing out of the review process. One example: Additional courses were added to the Social Science area after students indicated that they did not have sufficient choices. However, staffing issues continue to be problematic. Some classes may have as many as 250 students to accommodate the large number of students who must enroll in them to meet curricular requirements.

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As a result, vast differences in learning experiences exist across the sections, depending on which section a given student may be enrolled. The University should look more closely at those General Education sections with large enrollments and devise a plan to reduce class sizes in those areas. Such a move would support the University's claim of encouraging small class sizes as an avenue of enhancing the quality of teaching and learning, a move that also would be consistent with the University's *Strategic Plan*.

The University has attempted to address this issue partially by proposing a legislative initiative, during the 2000-2001 session, to fully fund salary increases as well as funding for approximately 65 new faculty positions, totaling about three million dollars. However, because of other competing legislative priorities, the University's contingency plan calls for the reallocation of one million dollars from tuition increases to fund 20-22 new faculty positions for the 2001-2002 school year.

The degree of campus acceptance of the principles of general education and of this program in particular varies considerably across Departments and Divisions. On the other hand, there is widespread agreement that the present administration, the Provost in particular, is a substantive supporter of general education. In spite of this support by the Provost, there appears to be a lack of recognition and acceptance of the value of general education courses among some students and faculty of the University. This issue should be addressed on a University-wide level.

NCA team members were also concerned about the effectiveness of the current committee structure that provides oversight for the General Education program. The current General Education Committee functions in an advisory role to the Faculty Senate with only the authority to

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recommend. There is no consistent planning, agreement of course objectives and competencies, or input over who teaches the capstone course. Course objectives are not consistent across all sections. The lack of a single administrator, or program director, creates a leadership gap and provides a fertile atmosphere for competing agendas and lack of focus. A Program Director, or Coordinator, could more effectively oversee the entire General Education Program, providing leadership and cohesiveness to a fragmented program.

A certain amount of continuity is lost by virtue of the fact that the committee members keep changing and the Committee as a whole sees its authority as limited and constrained. For example, when asked about the lack of student outcomes data, some Committee members replied that they had no budget nor any authority to call for such assessment. In the face of student concerns about aspects of the program (e.g. the inconsistency in grading from one section to another for the same course in the same category), there is no individual to assume responsibility of exploring those concerns, or negotiating with faculty and departments about needed improvements. Admittedly, the General Education Committee has attempted to address this concern and has proposed a number of potential solutions, e.g. placing General Education under the aegis of the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching (CET), or creating an Associate Provost for undergraduate programs and include general education as one of those programs.

Academic Units

The *College of Business Administration* offers the Bachelors degree in Accounting, Business Teaching, Finance, Economics, Management, Management Information Systems, and Marketing. The College was first accredited by AACSB in 1993 and reaffirmed in 2000. The teaching load for

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permanent faculty is typically 9 credit hours (3 courses) or less in order to provide time for scholarly and service activities. At the time of the 1999 Self Study for reaccreditation, 89% of the tenured or tenure-track faculty had published at least one peer review article in the past five years, and 77% had published at least two. The College of Business Administration is one of only two colleges within the University which offers an undergraduate Advising Center for its majors.

The College has been successful in fund raising over the last five years, bringing in over \$5 million including funding for two Endowed Chairs. Through its outreach functions in technology transfer and business/community service, the College has over \$5 million of current grants and contracts. These outreach functions provide opportunities for over 1400 students and 57 faculty members to actively participate in economic development and technology transfer projects, including licensing of two commercial soybean-based lubricants, providing consultation services, management and professional development workshops, and assessing environmental compliance and outlining options for waste reductions.

During the NCA visit, the Dean of Business Administration indicated that the College would be opening an MBA program in Hong Kong in April, 2001. While the College has approval of the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, and of the Hong Kong Commission on Education, approval was not sought from the Commission on Higher Learning of the North Central Association for a *Change of Affiliation Status*. Delivering a degree program, for the first time, to an international site is an institutional change that requires Commission approval. Copies of relevant sections of the *Handbook on Accreditation, 1991* were made available to the CBA Dean and the Provost and Academic Vice President was informed of the required approval. The Dean and Provost indicated

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a commitment toward addressing this matter immediately by contacting NCA to begin the process for new program authorization.

The *College of Education* has evolved from a Normal School to a complex educational model now focusing on teaching and learning strategies for both students and faculty. The six departments within the College offers a variety of educational programs at the graduate and undergraduate levels, including the following degree options; BA-Teaching, MA degree, Masters of Art in Education, Specialist in Education, and the Doctor of Education (Ed.D) degree. The Teacher Education program and the practitioner-oriented emphasis of the doctoral program seems to stress, or focus on applied research and field-based experiences. Student teachers are able to gain a variety of field experience opportunities from surrounding school districts, including the Price Laboratory School (PLS), which houses K-12 and pre-school, located adjacent to the campus. The College of Education, along with the College of Business Administration, has established a College Advising Center where teacher education students are advised. The COE also has a Minorities in Teaching Program which works to recruit and retain minority students in education programs.

The College of Education also oversees the Office of Student Field Experiences, which administers the student teaching program, under the supervision of the Director of Teaching Education. Faculty appear to be well credentialed for their areas of teaching and research and students appear to be energized by their interaction with the faculty. Some faculty, however, expressed concern for what they perceived to be a lack of adequate presentation equipment in a number of classrooms in Schindler Hall. Currently, there are three computer laboratories in the Education Building, a small number of stations located elsewhere as well, and public terminals are

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also present. Laboratory facilities and equipment are primarily supported through student computer fees and equipment is replaced on a three year cycle. The College operates both Apple and Window-based computer labs to better prepare students with a variety of technology skills.

While enrollment patterns within the College have typically reflected University trends, some areas such as Early Childhood Education or Elementary Education at the undergraduate level, or Special Education at the graduate level, have shown considerable enrollment increases and further attention will need to focus on these changes. The College of Education has the highest enrollment within the University (3902 students, Fall 2000) and the largest number of off-campus credit offerings (62.5%) among the undergraduate colleges. Faculty teaching loads approximate 9 hours a semester and most faculty are actively engaged in some type of scholarship to augment their teaching schedules and service activities. External funding, through grants and contracts, has reached nearly \$20 million annually, and the number of faculty publications has also significantly increased over the past decade.

The *College of Humanities and Fine Arts* serves the University as the backbone of its academic programs, providing a vital service role toward the quality of the institution's educational product. The eight departments within the College and its faculty, appears to fulfill its mission well; carrying-out the ...*liberal arts*...component of the University's mission and vision through high quality teaching and learning. The College offers a variety of educational programs at the graduate and undergraduate levels, including the following degree options; Bachelor of Arts degree, Bachelor of Fine Arts, Bachelor of Music, and the Master of Music.

Because of the nature and mission of the College, a considerable portion of its efforts and

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resources are dedicated to the support of the General Education curriculum. The College Dean has been creative toward balancing the support of liberal education and professional education; a challenge that could impact the quality and excellence of academic programing. The College will become increasingly challenged by the demand to provide high quality educational programs to a growing student body (2200 majors), in the face of an increasing demand for additional faculty and the supporting resources.

