University of Northern Iowa

Higher Learning Commission
Reaccreditation Committee
Annual Report

2007-2008

Beverly A. Kopper, Ph.D.
Associate Provost for Academic Affairs
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INTRODUCTION

This document constitutes an annual report on the University of Northern Iowa Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Reaccreditation Committee activities for the 2007-2008 academic year. The HLC Steering Committee was charged by Interim Provost Lubker on February 14, 2008 and held biweekly meetings throughout the spring semester. A Town Hall meeting was held on March 5, 2008 to discuss reaccreditation and the Foundations of Excellence program with the campus community. A major accomplishment during this year was the successful application to conduct a special emphasis self-study on the Foundations of Excellence program focusing on the first-year experience.

This report begins with a list of the Steering Committee members, Committee meeting agendas and meeting notes. Following this is a general timeline for the self-study activities which culminate in the HLC review team visit to campus during the winter of 2011. The self-study design, including the chairs and co-chairs for each section are outlined in this report. A data coordination team, resource room coordinator, and marketing and public relations coordinator have also been designated. Documents associated with the special emphasis self-study are also included.

Major activities for the 2008-09 academic year are outlined for summer 2008 through summer 2009. Dissemination of information to the campus community regarding the accreditation process, initiation of the Foundations of Excellence program, and the collection, analysis and interpretation of data will be major emphases for the Committee. Draft reports for each of the self-study sections will also be received by the Committee and the Foundations of Excellence action plans will be developed and refined during the upcoming academic year.

The Progress Report to the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools on the management, oversight and the assessment of student outcomes of UNI’s general education program submitted in October, 2004 in response to the HLC review team report of 2001 is included in Appendix A. The response to the recommendations identified by the HLC Team will be a focus of the current self-study.

Additional information regarding reaccreditation can be found on the UNI website - HLC Accreditation work site at: http://www.uni.edu/accreditation/.
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HLC Steering Committee Meeting
Thursday, February 14, 2008
11:00 a.m. -12:15 p.m.
Seerley 119

AGENDA

I. Welcome & Introductions - Bev Kopper

II. Charge to the Committee – Jim Lubker

III. UNI – HLC Accreditation Website – Bev Kopper
   a. Timelines
   b. New Criteria
   c. Progress Report

IV. Foundations of Excellence – Bev Kopper

Next meeting:
Thursday, February 28, 2008
All meetings will be held in Seerley 119 from 11:00-12:15
HLC Steering Committee Meeting
Thursday, February 28, 2008
11:00 a.m. -12:15 p.m.
Seerley 119

AGENDA

I. The Criteria for Accreditation – Chapter 3

The HLC Handbook of Accreditation downloads as a PDF but you can find Chapter 3 on page 33 of the document.

http://www.uni.edu/accreditation

Next meeting:
Thursday, March 13, 2008
HLC Steering Committee Meeting
Thursday, March 13, 2008
11:00 a.m. -12:15 p.m.
Presidential Room, Maucker Union

AGENDA

I. February 14 & February 28, 2008 Meeting Notes - Bev
II. Notebooks & Sample Self-studies - Shirley
III. Resource Room - Bev
IV. Update from HLC Liaison - Bev
V. Criterion 5 – Engagement & Service - Bev
VI. Transparent Process - Jim O'Connor
VII. Assessment Update - Donna & Siobahn
VIII. IT Support - Bev
IX. Timeline for Remainder of Semester - Bev

Next meeting:
Thursday, March 27, 2008; 11:00-12:15
College Eye Room, Maucker Union
*History of Last Self-study & Words of Wisdom – Reinhold Bubser & Siobahn Morgan

Future meetings – Presidential Room:

April 10
*Development of self-study design

April 24
*Report from HLC Meeting
*Organization of subcommittees
*Plans for summer & fall
HLC Steering Committee Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2008
11:00 a.m. -12:15 p.m.
College Eye Room, Maucker Union

AGENDA

I. March 13, 2008 meeting notes – Bev

II. History of Last Self-study & Words of Wisdom – Reinhold Bubser, Phil, Karen & Siobahn

III. LAC Assessment Update - Siobahn

Next meeting:
Thursday, April 10, 2008; 11:00-12:15
Presidential Room, Maucker Union
*Development of self-study design

April 24
*Report from HLC Meeting
*Organization of subcommittees
*Plans for summer & fall
HLC Steering Committee Meeting
Thursday, April 10, 2008
11:00 a.m. -12:15 p.m.
Presidential Room, Maucker Union

AGENDA

I. March 27, 2008 meeting notes – Bev

II. Development of Self-Study Design - Bev

Next meeting:
Thursday, April 24, 2008; 11:00-12:15
Presidential Room, Maucker Union

*Report from HLC Meeting
*Organization of subcommittees
*Plans for summer & fall
AGENDA

I. April 10, 2008 meeting notes – Bev

II. Report from HLC Annual Meeting – Bev, Barbara, Donna & April

III. Organization of subcommittees – All

IV. Plans for summer & fall - Bev
HLC Steering Committee Meeting
Thursday, May 8, 2008
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.
College Eye Room, Maucker Union

AGENDA

I. April 24, 2008 meeting notes – Bev

II. Organization of subcommittees – All

III. Plans for summer & fall - Bev
HLC Steering Committee
Meeting Notes
February 14, 2008 – 11:00 a.m.
Seerley 119

Present: Agee, Chatham-Carpenter, Cutter, DeFrancisco, Hanish, Kopper, Licari, Martin, Morgan, Murtha, Neibauer, O’Connor, Patton, Pease, Uehle, Upah, Vinton, Wilson

Absent: Kaparthi, Moussavi

1. Welcome & Introductions – Bev Kopper
Chair Kopper welcomed the committee to the first meeting and thanked everyone for agreeing to serve. Members introduced themselves.

2. Charge to the Committee – Jim Lubker
Dr. Jim Lubker, Interim Provost, presented the charge to the committee. He stressed the importance of reaccreditation to the university community. The HLC does not automatically grant reaccreditation; a few institutions have recently been but on probation. Lubker thanked the committee for their upcoming service.