Issues of space have become an increasing challenge for the Dean to manage, but have been addressed in a creative fashion. Recent renovations and new constructions have allowed the Dean to relocate some faculty as a means of addressing the space problem, thereby improving conditions. Renovations, such as that of Lang Hall, have been intelligently and respectfully planned; respectful of the integrity of the original buildings but attentive to the changing needs of faculty and their responsibilities. The new Performing Arts building epitomizes creative use of space which transcends the immediate needs of the College. The building is well designed and provides additional space for CHFA faculty, along with practice space and performance opportunities for UNI students. Additionally, the Performing Arts building provides a number of opportunities for the local community to enjoy University performances, while also allowing community participation in the local symphony. The use of the building for university and community needs to support the Fine Arts has been a positive avenue toward community outreach, or better integrating the town and gown relationship.

The *College of Social and Behavioral Science*, like several other colleges, plays a vital role toward the support of General Education. The Dean and several faculty were quick to point out their

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commitment to General Education, and with the anticipation of additional faculty positions to the College, there is a commitment toward providing additional tenured, or tenure-track faculty to teach in the General Education program. The current Dean is still fairly new in this position, having previously served as Head of the Psychology Department; she is clearly perceived by the faculty as a strong and effective leader who represents the College well.

There are seven departments within the College responsible for a variety of graduate and undergraduate programs. One of the newest degree programs within the College, the Master of Social Work (MSW), was approved by the University and Board of Regents in 1999 and is now in place. However, with the expansion of new programs within the College, comes the challenge of space and facilities, not only for Social Work, but for other departments as well.

Faculty credentials are strong and research/scholarship is highly valued, but with a very strong commitment to teaching as priority. Faculty research activities are primarily focused toward applied research and undergraduate research opportunities are encouraged as well; e.g. the annual Undergraduate Social Science Research Conference, or opportunities through the Center for Social and Behavioral Research (CSBR). Recently, a number of tenure-track positions have been opened and a considerable amount of faculty recruitment is now underway, providing a heightened sense of enthusiasm among the faculty. Results from program reviews have been favorable and a few suggested changes within the curriculum are currently underway.

The *College of Natural Sciences* has a number of strong academic programs under effective leadership of the Interim Dean and seven academic departments. The College offers a number of educational programs at the graduate and undergraduate level, including the Doctor of Industrial

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Technology. Several programs have been nationally recognized through specialized accreditation, such as the National Association of Industrial Technology, and other programs play vital roles toward the support of General Education, e.g. Biology, Chemistry, Earth Science, Mathematics, and Physics.

Enrollment trends within the College have shown modest increases over recent years, although enrollment patterns show slight variations across departments. For example, the Biology department tends to get over subscribed while the Mathematics department has experienced some degree of enrollment decline. Approximately 65% of the undergraduate students graduate in six years and few are able to complete degree requirements in four years. However, the placement record for the College is nearly 100%, if advancement to graduate schools or professional schools and moving into jobs of choice are included. This is an outstanding record, which speaks well of student advisement, career placement and faculty mentors. Faculty also expressed some degree of concern about the effect of projected long term faculty turnover rates within the College. Even though faculty turnover, other than anticipated retirements, has been relatively stable, there is concern in recent years over the likelihood of good faculty members looking to leave for positions in research universities.

The 1991 NCA review also raised a number of issues, pertaining to CNS, which in large part have been addressed over the past decade, e.g. program review, equipment support, and Research and Scholarship support as a factor in faculty merit pay. Academic programs within the College, like programs across the University, are reviewed on a regular seven year cycle by internal and external reviewers. While the University's support for equipment within the College has shown some degree

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of improvement in recent years, the overall level of equipment support continues to fall considerably below an acceptable level within the College at this time. The Provost has a centralized fund for separate allocations to the deans for needed equipment, but \$225,000 for a University equipment budget is woefully short of an adequate funding base for equipment to support the CNS or the University as a whole. This issue is accentuated by the fact that the deans are often forced to utilize some of this funding to provide start-up support for newly recruited faculty within the College. The University would be well advised to carefully reexamine its funding base for equipment, supplies and repairs in an effort to protect the academic integrity of its educational programs and student learning outcomes.

Research and Scholarship activities, within the CNS, are now integral components of the faculty review process for merit pay. One-fourth of the evaluation factor now comes from research and scholarship, and new faculty are made aware of the expectations pertaining to research, tenure and promotion. However, there is a practical limitation to the effectiveness of this improved system. Two-thirds of the available money for merit increase goes to an across-the-board salary increase mandated by a faculty union agreement. Of the remaining one-third, the deans have discretionary authority to use part of it to make market adjustments where necessary and what remains for merit increases is rather small. Nevertheless, the University has consistently implemented good faculty salary increases over the years, although salary compression is becoming an issue of increasing concern to the faculty and department heads. However, this issue is a common problem among most universities with no easy solution.

The *Graduate College*, which has overall responsibility for graduate and research programs

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across the University, appears to be well staffed with two Associate Deans, a Director of grants and contracts and several staff and office support personnel. The graduate faculty is represented by the Graduate Council and serves in an advisory role to the Graduate Dean. A review of various data relating to graduate enrollment, graduate degrees awarded, placement of graduates, research proposal activities by the faculty and research funding secured by these proposals all demonstrate the vitality of graduate and research programs at UNI. Team members who met with the Graduate Council and several graduate students report that there is energy and enthusiasm among the students and faculty about graduate education.

Previous concerns noted in the 1991 review pertaining to low stipend levels for graduate students remain problematic and funding for assistantships continue to be non-competitive. This issue is somewhat mitigated by the policy which allows the departments to supplement the basic stipend with grant and contractual money. The previous NCA team also noted that UNI doctoral programs were marginal and needed a greater commitment by the University to retain vitality. The current NCA team believes, however, that although the size of UNI doctoral programs continue to be marginal, the placement record of those earning the degrees tends to indicate that these degree programs (Doctor of Education and Doctor of Industrial Technology) are serving the students well.

Enrollment trends for graduate students have shown a steady increase over the past decade, from 1,078 in 1989, to 1,569 in 1999. A particularly noteworthy achievement is a significant increase in minority enrollment in the Graduate College during the past decade, due in part to recent partnerships with several Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), e.g. Florida A & M, Dillard University, and Xavier University. In total, these efforts have resulted in 96 student

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recruitments and the awarding of 59 graduate degrees from 1989-1999. At the present time, the minority graduate enrollment at UNI approximates 7%, compared to about 4.6% undergraduate minority enrollment across the University.

The Graduate College has a variety of award programs which are aimed at assisting faculty development and professional participation by graduate students. The Dean has an annual budget of \$172,000 to help support faculty travel for professional presentations and performances. A clearly stated set of criteria is used to award the travel grants, which is cost-shared by the departments. Similarly, the Dean allocates \$30,000 per year to support graduate student travel to professional meetings. The Graduate Dean also has oversight responsibility for Summer Faculty Support (35 awards out of 85 applicants in 2001), matching funds (\$100,00 plus) for equipment purchases from grants and contracts, and the Professional Development Leave (18 awards out of 35 applicants in 2001-02). The Graduate College also recognizes outstanding dissertations, theses, and research reports as well as outstanding graduate faculty teaching awards on an annual basis. The fact that the responsibility of these various support mechanisms are vested in the Graduate College may be seen as clear indication of the importance that the University places in its graduate programs, students and faculty.

Another very important component of the University's educational programs is that of the *Division of Continuing Education and Special Programs*. The Continuing Education unit is administered by an academic dean who is a member of the Council of Academic Deans and equally involved in the decision-making process of academic policy and academic administration. The Dean of this Division also appears to have developed a positive and productive relationship with the other

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academic deans toward the support of academic programs across college boundaries, including credit and non-credit offerings. The Division of Continuing Education has management responsibility for four educational programs, each with its own Director and program focus; Continuing Education Credit Programs, Continuing Education Non-Credit Programs, the Museum and Individual Studies Program. The Museum has recently completed its own self-study and accreditation visit by the American Association of Museums about a week prior to the current NCA review.

Off-campus course offerings and programs at UNI tend to have strong enrollments and educational opportunities are delivered through a variety of avenues, including off-campus sites, the Iowa Communication Network (ICN) courses, Correspondence Study, and semester based on-line courses. Off campus enrollment at the University has grown from 5,049 in 1991-1992 to 8,171 in 1998-1999, with much of the growth occurring within the College of Education and the Graduate College. Through distance education, a number of courses and programs are made available throughout the State of Iowa to place-bound students, primarily in Graduate Education through ICN. Faculty and the administration often spoke of the University's efforts to insure that the quality of off-campus educational offerings are subject to the same degree of scrutiny as on-campus courses, although the process of off-campus program and course-by-course review was not clearly defined. Much of the off-campus instruction is done by full-time, regular teaching faculty within the University as an in-load assignment, although it is unclear as to how faculty performance is reviewed within the context of the off-campus culture and environment. Distance education students are given the opportunity to complete a course/instructor evaluation form. These data are received and

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compiled by the Continuing Education Office with copies sent to the instructor and department head after the course has been completed and grades are turned in. Much of the off-campus programs are focused toward contract training programs for the government and industrial/business organizations, along with Elderhostel and the University's popular Study Abroad Program.

Also administered by the Continuing Education and Special Programs division is the Bachelor of Liberal Studies (BLS) degree program; an external degree program offered jointly with the University of Iowa and Iowa State University. While the focus of this program is to attract and support the educational needs of the non-traditional student, the program also provides an avenue for students who may have changed career options. BLS students have the opportunity of pursuing their courses of study through correspondence, World Wide Web classes, telecourses, or ICN courses, currently serving slightly more than one hundred students. Additionally, the Individual Studies Program also provides for some students other program options, e.g. General Studies Major, Individual Studies Major and the National Student Exchange Program. The emphasis of this 45 hour program is on distribution, rather than concentration, for the student who desires a well rounded liberal arts education.

The University's Museum is viewed by many to be the "gem" of the campus. Having just recently completed its own accreditation review, the Museum is now better poised to expand upon its potential. With educational opportunities provided for students, through internships, class visits, assignments, or for personal growth, the Museum has become a "value added" educational experience for more than 1200 UNI students during the past school year. Space is becoming an increasing issue and the team was told that the administration is currently in the process of looking

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for a possible new location and attending to the immediate needs to the facility. The current staffing level of five appears to be adequate for the moment, but the proposed expansion of services and space will also require a review of the corresponding future staffing requirements.

Rod Library

The University's Library is a beautiful facility that is well maintained and designed with many areas suitable for individual or group study, and a welcoming ambiance. The Library Dean's position was upgraded in 1998 from Director to the current status of Dean and the individual currently holding that position is an active member of the Academic Affairs Council. Since the last accreditation review, the Library has shown considerable improvement in several areas noted in the previous NCA review, e.g. space and size of periodical collections. A 60,000-square-foot fourth floor was added to the facility in 1995 and mobile, compact shelving was installed in 1998. Additionally, the Library staff has devoted considerable energy, under its collection management program, to increasing both local holdings and access to remote holdings, particularly for journal literature. In the years since the 1991 NCA report, Rod Library has increasingly focused on licencing privately vended databases, including full-text electronic journals, and computer-based access to the Internet and World Wide Web.

The State Legislature has generously supported the library's budgetary needs over most of the last ten year period and internal reallocation of resources have also contributed to its success. The Library budgets have increased nearly 41% for personnel, 62% for equipment and supplies, and 98% for materials over the past decade. Additionally, \$140,000 has been allocated to the library for several years through the Student Technology Fee, and the Provost's Office has also supplemented

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the materials and access budget during the years when the Legislature's contribution was smaller.

A demonstration classroom and a small computer laboratory serve as bibliographic instruction rooms and perhaps a third computer lab would provide much needed additional instructional stations. Another computer lab, maintained by Information Technology Services, is also available to students all hours that the library is open for service.

The library faculty and staff seem to plan and provide services with the best interest of the student body in mind by, for example, providing bibliographic instruction at a variety of levels appropriate to the course. Library faculty and staff members are dedicated to providing increased access to materials available both locally and remotely. It is apparent that the library personnel are proud of their services and resources, and they work hard at promoting the use of the facility.

Librarians offer basic library instruction and an introduction to the library's services and resources to every freshman student in oral communication and college reading and writing courses. The Bibliographic Instruction faculty works closely with the teaching faculty to design appropriate library instruction in a wide variety of courses, including distance education courses off campus.

Center for the Enhancement of Teaching

One of a number of new initiatives since the last review includes the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching, opened in 1993 with the hiring of its current Director. Located on the fourth floor of the Rod Library, the center appears to have sufficient space to accommodate its small, but efficient staff and service function. During the opening semester (spring, 1993) of the Center, a "needs assessment survey" was conducted by the Director to prioritize the program's agenda. While the primary focus of the Center is to support the teaching mission of the University, a number

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of other functions and roles have emerged over the years, including new faculty orientation and professional development for faculty and staff. The Center has served as host to a number professional workshops and conferences for a variety of groups across the campus. Conference participation, at a given workshop, has grown from 175 participants in 1995 to 850 in 1998, and its image among the University community is positive and well received.

The Center has also taken a leadership role toward the management of several projects relating to the mission and goals of the University, e.g. *to identify the qualities of an educated person that are expected of students who graduate from UNI and to translate those qualities into curricular and co-curricular activities*. To that end, the faculty, staff and students engaged in a three-year dialogue on the topic; *Qualities of an educated person*. Additionally, the Center also provides a very important support role to the teaching mission of the University through its *Small Group Instructional Diagnosis (SGID)* program. Through the SGID program, new and senior level faculty are able to seek assistance toward the assessment of their classroom teaching. This program has assisted approximately 25 faculty members annually over the past seven years and continues to be a valuable tool toward encouraging high quality instruction. Other issues currently being addressed through the Center includes: the need to increase collaborative faculty development as part of the culture, enhance the development of department heads as to their role in faculty development, and further emphasize the role of scholarship "of teaching, for teaching, and in teaching".