3. UNI-HLC Accreditation Website – Bev Kopper
   a. Timelines
   Kopper distributed a handout detailing the self-study timeline beginning Spring 2008 through Spring 2011 when the evaluation visit will take place.

   b. New Criteria
   Kopper also distributed a handout that illustrates the new criteria which universities must utilize for reaccreditation. She displayed the UNI Accreditation website and suggested the committee read Chapter 3 of the HLC Handbook which details the new criteria.

   c. Progress Report
   The HLC requested a progress report related to our General Education program after the last self-study that was completed in 2001. A report was submitted in October 2004 and the evaluators will be reviewing the progress made since then.

Agee asked if either ISU or the University of Iowa have recently completed a reaccreditation self-study. The self-study at ISU was completed in 2006 and the University of Iowa will host an evaluation team this April.

Patton asked if there will be a liaison designated from ITS in case there is a need for specific data analysis. Kopper will inquire as to this possibility.

4. Foundations of Excellence – Bev Kopper
Kopper distributed three handouts detailing the Foundations of Excellence project. The HLC and the Policy Center on the First Year of College are sponsoring this joint project and UNI will submit an application for participation. UNI co-chairs for the FOE project are April Chatham-Carpenter, representing Academic Affairs and Jon Buse, who will represent Educational and Student Services.

Next meeting: Thursday, February 28, 2008
Seerley 119; 11:00-12:15
HLC Steering Committee
Meeting Notes
February 28, 2008 – 11:00 a.m.
Seerley 119

Present: Agee, Chatham-Carpenter, Cutter, DeFrancisco, Hanish, Kaparthi, Kopper, Licari, Martin, Morgan, Murtha, Neibauer, Patton, Pease, Uehle, Upah, Vinton, Wilson

Absent: Moussavi, O’Connor

1. The Criteria for Accreditation – Barbara Cutter
The committee reviewed and discussed the Criteria for Accreditation from Chapter 3 of the HLC Handbook of Accreditation.
Criterion One: Mission and Integrity
-Is the mission on our homepage?
-Do employees know the mission?

Criterion Two: Preparing for the Future
-Alumni data
-Placement of teaching majors, CPA students, etc.
-GRE scores

Criterion Three: Student Learning and Effective Teaching
-Assessment (doing it, documenting it, closing the loop)
-How do you measure effective teaching? Kopper indicated the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching may be funded again.
-UNI has been approved to participate in the Foundations of Excellence program. There will be an entire chapter dedicated to the FOE in the self-study.
-Physical environment; building renovations, etc.
-Agee indicated the committee struggled with student development during the last self-study.

Criterion Four: Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge
-Do we support faculty research, provide travel funds, etc.
-International programs included here such as Camp Adventure

Criterion Five will be discussed at the next meeting.

Kopper asked any committee member who might be interested in attending the HLC Annual Meeting to notify her.

Next meeting: Thursday, March 13, 2008
Presidential Room-Maucker Union; 11:00-12:15
HLC Steering Committee
Meeting Notes
March 13, 2008 – 11:00 a.m.
Presidential Room-Maucker Union

Present: Agee, Buse, Chatham-Carpenter, Cutter, DeFrancisco, Hanish, Kopper, Licari, Martin, Morgan, Moser (for Kaparthi), Murtha, Neibauer, O’Connor, Patton, Pease, Uehle, Upah, Vinton, Wilson

Absent: Moussavi

Bev welcomed Jon Buse, Dean of Students and Co-Chair of the Foundations of Excellence project, to the committee.

1. February 14 & February 28, 2008 meeting notes – Kopper
Formal minutes will not be taken but notes will be provided for each meeting.

2. Notebooks and Sample Self-Studies - Uehle
Shirley distributed notebooks that contained agendas and notes from the first two meetings as well as examples of Tables of Contents from several self-studies at other institutions.

3. Resource Room – Kopper
ITTC 117D has been designated as a resource room. Kate will assist with the cataloguing of printed documents.

4. Update from HLC Liaison - Kopper
Bob Appleson is our liaison from the HLC. We must request approval from the HLC to conduct a customized self-study utilizing the Foundations of Excellence project and Mr. Appleson would like to get this approval signed by early April. Mr. Appleson will visit UNI in the fall and meet with the Steering Committee.

Bev discussed the UNI Strategic Plan timeline with Mr. Appleson. The current Strategic Plan covers the period 2004-2009; therefore, we may have a new strategic plan near the end of the reaccreditation process. Mr. Appleson indicated that it would be ideal to have a new strategic plan implemented so that it could be integrated with the self-study process; however, we would not have to include the new plan in the accreditation report.

5. Criterion 5: Engagement & Service – Kopper
This criteria takes on a higher value because of our new Carnegie classification in Community Engagement. Included here would be any work that we do off-campus with various constituencies and organizations.

6. Transparent Process – O’Connor
Jim explained that the reaccreditation process will engage the entire campus community. Key
milestones will be announced via news releases and the website will be a repository of information.

7. Assessment Update – Vinton & Morgan
Donna indicated that assessment is woven throughout the five criteria. She distributed a handout from the HLC which gives a very clear statement that assessment is important in the self-study process.

Siobahn will discuss assessment in relation to the liberal arts core at the next meeting.

8. IT Support – Kopper
Bev talked with Steve Moon regarding the need for a point person from Information Technology to assist with the reaccreditation process. DeWayne Purdy will continue to be our webmaster.

9. Timeline for the remainder of the semester – Kopper
Bev has invited Reinhold Bubser to the next meeting to provide a history of the last self-study.

Next meeting: Thursday, March 27, 2008
College Eye Room-Maucker Union; 11:00-12:15
HLC Steering Committee
Meeting Notes
March 27, 2008 – 11:00 a.m.
College Eye Room-Maucrker Union

Present: Agee, Buse, Chatham-Carpenter, Cutter, DeFrancisco, Hanish, Kristin Moser (for Kaparthi), Kopper, Licari, Martin, Morgan, Moussavi, Neibauer, O'Connor, Patton, Pease, Uehle, Vinton

Absent: Murtha, Upah, Wilson

Guest: Dr. Reinhold Bubser

1. March 13, 2008 meeting notes – Kopper
Notes were distributed via e-mail and no corrections were requested.

2. History of last self-study and words of wisdom – Bubser, Agee, Patton & Morgan
Bev distributed copies of the report from the HLC evaluation team visit in 2001 as well as a draft of the timeline for the current self-study.