Information Technology Services

The Information Technology Services (ITS) area of the University is organized into four primary service units, each with its own mission and focus; Educational Technology, Information

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Systems, Network Services, and User Services. Exemplary, innovative uses of technology are evident in the student portal project, the Program of Study software, and the many uses of the network for which UNI won the EDU-CAUSE competition for Excellence in Campus Networking.

The functional structure of the ITS unit is highly decentralized with each college or division maintaining its own computing staff and budget. While the decentralization of ITS resources across the campus has a distinct advantage of local control and customized services, there exist also the challenge of efficiency of resources and effective use of personnel and facilities. The distribution of staff, equipment, and facilities in a number of different buildings across the campus is an area of concern, but appears to have been addressed through a consolidation proposal with the University's *Strategic Plan*. Human and fiscal resources are stretched. As seen in many universities, student, faculty, and administration expectations of ITS, software, and hardware are high. The ITS Division works diligently to try to meet growing expectations and training requirements with a staff that has not always increased in response to these demands.

Collaboration with the colleges and administrative divisions across campus is a hallmark of the ITS unit. Examples of cooperation in planning and training are wide spread. The Division understands the University's Strategic Plan and works to fulfill it. The University's Strategic Technology Plan can be found at <http://www.uni.edu/its/ad/strategies.html>.

Assessment

The UNI Assessment Plan was approved by NCA in 1995 and the University was accustomed to its Assessment Committee submitting its annual report on Student Outcomes Assessment (SOA) to the Board of Regents, as mandated by Board policy at that time. In 1997, the

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Board of Regents revised its policy on assessment and merged Student Outcomes Assessment with the yearly Academic Program Review report submitted to the Board. The University was commended by NCA during that time for linking outcomes assessment with program review and strategic planning. Student Outcomes Assessment at UNI are currently guided by its well established assessment policy, developed by its Assessment Committee, approved by the Faculty Senate and University administration.

The current Assessment Committee, consisting of faculty representatives from each College, as well as representatives from Educational and Student Services, Alumni Relations, and Information Management and Analysis functions primarily as a policy oversight body for assessment activities, particularly as it relates to academic programs and departments. The integration of student outcomes assessment with planning and program review has been a positive effort toward bringing focus to the functional interaction of those three components to academic programming. The institution should be commended and encouraged to strengthen and refine this model.

The current NCA team is of the opinion that some form of Level II Assessment is taking place throughout the campus, but the interrelationship, as well as distinctions, between program review and student outcomes assessment lacks clarity, or not well understood by some faculty and staff. While the processes currently in place for student outcomes assessment seems to have become institutionalized and generally accepted by faculty, staff, and students, there continues to exist the challenge of maintaining faculty support and enthusiasm for the assessment program. For the most part, faculty have taken seriously the feedback provided by program reviews and student outcomes assessment data and responded with a number of program and curricular changes over the years.

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Most academic departments and divisions were able to identify, for the team, a number of examples relating to changes in programs or curriculum, resulting from feedback surrounding program reviews or student outcomes assessment.

The assessment of student outcomes of the General Education curriculum, through the seven year program review cycle, requires a restatement of the intended outcomes, relative to the six focal areas of the curriculum: Civilization and Culture (I); Fine Arts, Literature, Philosophy, and Religion (II); Natural Science and Technology (III); Social Science (IV); Communication Essentials (V); and Personal Wellness (VI). NCA team members found that learning outcomes and competencies for each of the six focal areas were well documented, in addition to which courses in each of the areas also have learning outcomes and competencies in place. While the review process includes the survey of faculty teaching in the focal area, examination of current course outlines, and enrollment/grade distribution records, there is no apparent assessment of an integrated General Education program involving student learning outcomes. The unevenness of assessment activities across the program compromises the evaluation of an integrated curriculum. An exception to this observation was the Oral Communication component of the General Education program, where faculty are collaborating with department heads across the campus on assessment activities.

In previous years, the assessment of student academic achievement, relative to the stated outcomes and competencies of the General Education program, consisted of a survey of "student perceptions of the success with which the area met its general education goal". The survey, on a five point scale, asked students in capstone courses to indicate if they had achieved understanding of each of the stated goals and also asked, relative to each class in the area, if it met the goals and

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competencies. This survey is no longer in use and has not been used within the past five to six years. A similar survey, however, is currently being developed and will be administered to UNI students in the future. While such "perception" surveys are useful, they are not the most effective methods of assessing student academic achievement of general education.

Academic departments, programs and divisions across the campus tend to utilize a variety of tools and methods to assess student academic achievement within their respective disciplines. The College of Business Administration has, for a number of years used Educational Benchmarking Inc. (EBI) to generate a longitudinal database for continuous improvement. These are also used for comparison to other AACSB accredited Colleges. Based upon the EBI data, the College faculty are revising the College core requirements to add additional emphasis on International Business. Academic departments across the Colleges, typically have Assessment Plans in place and are actively involved in data collection, analysis and review. A number of curricular and program changes have occurred as a result of the assessment and program review process across the University. Professional Colleges, such as Education, also utilize specialized accreditation standards (e.g. American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, or Iowa State Department of Education) as a means of assessing program effectiveness and student academic achievement, along with departmental and program tools.

An equal partner in the assessment of student outcomes achievement is the Division of Educational and Student Services (ESS), a unit which covers a broad range of student centered activities as part of its mission. For example, ESS oversees the Summer Orientation Program for new students, Academic Advising Services, Admissions, Career Center, Registrar, Center for

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Multicultural Education, University Health Services, as well as University Residence system. A variety of examples of student assessment activities were well documented and discussed with team members during campus interviews. As example, feedback tools from the Summer Orientation Program for new students are reviewed and action steps taken to improve the situation, or quality of service. Also, utilizing a benchmarking instrument, the Department of Residence conducts an annual student satisfaction survey to assess student satisfaction with the on-campus living and dining experience. Results of the survey have contributed to: provision of weekend custodial service, residence hall substance-free houses, smoke-free environments, staff training, and expanded housing options.

There is a history and culture of assessment within the Division and students were typically very positive about the overall quality of student support services. Woven into the culture of this Division is the commitment to high quality student care, and an eagerness for creative change toward the improvement of services to students and the surrounding community.

Level II assessment activities are also occurring in other areas of the University, including the Library and the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching, as examples. In the Rod Library, assessment activities have become a natural part of the bibliographic instruction program through classroom surveys and other approaches to student feedback. Currently, there are plans underway to ease both the time constraints of administering the surveys during class time and the time consuming task of compiling the results by putting the surveys on-line. The Center for The Enhancement of Teaching routinely conducts post-event and activity evaluations for the improvement of operations and services. It was unclear to the team, however, if and how the Center

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conducts its own self-reviews as a means of continuous improvement.

International Program

The University has a strong international program consistent with its *2001-2006 Strategic Plan*; calling for greater “global awareness and a sense of global citizenship among students, faculty and staff”. The program director has a strong sense of mission to fulfill the expectations of this goal and he is quick to emphasize the positive support that he receives from the administration. Even though the number of UNI students studying abroad has shown a slight decline over the past year, the overall historical trend suggests that the international program is highly regarded by students, faculty and staff. The total number of exchange agreements has increased each year since 1967 and the number of inactive agreements has decreased during the past year. Courses in the UNI Study Abroad programs are taught by UNI faculty, thereby generating “increased opportunities for faculty to enhance the quality of teaching”, as proposed in the planning document.