Bev introduced Dr. Reinhold Bubser, chair of the last self-study committee. She asked him to share words of wisdom along with Phil and Karen who were also on the committee. Some thoughts from Reinhold include:
- Timelines are critical; build in padding for late responses
- Reports to the Board of Regents are a tremendous resource
- Assessment is very important – can we document learning?
- Immediate retrieval of data is crucial; create resource room with catalogued information
- Respond to the 2001 Report from the HLC evaluation team and to the 2004 Progress Report on the Assessment and Management of the General Education Program
- A rapid response team needs to be in place before and during the time the evaluators are on campus; everyone must be on call during the visit
- The production of the written report was the most difficult part of the entire process
- His one criticism of the written report was that it lacked cross-referencing

Victoria suggested we create standard guidelines for writing the self-study report since sections will be written by various committees and a template will make the end process more efficient.

3. LAC Assessment Update - Morgan
Siobahn distributed handouts on the status of assessment in the Liberal Arts Core.

Next meeting: Thursday, April 10, 2008
Presidential Room - Maucker Union; 11:00-12:15
HLC Steering Committee
Meeting Notes
April 10, 2008 – 11:00 a.m.
Presidential Room-Maucker Union

Present: Agee, Chatham-Carpenter, Cutter, Hanish, Kaparthi, Kopper, Licari, Martin, Morgan, Murtha, Neibauer, O’Connor, Patton, Pease, Uehle, Upah, Vinton, Wilson

Absent: Buse, DeFrancisco, Moussavi

1. March 27, 2008 meeting notes – Kopper
   Notes were distributed via e-mail and no additions or corrections were requested.

2. Development of Self-Study Design – Kopper
   Bev distributed a draft Table of Contents for the self-study and asked members to serve on at least one committee devoted to each chapter of the self-study. The Table of Contents is attached with the names of volunteers. The Foundations of Excellence (FOE) Dimensions committees will be formed in the fall. April and Jon will oversee this section of the self-study.

Phil suggested that a data collection committee be formed rather than have each committee gather data independently. Phil, Shashi, Kate and Patrick volunteered to serve on this committee.

Bev suggested each chair think about who they would like to have serve on their committee and bring ideas of what these sub-committees might look like to the next meeting. She hopes that students will be involved on all sub-committees.

Patrick volunteered the Geography department to assist with graphics and mapping as needed.

Kate reminded everyone that the files from the last self-study are archived in the Library.

Bev asked Jim to have a link added to the website for the submission of reports from the university community.

Next meeting: Thursday, April 24, 2008
Presidential Room - Maucker Union; 11:00-12:15
HLC Steering Committee
Meeting Notes
April 24, 2008 – 11:00 a.m.
Presidential Room-Maucker Union

Present: Agee, Buse, Chatham-Carpenter, Cutter, DeFrancisco, Hanish, Kopper, Licari, Martin, Morgan, Moser (for Kaparthi), Murtha, Neibauer, Patton, Pease, Uehle, Upah, Vinton

Absent: Moussavi, O’Connor, Wilson

Barbara chaired the meeting until Bev arrived.

1. April 10, 2008 meeting notes – Cutter
   Notes were distributed via e-mail and no additions or corrections were requested.

2. Report from HLC Annual Meeting – Chatham-Carpenter, Cutter, Kopper, Vinton
   Barbara reported the group met with our HLC liaison, Bob Appleton. He was given a copy of
   the letter sent to the HLC requesting that UNI be allowed to conduct a special emphasis self-
   study focusing on the Foundations of Excellence project. We are still waiting for approval from
   the HLC. The group also met with John Gardner, Executive Director of the Foundations of
   Excellence.

   Barbara attended a panel presentation with Bob Appleton and distributed copies of his two
   handouts regarding evidence and evaluative writing. Barbara also noted that honesty and
   transparency during the self-study process was a frequent theme stressed throughout the meeting.

   April attended all the first-year track workshops in addition to several others. She would like to
   incorporate an idea at UNI that is typical at other universities who participate in the Foundations
   of Excellence project. Each of the FoE Dimensions would be co-chaired by a representative
   from Educational and Student Services and from the Academic Affairs Division.

   Donna attended a variety of workshops and heard the word “evidence” frequently. She read a
   list of items that other institutions have used to prepare their campus for the evaluation visit.

   All participants brought back promotional items and marketing ideas from other institutions such
   as bookmarks, posters, online tutorials, information booklets, etc.

   Barbara stated that any available handouts from workshop sessions are on the HLC website for
   public viewing.

   The need for a marketing plan was mentioned – Bev indicated she and Jim will meet soon to
discuss a plan.

   Victoria believes the self-study could be used for student projects and Bev indicated that college
credit could possibly be offered to students who participate.
Each committee member received a HLC Self-Study Survival Kit which was an idea Bev found at the HLC Annual Meeting.

Bev stated that Farzad Moussavi has removed himself from the committee and no one will be named to fill his position; therefore, a new chair for Criterion Five will have to be selected.

The committee decided to meet again in two weeks to discuss potential committee members and finalize plans for summer.

Next meeting: Thursday, May 8, 2008
College Eye Room - Maucker Union; 12:00 noon
Lunch will be provided
HLC Steering Committee
Meeting Notes
May 8, 2008 – 11:00 a.m.
College Eye Room-Maucker Union

Present: Buse, Chatham-Carpenter, Cutter, DeFrancisco, Hanish, Kopper, Kaparthi, Licari, Martin, Morgan, Murtha, Neibauer, O’Connor, Patton, Pease, Uehle, Upah, Vinton

Absent: Agee, Wilson

Bev announced that Dr. Al Hays, Director of the Public Policy Program, has agreed to join the committee and chair Criterion Five-Engagement and Service. Dr. Hays is on PDA this semester but will join the group in the fall.

Bev reported that a draft agreement between UNI and the Higher Learning Commission requesting the special emphasis self-study option is on President Allen’s desk.

1. April 24, 2008 meeting notes – Kopper
Notes were distributed via e-mail and no additions or corrections were requested.

2. Organization of subcommittees - All
Possible committee member names were submitted by co-chairs of each chapter and compiled into one listing to look for duplications, omissions, etc. The composite list was distributed for discussion. Some co-chairs will start making contacts with potential committee members this summer.

3. Plans for summer & fall – Kopper
Bev and Jim have met regarding the production process of the self-study. Jim distributed a handout on “Advice for Document Preparation” which outlined specifications for font, margins, etc. The committee decided that a central location for all reports, files, graphics, documents, etc. needs to be identified. WebCT and SharePoint were both suggested as electronic repositories.

A call for self-study volunteers will be sent to all staff early in the fall. Bev will meet with the Cabinet and Academic Affairs Council this summer to update them on our progress. Also in the fall, Bev will be promoting the self-study to various constituency groups on campus.

The data coordinating committee (Kate, Phil, Shashi & Patrick) agreed to meet this summer to compile a list of UNI reports that might be needed for the self-study.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Range</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2007</td>
<td>Meetings held with Academic Affairs and Educational &amp; Student Services to discuss participation in the FoE program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 30, 2008</td>
<td>Conference call with Dr. John Gardner, Director of the FoE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 6, 2008</td>
<td>University Council meeting to discuss Reaccreditation and FoE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 14, 2008</td>
<td>HLC Steering Committee convened to begin self-study process. Accreditation Web site launched.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 22, 2008</td>
<td>UNI formally admitted to the FoE program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 5, 2008</td>
<td>Town Hall Meeting to discuss Reaccreditation and FoE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 7, 2008</td>
<td>Conference call with Dr. John Gardner, Director of the FoE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 12-15, 2008</td>
<td>HLC Steering Committee members attend HLC Annual Meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2008</td>
<td>HLC Steering Committee meets to plan self-study process and organization of subcommittees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2008</td>
<td>HLC Criteria Subcommittees appointed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2008-April 2009</td>
<td>Subcommittees collect, analyze, and interpret data and draft reports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 31-August 1, 2008</td>
<td>Team attends FoE Launch Meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2008</td>
<td>FoE Dimension Subcommittees appointed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2008</td>
<td>HLC Liaison visits campus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2008</td>
<td>FoE faculty/staff surveys administered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 31, 2008</td>
<td>All subcommittee work plans due to steering committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2008</td>
<td>FoE first-year student survey administered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2008-May 2009</td>
<td>FoE Task Force analyzes data and develops draft reports and strategic action plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 6, 2009</td>
<td>Team attends FoE Winter Meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2009</td>
<td>HLC Steering Committee members attend HLC Annual Meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1, 2009</td>
<td>Draft reports from all subcommittees due to HLC Steering Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May-August 2009</td>
<td>FoE Strategic Action Plan refined.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2009</td>
<td>HLC Liaison visits campus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2009</td>
<td>FoE Strategic Action Plan initiated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 1, 2009</td>
<td>Final reports from subcommittees due to HLC Steering Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2009-February 2010</td>
<td>Draft self-study based on subcommittee reports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March-April 2010</td>
<td>Campus input regarding self-study draft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May-September 2010</td>
<td>Self-Study refined based on campus input.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2010</td>
<td>Steering Committee members attend HLC Annual Meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2011</td>
<td>Distribution of self-study to HLC review team.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February-April 2011</td>
<td>HLC review team visits campus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2011</td>
<td>Convene Steering Committee to develop program plan to address the recommendations from the self-study and the HLC review team.</td>
</tr>
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SELF-STUDY DESIGN
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Chapter 4: Philosophy Dimension
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Part Five: Appendices

Data Coordinators: Phil Patton, Shashi Kaparthi, Kate Martin, Patrick Pease
Resource Room Coordinator: Kate Martin
Marketing & Public Relations Coordinator: Jim O’Connor
March 5, 2008

Dr. Beverly Kopper
Associate Provost and Associate VP for Academic Affairs
University of Northern Iowa
1227 W. 27th Street
Cedar Falls, IA 50614

Subject: Confirmation of Selection for Foundations of Excellence National Select Cohort Class of 2008-2009

Dear Beverly:

Please consider this letter pursuant to our recent discussion about your institution’s application for participation in the 2008-2009 Foundations of Excellence process. Further, this is to confirm my invitation to you to participate based on our acceptance of your application. We are looking forward very much to working with you next year and are optimistic that together we can make a major contribution towards improving your beginning college experience. So, welcome to the National Select Cohort of Foundations of Excellence for 2008-2009.

I will be sending you over the next few days a formal agreement for you to have executed and returned to us. In addition to providing you with detailed information on what we have agreed to provide you, this will comprise your license for use of our intellectual property and software platform known as FoEtec.

In the meantime, between now and when the process formally commences in July 2008, there are three major subjects for your early decision making and planning that will greatly influence the outcomes of our work with you. These are:
1) a final decision about which individual(s) will serve as your campus leaders of this project and as “liaisons” to us at the Policy Center (a liaison and a co-liaison)
2) the composition of an institution-wide task force, ideally, to be composed of representatives from the faculty, academic administrators, the chief academic office, student affairs colleagues, IR/assessment professionals, and students. We recommend that you formally appoint this task force before the end of this academic year and the faculty depart for their summer’s hiatus.
3) who will represent your institution and attend the Launch Meeting in Asheville on July 31 – August 1. You will recall that your three registrations are complimentary and that at a minimum you must bring three individuals. Our suggestion is that this team includes either the chief academic officer or surrogate; the liaison(s) for the project leadership; and
an IR/assessment professional who will be providing data collection support for the project. Once you have made decisions about composition please go to our website at www.fyfoundations.org for information on this meeting and its location so that you can obtain hotel reservations. Of course you may send more than three individuals but they would be at an extra charge of $325 per person.

I want you to feel free to communicate with me about anything, any time, during our work together over the next year. We thank you again for your interest and confidence in the prospect of working with us. You will have our total commitment and attention to delivering for you an outstanding professional process for the betterment of your campus and the success of your first-year students.

To consummate all these arrangements please be on the look out for the contractual materials which will arrive relatively shortly. But in advance of that please accept this letter as indication of our commitment to work with you next year.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

John N. Gardner
Executive Director

cc: Dr. James Lubker, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
    Dr. Jon Buse, Dean of Students
March 6, 2008

Dr. Beverly Kopper
Associate Provost and Associate VP for Academic Affairs
University of Northern Iowa
1227 W. 27th Street
Cedar Falls, IA 50614


Dear Beverly:

As promised, I am writing now to forward to you an official agreement, with exhibits and an invoice, for you to have executed, which will finalize your admission and selection process for the Foundations of Excellence National Select Cohort for 2008-2009. Let me take this opportunity to welcome you again and to tell you how much we are looking forward to working with you.