Division of Educational and Student Services

The Division of Educational and Student Services (ESS) has the primary responsibility of assuring that students are properly admitted and afforded appropriate assistance toward attaining their educational objectives. The Division is headed by a capable Vice President who assumed her current position in 1999 following a national search. Reporting to the Vice President for Educational and Student Services are nearly 120 professional and 225 support staff who are totally dedicated to the welfare of the UNI student body. This Division has oversight responsibility for a wide range of student-oriented programs, including Enrollment Services, Registration, Academic Advising, University Health Services, Residence Services, Financial Aid, Multicultural Education, Placement

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and Career Services, along with the Student Union.

ESS is moving rapidly toward an integrated Student Services Center that will be user-friendly and lessen the time students need to complete their university business. The My UNiVerse program is an excellent example of the Division's focus on student welfare; through this software package, students are provided twenty-four hour access to important information relating to their educational needs. The recruitment of undergraduate minority students continues to be a major challenge, while recruitment efforts to attract minority students at the graduate level has been highly successful.

The *Office of Career Planning and Placement* is one of many examples of a dynamic office with an ambitious set of programs emphasizing both development and placement. The Director of this area is highly experienced and has a forward-looking approach to management and student services. There is concern, however, about the current technology needs of the office and several staff members indicated that a substantial technology upgrade would better serve the students. At this time, students have access to on-line services twenty-four hours a day and frequently utilize initial contacts gained in this manner to schedule office interviews. Every effort is made by the staff to reach students at the earliest possible time in their University experience as a means to ensure good decision-making later in their educational programs.

The *Academic Advisement Services* unit provides a centralized advisement mechanism, through professional advisors, for the undeclared majors and those students who have declared a major are assigned to the appropriate academic department. Students who have chosen a major field of study in Education or Business are provided advisement through the Advisement Centers within those two Colleges. Some students who have chosen a major field of study in Education or Business

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are provided advisement through the Advisement Centers within those two colleges. These are the only two colleges with Academic Advisement Centers that also provide enrollment management and tutorial assistance within their respective colleges. Some faculty in other areas also play major roles in the advisement process and faculty release time is also provided in some cases.

Academic Advisement Services also provides a unique service to academic units by providing the training for new faculty advisors and assist the departments with national testing, tutorial assistance and up-to-date advisement issues. The advisement services also utilizes technology for record keeping and generating degree audits, along with providing the appropriate data for faculty desk-top computers to assist with their advisement of students.

Maucker Union/Housing

The University's student union is a heavily utilized facility with a large formal program base. A revitalization of the building is just underway, a thirteen million dollar project supported by student fees. Upon the completion of this project, it will be an outstanding facility operating from the center of the campus. Building staff believe that their most important goal is "building and sustaining positive student relationships" and feel successful in that effort. The Union is very well managed by a doctoral level director who is supported by a competent and enthusiastic staff. The director also plays an important role in serving as advisor to the UNI student government.

The University currently has ten residence halls, that have a design capacity of 4,925 students and currently operating with an occupancy level above 90 percent. The newest residence hall for upperclass students (Residence on the Hill, or ROTH) houses 384 students in apartment and suite-style accommodations and was completed in 1994 at a cost of \$9.3 million. Among other

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activities, the residence halls attempts to support the mission of the University through such initiatives as the Citizens and Scholars Program; designed to promote citizenship and scholarship during daily living throughout the campus experience.

Some residential facilities, however, are in need of renovation and 12-13 million dollars will be spent during the coming year to air condition some residential facilities and provide up-grades for others. Also, there is currently underway an \$11.5 million renovation project to Redeker Center with an \$8 million project in planning for Towers Dining Center.

Athletics

The University offers a 20-sport intercollegiate athletic program, serving more than 475 student-athletes. All programs are offered at the Division I level, with football recognized as a I-AA program. The Missouri Valley Conference serves as the league affiliation for all sports except football and wrestling. The football program competes as a member of the Gateway Football Conference, and wrestling competes an independent member of the NCAA. Women's soccer is the newest addition to the varsity sports program and began its competition during Fall, 2000.

The Athletic program was fully certified by NCAA in 1996 and is currently in the process of completing its evaluation process for continued certification. Within the recent evaluation process for continued certification, the new Athletic Director hopes to reorganize the Athletic Department, in terms of personnel duties and responsibilities, and departmental goals and objectives. The Department appears to be well managed and there are currently no Title IX or other equity issues pending. The philosophical foundation of the athletic program is strongly oriented toward student

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success and student athletes are easily mainstreamed into the general student body where educational goals take priority. In fact, the graduation rates of student athletes, on average, exceed those of the general student body (see Table V.1 Graduation Rates Comparison, p139, Self-Study). The University and Athletic program should be proud of such an accomplishment and every effort should be made to continue such an example for other institutions.

Criterion Four-*The Institution can continue to accomplish its purpose and strengthen its educational effectiveness.*

This section of the report is intended to address the manner in which the University utilizes its resource base to accomplish its mission and purpose. The University of Northern Iowa has evolved from a teacher preparation institution in the 1800s to a multi-purpose institution that offers a wide range of undergraduate and selected graduate programs. UNI is one of only three public universities within the State; a State with a proven track record of support for higher education. The University is well funded with a capable administration. For fiscal year 1999, the University had a total revenue of approximately \$182 million. The primary source of funds were tuition and fees of \$37.4 million, State of Iowa appropriations of \$89 million, and a total of \$55.7 million from other sources. Funding levels from the legislature has allowed the University to maintain relatively small class sizes, address course availability, and continue to develop new program initiatives without significantly large tuition increases. Over the last decade, appropriations have increased 7.8 percent and constant dollar tuition has increased by 10.9 percent over the same period. In the most recent year, dollars spent for faculty and staff professional development have increased, student academic planning and availability of required courses to meet student's programs of study have

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been significantly enhanced.

Since the last NCA Self Study, the UNI Foundation has completed two successful capital campaigns, and a third campaign is now in the early implementation stage. The UNI Foundation is well along in the largest capital campaign drive in the history of the University; "Students First" is

projecting to raise \$75 million to meet student needs with scholarships, program support, and facilities by 2005. The priorities for this campaign were developed through collaboration from academic and non-academic department heads, deans and the President's Cabinet. Income producing funds in the Foundation approximates \$40 million and the endowment from all sources is \$68 million.

It was clear to the team that the University's physical resources are supportive of its mission and strategic goals, with a number of construction and renovation projects currently in the design stage and a number of others completed since the last NCA visit. While there is a five year plan for additions and renovations currently in place, there are some facilities that are not addressed in the plan for which there is concern. The most recent Campus Master Plan was revised and up-dated in 2000 and it is supportive of the *UNI Strategic Plan, 2001-2006*.

The University's commitment to high quality teaching and learning must by necessity also include a commitment to the faculty resource base. During recent times, the University has experienced a rather sharp increase in faculty turnover, due in large part to the retirement of those who were hired when the "baby boomers" entered the professorate. Faculty in some areas are also fearful of losing good faculty to research universities. The University will need to address the increasing need for additional faculty resources in the future in order to achieve its educational goals documented in the *Strategic Plan 2001-2006*. This issue is made even more critical when viewed

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in the context of the strategic goal to have 75 % of its core educational offerings (currently at 65%) taught by tenured and tenure-track faculty.