We are enclosing our standard Agreement document which we would request that you have executed and returned to us no later than July 30, 2008. We trust that what it outlines is precisely what you had come to expect from reading about our Foundations process and your discussion with me. Of course, if you have any questions, I would be happy to address them with you. You will also find enclosed “Exhibit A” which delineates what precisely your campus will be receiving from us as part of this Agreement. Further, you will find enclosed “Exhibit B” which explains the precise details of the license the Policy Center is hereby granting to your institution for the use of our intellectual property. These documents are probably the most technical and certainly “legal” looking you are going to receive from us this year, but we know you would expect and want nothing less from any other important professional partner. And, finally, you will find enclosed an invoice for the payment of the base fee incorporated into the Agreement, once that agreement has been executed. Unless we have made arrangements to the contrary, that fee is also due by July 30, 2008.

In addition to these important documents, the only other matter I would want to call your attention to at this time, is the necessity of having hotel reservations made for your representatives who will attend the July 31 – August 1, 2008 Launch Meeting in Asheville. The cut off for discounted room block rates is June 30. Complete details about the Launch Meeting are included as an enclosure.
I thank you for your attention and actions related hereto these matters. And, again, don’t hesitate to contact me if you need further information and/or assistance.

Best wishes upon joining Foundations of Excellence for 2008-2009. We cordially welcome you.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

John N. Gardner
Executive Director

Enclosures:  1. Agreement
             2. Exhibit A
             3. Exhibit B
             4. Invoice
             5. Information on Launch Meeting

cc:        Dr. James Lubker, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
           Dr. Jon Buse, Dean of Students

Note: All benefits and conditions of participation are delineated in an Agreement to be executed between the campus and the Policy Center.

- A campus specific license for use of:
  - Foundational Dimensions® principles in the First College Year
  - Current Practices Inventory
  - Performance Indicators for the Foundational Dimensions principles
  - Action Plan

- Advisory, communication services for campus personnel in support of pre-Launch Meeting organizational/decision making steps.

- Foundations of Excellence technology infrastructure for reporting and planning (Two-years access from July 31, 2008 – July 31, 2010). Campuses may extend access to technology infrastructure beyond two years for an additional fee.

- A Policy Center Advisor assigned to the participating campus for one year (July 31, 2008 – July 31, 2009). Campuses may extend their contract with Policy Center beyond one year for an additional fee.

- One year of intensive off-site advisory support from the Policy Center staff with regular feedback on campus reports (July 31, 2008 – July 31, 2009). This support from the Policy Center may be extended beyond one year for an additional fee.

- Mandatory participation in Foundations of Excellence Launch Meeting for three campus representatives (complimentary registrations). Campuses may choose to send additional representatives with fees paid by the campus.

- Data from Foundations of Excellence Student Surveys

- Data from Foundations of Excellence Faculty/Staff Surveys

- Regular ongoing sharing/reporting opportunities with cohort institutions

- National recognition

- Inclusion in ongoing Policy Center research and dissemination activities.

- Priority for optional on-site assistance from Policy Center Advisor (Additional fees apply)

- Mid-point optional meeting held in conjunction with Annual National Conference on The First-Year Experience, February 6, 2009, Orlando, FL (Additional registration fee will apply).
Exhibit B

License Permissions and Terms for Institutional Participants in the Policy Center's Foundations of Excellence® National Select Cohort

Templates and Reports. Each participant shall have access and be able to use solely for its internal purposes Web-based and downloadable templates and reports to collect and organize data. These templates and reports include, but are not limited to, the Foundational Dimensions® principles, Performance Indicators, Current Practices Inventory, and Action Plan. The Policy Center grants to the participant a non-exclusive, limited, nontransferable, terminable license to only use and reproduce these templates and reports for internal uses associated with the program for the term of this Agreement. In no event, shall the participant directly or indirectly disclose, sell, reveal, report, publish, transfer or otherwise make available the templates and reports to any third party without the express written consent of the Policy Center.

Trademark. During the term of the program, the Policy Center grants the participant a non-exclusive, limited, nontransferable, terminable license to use the Policy Center's Foundations of Excellence® mark, U.S. Registration No. 2,894,840 and Foundational Dimensions® mark, U.S. Registration No. 2,904,427, (the "Mark"), in advertising such as: (a) "The Participant is engaged in the Foundations of Excellence® Self-Study Process using the Foundational Dimensions® principles, guidelines and reports"; or (b) "The Participant is a member of the Foundations of Excellence® National Select Cohort that utilizes the Foundational Dimensions® principles, guidelines and reports." The participant shall not do anything inconsistent with the Policy Center's ownership rights, including but not limited to filing any application to register the Mark, in whole or part, or any mark that is confusingly similar to the Mark at any time and/or attacking title to or rights in the intellectual property of the Policy Center, including without limitation, the Mark. Use of the Mark by the participant shall inure to the benefit of the Policy Center.

Terms and Conditions for General Use of the Foundational Dimensions® Principles and Foundations of Excellence® Self Study

The Foundational Dimensions® principles were originally developed by the Policy Center on the First Year of College in collaboration with its research partners and over 300 public and private four-year and two-year institutions and are copyrighted by the Policy Center on the First Year of College. Together the Dimensions constitute an aspirational and measurement model for the first year. We hope that institutions will find them useful as they consider the design of an educationally purposeful experience for first-year students. To that end, campuses are encouraged to copy the Dimensions for internal use. This copyright permission does not extend to other kinds of copying, such as copying for general distribution, for advertising or promotional purposes, for creating new publications, or for resale.

Please note that a public claim to conducting a Foundations of Excellence® Self Study can only be made by campuses that have obtained a license to use the various templates, reporting documents, and processes that are designed to facilitate use of the Foundational Dimensions® principles as an aspirational and measurement model.

If you have questions about these terms and conditions, contact the Policy Center at info@fypfoundations.org or 628-966-5401.
The Foundations of Excellence National Select Cohort Launch Meeting

This Meeting has as its basic purpose a thorough introduction for campus representative(s) to the Foundations of Excellence process. For 2008-2009 participants, registration for the Institute will begin at 7:30 am on July 31st and the meeting will end by 3:00 p.m. on August 1st. The first meeting session is scheduled at 8:30 am on July 31st. The location for the meeting is the Renaissance Hotel Asheville, in Asheville, NC. This two day meeting will enable campus participants to: 1) meet each other and form a national cohort network; 2) meet and interact with all the Policy Center staff members; 3) learn how the Foundations of Excellence process is designed and may work best so that each campus can maximize its potential to strengthen its first year; 4) observe demonstrations of the technology components of the Foundations of Excellence process; 5) set goals and address questions campuses will understandably bring with them; and 6) develop a personal relationship with the campus’s Policy Center contact person.

Attendance at the Institute is required for each Institution. Three registrations are included as part of the fee. The Policy Center recommends that the three participants be the chief academic officer and/or her/his representative, the Foundations of Excellence task force liaisons, and an institutional research or assessment professional. Each Cohort campus may bring additional representatives at a cost of $325.00 each. Both complimentary and paid registrations include all meeting materials, breakfasts, lunches, and an evening reception.

Institute location: Renaissance Asheville Hotel, One Thomas Wolfe Plaza, Asheville, NC 28801. The hotel is located just off Interstate Hwy 240 East in downtown Asheville.

Dates: July 31 and August 1, 2008

Registration: Registration begins at 7:30 am on July 31st.

Times: The first session begins at 8:30 am on July 31st and the meeting concludes on August 1st at 3:00 pm.

Meals: Full breakfast, lunch, and wine and cheese reception on July 31, and full breakfast and lunch included on August 1 included

Hotel reservations: Please make room reservations directly with the Renaissance Hotels Central Reservations Office. Call 1-800-468-3571, and specify "Foundations of Excellence Launch Meeting" Reservation cut-off date for discounted block rate is Monday, June 30th.

Room rates: A special conference rate of $159.00 is available.

Transportation to Asheville: Asheville can be reached by air on Delta, US Airways, Continental Airlines, and Northwest Airlines. Note: the least reliable service into Asheville is on the Delta Connection carrier, Atlantic Southeast Airlines from Atlanta. A larger airport with more service options and sometimes lower prices is the Greenville/Spartanburg SC Airport, which is 75 – 90 minutes from Asheville by car. The Renaissance Hotel is approximately 15 miles from the Asheville Airport and ground transportation may be arranged in advance through Diamond Executive Car Transportation by calling 877-891-0339 (toll-free) or 828-281-8139 (local). Ground transportation may also be secured upon arrival at the airport by reporting to the ground transportation desk in Baggage Claim. Due to heavy tourist traffic and large numbers of campers coming to Asheville during the summer months, early reservations are recommended.
Registration Form (Inaugural National Select Cohort)  
Foundations of Excellence National Select Cohort Launch Meeting

Institution Name: ____________________________________________________________

Participants Information

Complimentary Registrations (Three):

1. Name __________________________________ Title ____________________________
   Email ____________________________________________ Special Needs or
   (Dietary Preferences) ______________________________

2. Name __________________________________ Title ____________________________
   Email ____________________________________________ Special Needs or
   (Dietary Preferences) ______________________________

3. Name __________________________________ Title ____________________________
   Email ____________________________________________ Special Needs or
   (Dietary Preferences) ______________________________

Additional Registrations @$325.00 per person:

1. Name __________________________________ Title ____________________________
   Email ____________________________________________ Special Needs or
   (Dietary Preferences) ______________________________

2. Name __________________________________ Title ____________________________
   Email ____________________________________________ Special Needs or
   (Dietary Preferences) ______________________________

3. Name __________________________________ Title ____________________________
   Email ____________________________________________ Special Needs or
   (Dietary Preferences) ______________________________

(7 or more: please attach sheet with additional names and information)

Registration Fee for Additional Participants _______ @$325.00 = _______

Method of Payment: Federal ID No. 26-0166817

( ) Please invoice

( ) Credit Card No. ____________________________ Exp. Date ____________
   (Visa, MasterCard and Discover only)

( ) Check enclosed (Make checks payable to the Policy Center on the First Year of College)

( ) Purchase Order  Purchase Order Number ____________________________

Mail or fax form to Policy Center on the First Year of College, PO Box 72, Brevard, NC 28712. Fax: 828-883-4093
Agreement

This Agreement between University of Northern Iowa and the Policy Center on the First Year of College sets out the terms and conditions of participation in the Foundations of Excellence® National Select Cohort.

During the one-year period from July 31, 2008 – July 31, 2009, in exchange for payment of $33,500, payable by July 30, 2008, the Policy Center shall provide all services outlined in Exhibit A in a professional and timely manner. Access to services from the Policy Center may be extended beyond one year upon execution of an additional agreement between the Policy Center and University of Northern Iowa and for payment of an additional fee.

During the two-year period from July 31, 2008 – July 31, 2010, University of Northern Iowa shall also have access to FoEtec®, a Web-based platform containing downloadable templates and materials. These templates and materials, designed for use in recording and manipulating all data collected by University of Northern Iowa during the term of this Agreement and developing the Action Plan for First-Year Improvement, include, but are not limited to, the Foundational Dimensions® principles, Performance Indicators, Current Practices Inventory template, and Action Plan template. License to use these items is restricted to University of Northern Iowa, and access shall not be shared with other third parties. The license to these items expires on July 31, 2010 and is governed by the license terms provided in Exhibit B to which University of Northern Iowa agrees.

In order to accomplish the project’s objectives, University of Northern Iowa shall appoint a task force and a liaison and co-liaison to the Policy Center. The work of the project shall be undertaken primarily by the task force, with assistance as needed from other campus personnel or units. The task force liaisons shall be responsible for communication among campus staff, Policy Center staff, and other campuses involved in the project.

University of Northern Iowa shall participate in the Foundations of Excellence faculty/staff survey and the Foundations of Excellence student survey (owned by Educational Benchmarking, Inc.) as outlined in Exhibit A. The surveys, Web-based administration, and analysis tools are included in the Foundations of Excellence fee. University of Northern Iowa shall assume responsibility for any necessary compliance with established policies and procedures in regard to data collected utilizing human subjects. The Policy Center shall have access to data and information from participating institutions derived from Foundations of Excellence surveys and in-house evaluations; however, the Policy Center shall not publish or disseminate data in any way that would personally identify a particular campus, its faculty, or its students.

University of Northern Iowa must send at least three representatives to the Foundations of Excellence Launch Meeting on July 31 – August 1, 2008. No registration fees shall be charged for these representatives. Additional representatives may participate at a cost of $325 each.