Evaluative Processes

Central to the University's ability to deliver high quality academic programs and effective student services is an internal mechanism of self examination. UNI has established a number of internal processes to evaluate the effectiveness of its academic programs, through program review, student academic achievement, through assessment, and planning, through strategic planning. Student outcomes achievement has been mandated by the Board of Regents for a number of years, but was integrated with program review in 1997. Student outcomes assessment at UNI is currently guided by a well established Assessment Policy, developed by the Assessment Committee, and approved by the Faculty Senate and University administration. The University's Assessment Plan was approved by NCA in 1995 and the institution was commended for linking outcomes assessment with program review and strategic planning. The current NCA team believes that the integration of student outcomes assessment with planning and program review has been a positive effort toward bringing focus to the functional interaction of those three components to academic programming at UNI.

The current team believes that some form of assessment, or data collection, has been institutionalized, although the clarification of program review and outcomes assessment in some areas of the campus is not well understood. Most academic units across the campus tend to utilize some form of assessment, or method of assessing student academic achievement within their respective disciplines. Many non-academic areas, particularly the Educational and Student Services

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Division, the Library, ITS, and Auxiliary services have some format for evaluating their effectiveness. A number of program or curricular changes have also occurred, within some academic programs, as a result of feedback from assessment, program review, or specialized accreditation. Several new program initiatives, such as the Master of Social Work, have also evolved from the assessment process, or program review. However, the assessment of an integrated General Education program involving student learning outcomes is not well defined and is in need of further attention.

Strategic Planning

The University of Northern Iowa has a history and culture of supporting the planning initiative, dating back to the mid-eighties. As the planning process became more formalized between the Board and Regents institutions, the UNI strategic planning process evolved and was Board approved in 1990, revised and Board approved in 1996, and the most recent *Strategic Plan* was approved by the Board of Regents in December, 2000.

The current *UNI Strategic Plan 2001-2006* documents the University's definition of its culture, values and vision statement. The document describes eight specific goals, along with achievement indicators associated with the stated objectives. Elements of the planning initiative are used to guide much of the decision-making process at the University, and its support of student achievement, high quality programing, good teaching, diversity, liberal education, and community relations was clear and well defined. Development of the planning initiative involved university-wide input, through a variety of avenues, and is accessible through the UNI homepage (<http://www.uni.edu>). Team members were able to easily access the document through the

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homepage and found it to be readable and user-friendly.

Criterion Five-*The institution demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships.*

Team members reviewed numerous University publications including, but not limited to, the UNI Merit System Staff Handbook, Professional and Scientific (P&S) Staff Handbook, UNI Policies and Procedures Manual, UNI Student Handbook, UNI Programs and Courses, 2000, Students First, Student Newspaper, Recruitment and Marketing Materials, UNI Web site, Master Agreement, and the last two Annual Financial Audits. Most, if not all of the student and personnel manuals and handbooks are made accessible to constituencies through web sites and hard copies. Generally, these publications and web sites describe accurately the institution, its operation and programs. Policies and practices outlined are appropriate to the University. With appropriate checks and balances in place, the University operates with integrity to validate and evaluate its actions with the general public, Board of Regents, and educational community.

Institutional Policies and Procedures

The University of Northern Iowa has in place well established personnel and student policies and procedures that serve to guide and govern the rights and responsibilities of all its constituents. These policies and procedures are well defined and made accessible through published documents, such as handbooks, manuals, brochures, and pamphlets, in addition to being made available on-line. Additionally, the University also has in place mechanisms for the regular review and up-dating of institutional policies and procedures, ranging from complaints and grievances to issues of discrimination, sexual harassment, and disability.

Several policy documents and procedural avenues are available for students, for example,

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toward addressing grievances and complaints; UNI Policies and Procedures Manual, the Student Handbook, and the Graduate Student Handbook. Additionally, the Northern Iowa Student Government has a history of active involvement in University policy matters, including having direct appointments to the Affirmative Action Council on Academic Affairs, the Affirmative Action Council on Education and Student Services, the Educational Policies Commission, the Ethnic Minorities Cultural and Educational Policy Board, the Human Rights Commission, and the University Judicial Commission. The UNI teaching faculty are also governed by the Policies and Procedures Manual, in addition to the Master Agreement (Union Contract) between the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, and the UNI-United Faculty. Other Policy documents and governance structures, such as the Professional and Scientific Personnel Policies (P&S) or the Regents Merit System, provide policy protection and avenues for complaints and grievances.

University policies and procedures relating to affirmative action, equal opportunity, and non-discrimination are primarily administered by the Office of Compliance and Equity Management, utilizing appropriate state and federal laws and regulations to guide its activities. Through the University's Affirmative Action Plan, the institution monitors those policies and practices affecting employment and hiring practices under the jurisdiction of federal guidelines and reviews all complaints alleging discrimination in the workplace. University compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) is managed by the Office of Disability Services; working to assist or identify compliance matters relating to ADA policies and procedures impacting the University. This Office works closely with students and employees with disabilities and other appropriate Offices on campus toward addressing this matter. The University also provides regular

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employee training sessions and workshops on institutional policies and procedures pertaining to sexual harassment and grievance procedures. Additionally, the Master Agreement between the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, and the UNI-Faculty (July 1, 1999-June 30, 2001) defines the scope of grievance and outlines steps for grievance procedures (located on-line and Appendix D of Self Study).

Public Relations

The Office of Marketing and Public Relations assumes the role of "image builder" for the University and functions with a unified voice. Under the leadership of a new Associate Vice President, the Division has undertaken the development of an Integrated Marketing Plan that when fully implemented will set guidelines for a consistent and regular review of all campus publications, web pages, and displays. The Division is developing a "best practices" approach to web design, public relations, publications, and outreach in order to present a unified image to their publics. The use of the "One clear voice" motto is used throughout the Division and represents a unified strategy of communication across the University as well as off campus. The Division should be commended for its part in implementing the Integrated Marketing Plan and the University should be encouraged to continue those efforts.

The Division has been reorganized in recent months to work more effectively and efficiently. The staff has been reinvigorated by the reorganization and feels a renewed sense of vitality. The Division also appears to have a positive reputation on campus that has improved in the last several months due to its proactive approach to promoting the Integrated Marketing Plan and its outreach to the University community. Currently, the Division occupies cramped quarters and would greatly

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benefit from additional office space and room for an expanded dark room. Also, the Division does not have the needed resources to address their current staffing needs and as a result uses student help to a greater degree than is advisable.

Grants and Contracts

The Office of Grants and Contract Administration is responsible for assuring that the University is in compliance with internal and external guidelines and regulations, along with the satisfactory delivery of contract requirements. The primary role of this Office focuses on the post-award phase of most grants and contracts, which is meant to begin at the time of proposal submission. The pre-award phase of grant and contract administration is the responsibility of an Associate Dean of the Graduate College.