University of Northern Iowa may terminate this Agreement at any time, and the Policy Center may terminate if University of Northern Iowa breaches this Agreement. However, no refunds shall be issued by the Policy Center for termination after July 30, 2008. All licenses shall be terminated upon termination of this Agreement. The Policy Center’s liability under this Agreement is limited to the amount paid by University of Northern Iowa, and the Policy Center is not liable for any special, consequential, incidental, or indirect damages, or for lost profits.

Each party acknowledges that a duly authorized representative has executed this Agreement as of the date set forth below, and acknowledges that this party has read, understands, and agrees to the terms and conditions of this Agreement.

Policy Center on the First Year of College

Signature:  
Title: Executive Director  
Date: 3/5/08

University of Northern Iowa

Signature:  
Title:  
Date: 01/04/08
May 28, 2008

Dr. Benjamin J. Allen
President
University of Northern Iowa
20 Seerley Hall
Cedar Falls, IA 50614-0705

Dear President Allen:

I'm pleased to convey here a signed copy of the agreement for the Special Emphasis.

I look forward to working with you as the University of Northern Iowa approaches its Comprehensive Evaluation.

Sincerely,

Robert R. Appleson
Associate Director, Accreditation
AGREEMENT BETWEEN
THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA
AND THE HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION
ON A SPECIAL EMPHASIS SELF-STUDY OPTION
FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION SCHEDULED FOR 2010-2011

SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON:
The Foundations of Excellence

Purpose

The special emphasis self-study is an option made available to accredited, mature institutions that have a recent history of decennial review cycles in conjunction with their comprehensive evaluation visits and with no major interim monitoring. Through this arrangement, an institution seeks Commission authorization to focus study on one or more issues that are critical to significant advancement and improvement in the achievement and realization of its mission and vision. Collaboration between the institution and the Commission staff is essential when a special emphasis focus is contemplated.

Eligibility and Background

Founded in 1876, the University of Northern Iowa (web site: www.uni.edu) 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 variety of undergraduate programs. Under the 2005 Carnegie Classification system, the University of Northern Iowa is described as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic Classification</th>
<th>Master's L: Master's Colleges and Universities (larger programs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate Instructional</td>
<td>Prof + A&amp;S/SGC: Professions plus arts &amp; sciences, some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td>graduate coexistence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Instructional</td>
<td>Doc/Prof: Doctoral, professional dominant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment Profile</td>
<td>VHU: Very high undergraduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate Profile</td>
<td>FT4/S/HT1: Full-time four-year, selective, higher transfer-in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size and Setting</td>
<td>L4/R: Large four-year, primarily residential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Engagement</td>
<td>Curricular Engagement and Outreach and Partnerships</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The University of Northern Iowa is one of three public universities governed by the Board of Regents, State of Iowa. It was first accredited as a teacher training institution in 1913 and has been continuously accredited as a full-fledged, four-year college since 1930. It was first granted approval to offer undergraduate liberal arts non-teaching degrees in 1961. It was granted approval to offer programs at the Master's level in 1951 and the Doctoral level in 1978. The last comprehensive NCA evaluation took place in 2000-2001, at which time the next comprehensive review was set for 2010-2011, with a monitoring report on UNI's general education program and
the last comprehensive evaluation, UNI applied for and was granted a new elective Carnegie Classification: Community Engagement: Curricular Engagement and Outreach and Partnerships. UNI's mission is to provide a personalized learning environment, founded on a strong liberal arts curriculum. It is committed to being an intellectually and culturally diverse community. The University focuses both on undergraduate education, and on selected Master's, Doctoral, and other graduate programs. It is characterized by excellence in three areas: teaching and learning; research, scholarship, and creative work; and service. Through its varied endeavors, UNI shares its expertise with, and provides service to, individuals, communities, and organizations throughout the state, the nation, and the world.

The University of Northern Iowa has maintained its long commitment to academic excellence through some very difficult conditions. Due to revenue shortfalls in the state of Iowa in the early 2000s, the Iowa Legislature substantially reduced appropriations to all three of its public universities. Additionally, faculty union mandated salary increases were not funded. The University weathered these challenges relatively well through careful planning and practices across the institution. We are pleased to report that during that time period, the Education Trust cited UNI as having the highest graduation rate among its peer institutions and referred to UNI as a model of effective practice.

In 2005, the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, developed a four-year plan to maintain the excellence of Iowa's public universities in the face of these budget reductions: the Regents Partnership for Transformation and Excellence. In addition, the University of Northern Iowa also engages in a five-year cycle of strategic planning with annual reviews of progress reported to the Board of Regents.

The University of Northern Iowa wishes to further build on its strong commitment to providing high-quality undergraduate education by focusing its self-study on the first-year experience, through participation in the Foundations of Excellence program. The Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs and Educational & Student Services, along with the President and his Cabinet are financially supporting our participation in this process by strategically reallocating funds during tight budgetary times to finance this initiative.

Collaboration and Preliminary Submission

An institutional delegation met with its Commission staff liaison and discussed the special emphasis option during the 2008 Annual Meeting in Chicago.

The institution also submitted a preliminary document that

- provided historical data addressing its founding (i.e., Carnegie classification, accreditation history, source of controlling support, etc.);
- showed the relationship between the identified special emphasis and the institution's mission;
- documented institutional consensus and support for the special emphasis areas chosen;
- provided evidence that the institution has made progress with challenges identified by the team that conducted the last comprehensive evaluation visit or any subsequent on-site visit team;
• provided evidence that the institution has adequate financial resources and a comprehensive planning and budgeting process.

After reviewing this document, the staff liaison signaled his readiness to review a formal submission on which to base an agreement between the institution and the Commission.

Definition of Special Emphasis

The University of Northern Iowa proposes as its special emphasis participation in the Foundations of Excellence program as specified in the Joint Project between the Higher Learning Commission and the Policy Center on the First Year of College. The Foundations of Excellence program provides a comprehensive, guided self-study of the first college year that provides for a systematic assessment of institutional strengths and weaknesses. It is built on nine dimensions which serve as a framework for improving persistence and student learning and provide for an intentional design of the first year.

Participation in the Foundations of Excellence program will enable UNI to achieve the larger goal of developing benchmarks for student learning in the first year that will guide institutional decisions and actions throughout the college experience. Additionally, the self-study assures that UNI will consider learning outcomes in the broader context of institutional improvement. This process will contribute to the assessment and alignment of our institutional mission, goals, and intended outcomes.