The Graduate College has a well developed system that is designed to assist the faculty with proposal development and carry out grant and contract requirements once the proposals are funded. All federally mandated rules and guidelines, such as projects involving human subjects, or animal subjects, as well as potential conflict of interest matters, appear to be managed well and effectively. The success rate of competitive proposals is outstanding (70% of proposals funded for 58% of the dollar amount requested in 1999-00). The dollar amount garnered from all sponsored projects during the past ten years has shown a strong positive trend; \$3.5 million in 1986-87 to \$18.1 million in 1999-00.

The amount of sponsored projects for research stands at approximately \$1.4 million. The negotiated cost rate for the University is 45%, which is typical of most other institutions. The University has an overhead incentive program in which 35% of the indirect cost recovered is

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allocated as incentive money. This pool of money is further divided among the faculty principal and co-principal investigators (30%), the Graduate College (40%), the College Dean (15%) and the Department Head (15%).

Federal Compliance and Third Party Comments

The University of Northern Iowa describes how it complies with North Central policies regarding institutional integrity and Federal Compliance in the Criterion V (pp. 128-139) section of its Self Study document. The University also provided for team members in the Resource Room a variety of documents supporting its position of compliance, ranging from institutional policies and procedures, to collective bargaining agreements. Team members also reviewed a number of specific documents relating to Federal Affirmative Action guidelines, Grants and Contracts, Title IX, ADA, Student Complaint logs, and Financial Aid.

University records for written and signed student complaints are maintained in several administrative offices; the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Vice President for Education and Student Services, the Office of Compliance and Equity Management, and the Graduate College. Team members who reviewed this information indicated that student complaints were few in number, but generally addressed by the University in a timely and appropriate manner. Additionally, Financial Aid records indicated that the University's default rate was extremely low; 6.49% for the Perkins loan and 4.3% for the Federal Direct Student Loan Program. Third Party Comments regarding the NCA review were sought by the University from a variety of UNI constituencies and six letters were sent to the NCA Office. The letters of comment came from one student parent, several alumni, and several local professionals. The

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student parent wrote a letter of concern and took issue with the parking and laboratory student fees, while one of the local professionals raised concern about the University's use of achievement test score for admission, rather than aptitude examination scores. Letters from a UNI alumni and several local School District Officials spoke favorably and with enthusiasm about the quality of educational experience at UNI.

Strengths and Challenges

This part of Section II summarizes significant points out of the preceding material on General Institutional Requirements and Criteria for Accreditation. “*Strengths*” are intended to commend the University and to encourage continued good practice in the future. “*Challenges*” are intended to indicate those areas that need attention.

Strengths

1. The Board of Regents is knowledgeable and supportive of the University. Faculty and Staff are innovative, creative, and enthusiastic. Students demonstrate a high level of enthusiasm and commitment of the University.
2. UNI is a fiscally sound and dynamically managed University. Planning and program review are integrated and guide University budget decisions. The budget process has become decentralized and is highly participatory.
3. UNI has been supported in appropriations by the State of Iowa in a manner that has allowed the University to maintain relatively small classes, address course availability, and continue to develop new program initiatives without significantly large tuition increases.
4. My UNIVERSE, the student portal project, provides multiple options for student decision-making within the University environment.
5. The UNI Overseas Recruiting Fair is an annual event involving over 100 overseas schools from 60 countries, all looking for UNI teacher education graduates to work abroad.
6. Some newer facilities including the Curris Business Building, the Wellness Recreation Center, and the Performing Arts Center are state-of-the-art and serve the campus and

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community well. Renovation of existing facilities has maintained the architectural integrity of the campus and provides much needed state-of-the-art space.

Challenges

1. The University's efforts toward reaching diversity goals set by the Board of Regents are ambitious and should be commended. However, the challenge of using State resources to reach such goals may be compromised through competing priorities. Every effort should be made by the University to energize its recruitment strategy as a means of enhancing the quality of the overall educational experience.
2. There is a need to better integrate the assessment of student academic achievement, through outcomes assessment, across an integrated General Education curriculum. The unevenness of assessment activities across the program compromises the effectiveness of evaluating an integrated curriculum.
3. The current approach to the General Education program compromises its coherence and effectiveness. The existing structure creates a leadership gap and compromises coherence leading to a fragmented program.
4. While there is a five year plan for additions and renovations in place, there are some facilities that are not addressed in the plan for which there is concern.
5. Resources allocated for equipment acquisition, maintenance, and repair are inadequate.

Section III-Advice and Suggestions to the University

Members of the North Central team serve as both Evaluators and Consultants. In their capacity as Consultants, the team offers collegial advice in an advisory manner to the University of Northern Iowa; that is, making a change or improvement based on the listed suggestions is not directly related to the University's accreditation.

1. The Information Technology Services at UNI is highly decentralized, where each College and Division has its own computing staff and budget. While such a structure provides considerable autonomy and personalized service to the academic unit, it may also provide less efficiency of resources by dispersing facilities, personnel and space. The University may wish to consider an alternative approach to this arrangement.
2. The Center for the Enhancement of Teaching provides a vital service and plays a major role toward the support of the University's instructional mission, through collaborative faculty development opportunities, but the Center may wish to include department heads and other academic administrators in faculty development activities as an avenue of cross fertilization.
3. Office space, laboratory space, and space for generalized academic use is a generic problem across the campus. The University may wish to consider the development of a long-term Space and Facility Plan to support the anticipated growth of students and faculty in the future.
4. In an effort to more effectively support the University's quest for excellence and the teacher-scholar model, the institution may give thought to creating a stronger incentive and reward mechanism for integrating good teaching, scholarship, and student learning with faculty

performance.

Section IV-Team Recommendations and Rationale

The team's recommendation to (a) continue the accreditation of the University of Northern Iowa; (b) schedule the next comprehensive evaluation for 2010-2011; (c) require a monitoring report to NCA on the status of the General Education program and its assessment by October 1, 2004 is shown on the attached worksheet for the *Statement of Affiliation Status*. The written report must address what the team found to be an unevenness of implementing the University's approved Assessment Plan, relative to the General Education program; specifically as it relates to the structure and role of the General Education oversight body, and the assessment of its integrated curriculum through student learning outcomes. What follows is the rationale for the team's recommendations to the Commission.

1. The University of Northern Iowa has a fiscally sound and well managed financial resource base. UNI has had good success with legislative appropriations. The University has been supported by the State of Iowa in a manner that has allowed it to maintain relatively small class sizes, address course availability, and continue to develop new program initiatives without significantly large tuition increases. Over the past few years, the UNI Foundation has transferred increasing amounts of funds to the University for a variety of University initiatives, and has recently undertaken one of the largest capital campaign drives in the history of UNI; to raise \$75 million by 2005.
2. UNI has a successful track record of strategic planning, dating back to 1990 and several Board approved revisions of planning documents have occurred since then. The most recent

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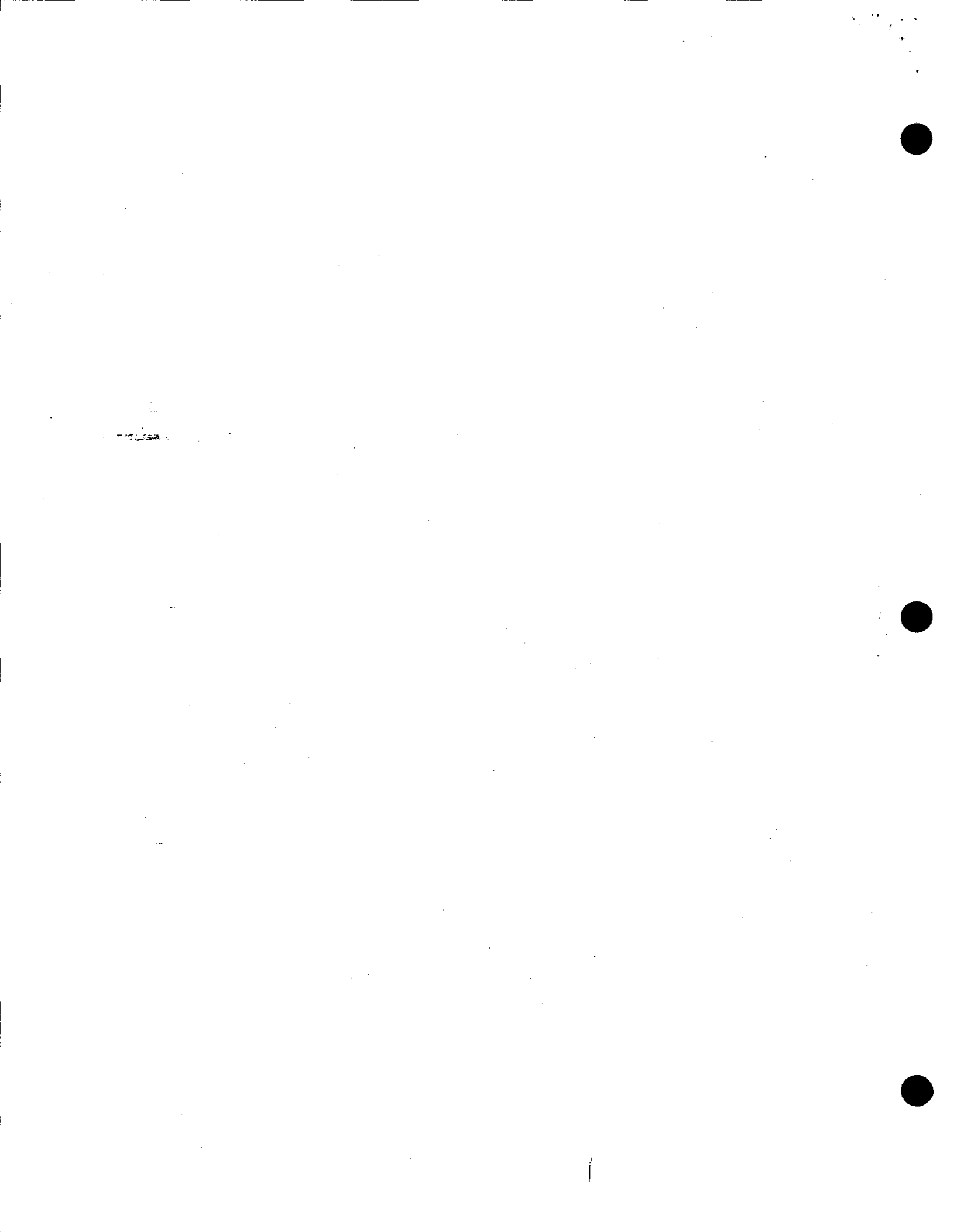
UNI Strategic Plan 2001-2006 was approved by the Board of Regents in December, 2000 and describes well the University's current goals and objectives in operational terms, along with a description of its culture, values and vision statement. The formalized planning process serves the University well as the driving force which integrates budget, academic program review, and assessment. The team believes that the strategic planning process at the University is well conceived and plays an important role toward day-to-day decision-making and future planning initiatives.

3. The University has a strong and engaging Governing Board, along with a stable and very capable campus administration. The state-wide Board of Regents has oversight responsibility for only three public higher education institutions where collaboration among the three is a major strength. The University's structure is well organized and its management team and human resource base serves to complement the institution's mission and purpose. The faculty clearly has primary responsibility for the University's curriculum, including program development, program review, standards for degrees and academic credit, and most academic policy matters.
4. The University's internal Governance structure is effectively organized to ensure that human potential is maximized, rights and responsibilities are protected, and the institution's mission and purposes are achievable. Faculty involvement in the governance process is formalized through a structured collective bargaining mechanism, guided by A Master Agreement between the Board of Regents and the UNI-United Faculty and the Iowa Code. The Faculty Senate also plays a vital role in the university governance structure, although there exist clear

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areas of governing responsibility between the United Faculty, Faculty Senate, Graduate Council, Professional and Scientific Council (P&S), and several other governance councils. Additionally, the Student Government (NISG) has a track record of strong leadership and active involvement in student and campus related governance.

5. The University operates with integrity, in terms of its practices and constituent relationships. The institution has in place a number of internal controls, through a number of policies and procedures, to encourage institutional and personal integrity while protecting the rights of its human capital. Most, if not all, of the University and Governing Board's policies are accessible through hard copies or on-line for students, staff and faculty.



WORKSHEET FOR STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS

INSTITUTION: UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA
Cedar Falls, IA 50614-0002

TYPE OF REVIEW: Continued Accreditation

DATE OF THIS REVIEW: February 19, 2001 — February 21, 2001

COMMISSION ACTION:

STATUS: *Accredited (1913-17; 1918 - .)*

Institution *Recommended Wording:* RETAIN ORIGINAL WORDING

Team *Recommended Wording:* RETAIN ORIGINAL WORDING

HIGHEST DEGREE AWARDED: *Doctor's.*

Institution *Recommended Wording:* RETAIN ORIGINAL WORDING

Team *Recommended Wording:* RETAIN ORIGINAL WORDING

**MOST RECENT
EXPIRATION:** *July 31, 1995.*

TO BE CHANGED BY THE COMMISSION OFFICE

**STIPULATIONS ON
AFFILIATION STATUS:** *Accreditation at the Doctor's level is limited to the Doctor of Industrial Technology and the Doctor of Education.*

Institution *Recommended Wording:* RETAIN ORIGINAL WORDING

Team *Recommended Wording:* RETAIN ORIGINAL WORDING

NEW DEGREE
SITES:

Prior Commission approval required.

Institution *Recommended Wording:* RETAIN ORIGINAL WORDING

Team *Recommended Wording:* RETAIN ORIGINAL WORDING

PROGRESS REPORTS
REQUIRED:

None.

Team *Recommended Wording:* 10/1/04; A report on General Education program and
assessment.

MONITORING REPORTS
REQUIRED:

None.

Team *Recommended Wording:* NONE.

CONTINGENCY REPORTS
REQUIRED:

None.

Team *Recommended Wording:* NONE.

OTHER VISITS
REQUIRED:

None.

Team *Recommended Wording:* NONE.

LAST COMPREHENSIVE
EVALUATION:

1990-91.

TO BE CHANGED BY THE COMMISSION OFFICE

NEXT COMPREHENSIVE
EVALUATION:

2000-01.

Team *Recommended Wording:* 2010-11.