The special emphasis will focus on the question “How can we improve the experience of our first year students?” Some of the specific questions to which UNI seeks answers are:

• What are appropriate and realistic goals for retention, and what are other indicators of success of the first-year experience? What additional data should be collected?

• How do we maintain our historical emphasis on a coherent general education curriculum as we serve more transfer and commuting students?

• Can and should the strategy of learning communities be applied to our main campus? To our off-campus degree site? Should we consider other changes in course scheduling?

• Does the present method of faculty assignment to first-year courses fit our enrollment?

• Are organizational and infrastructure changes needed to strengthen the first-year experience?

• Do we approach the first year in ways that are intentional and based on a philosophy/rationale of the first year that informs relevant institutional policies and practices?

• Do we create organizational structures and policies that provide a comprehensive, integrated, and coordinated approach to the first year?

• Do we deliver intentional curricular and co-curricular learning experiences that engage students in order to develop knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors consistent with the desired outcomes of higher education and the institution’s philosophy and mission?
UNI Special Emphasis Self-Study Agreement

- Do we make the first college year a high priority for the faculty?
- Do we facilitate appropriate student transitions through policies and practices that are intentional and aligned with institutional mission?
- Do we serve all first-year students according to their varied needs?
- Do we ensure that all first-year students experience diverse ideas, worldviews, and cultures as a means of enhancing their learning and preparing them to become members of pluralistic communities?
- Do we promote student understanding of the various roles and purposes of higher education, both for the individual and society?
- Do we conduct assessment and maintain associations with other institutions and relevant professional organizations in order to achieve ongoing first-year improvement?

UNI desires to devote a portion of its current self-study to these and related questions. It also desires consultation and advice from the Higher Learning Commission Consultant Evaluators on these questions through the special emphasis portion of its accreditation review.

Outline Format for Self-study

An outline of our institutional self-study is attached. Briefly, the self-study will consist of three large sections. The first section will have two preliminary chapters providing an overview of the institution and its response to concerns raised during the last review. The second section will include a chapter for each of the nine Foundations of Excellence Dimensions. The third section will have five chapters addressing the five new criteria for accreditation. The final section of our self-study will include conclusions.

The general time line for the self-study began with meetings during the Fall 2007 semester to discuss participation in the Foundations of Excellence program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall 2007</th>
<th>Meetings held with Academic Affairs and Educational &amp; Student Services to discuss participation in the FoE program.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 30, 2008</td>
<td>Conference call with Dr. John Gardner, Director of the FoE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 6, 2008</td>
<td>University Council meeting to discuss Reaccreditation and FoE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 14, 2008</td>
<td>HLC Steering Committee convened to begin self-study process. Accreditation Web site launched.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 22, 2008</td>
<td>UNI formally admitted to the FoE program.</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 5, 2008</td>
<td>Town Hall Meeting to discuss Reaccreditation and FoE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 7, 2008</td>
<td>Conference call with Dr. John Gardner, Director of the FoE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date/Period</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 12-15, 2008</td>
<td>HLC Steering Committee members attend HLC Annual Meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2008</td>
<td>HLC Steering Committee meets to plan self-study process and organization of subcommittees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2008</td>
<td>HLC Criteria Subcommittees appointed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2008-April 2009</td>
<td>Subcommittees collect, analyze, and interpret data and draft reports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 31-August 1, 2008</td>
<td>Team attends FoE Launch Meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2008</td>
<td>FoE Dimension Subcommittees appointed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2008</td>
<td>HLC Liaison visits campus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2008</td>
<td>FoE faculty/staff surveys administered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 31, 2008</td>
<td>All subcommittee work plans due to steering committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2008</td>
<td>FoE first-year student survey administered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2008-May 2009</td>
<td>FoE Task Force analyzes data and develops draft reports and strategic action plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 6, 2009</td>
<td>Team attends FoE Winter Meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2009</td>
<td>HLC Steering Committee members attend HLC Annual Meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1, 2009</td>
<td>Draft reports from all subcommittees due to HLC Steering Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May-August 2009</td>
<td>FoE Strategic Action Plan refined.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2009</td>
<td>HLC Liaison visits campus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2009</td>
<td>FoE Strategic Action Plan initiated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 1, 2009</td>
<td>Final reports from subcommittees due to HLC Steering Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2009-February 2010</td>
<td>Draft self-study based on subcommittee reports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March-April 2010</td>
<td>Campus input regarding self-study draft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May-September 2010</td>
<td>Self-Study refined based on campus input.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2010</td>
<td>Steering Committee members attend HLC Annual Meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2011</td>
<td>Distribution of self-study to HLC review team.</td>
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<tr>
<td>February-April 2011</td>
<td>HLC review team visits campus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2011</td>
<td>Convene Steering Committee to develop program plan to address the recommendations from the self-study and the HLC review team.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Institutional Capacity and Commitment to Special Emphasis

In selecting this special emphasis area, the institution has elicited feedback from a broad range of stakeholders, through a town hall meeting on accreditation and the Foundations of Excellence program and discussion at the University Council, which represents the leadership of all colleges, departments, and administrative units within the University. This has initiated extensive discussion both within and across the academic and student affairs divisions. The project has garnered wide support from campus constituents, which is best illustrated through the strong desire of the President, Provost, and the University Cabinet to participate in this process. The self-study will be guided by a steering committee that will serve as coordinators for the self-study subcommittees identifying the information and data needed to address the self-study components. The accreditation self-study steering committee, the special emphasis subcommittees, and the president and provost all support a thorough examination of the topic. Sufficient funds have been allocated to conduct this special emphasis and support the work of the steering committee. Thus, UNI has the capacity and commitment to support the special emphasis initiative.

The findings will form a section of the self-study report, which will be available to the campus community and to the public as well as submitted to the Higher Learning Commission. It is understood that the evaluation will be based on this portion of the self-study as well as the sections on the criteria for accreditation. Furthermore, UNI is committed to publicly reporting the findings and recommendations of the HLC and to work with the HLC in the follow-up to the report (including a later consultative visit) and recommendations.

Summary of Agreement

The University of Northern Iowa agrees to completion of the special emphasis self-study under the terms set forth above, which are listed in summary form below.

- defined need for and nature of the special emphasis self-study focus;
- use of outline format for the self-study that indicates how continued fulfillment of the Criteria for Accreditation will be addressed;
- statement of institution's capacity to support the special emphasis initiative;
- statement of institution's commitment to report the comprehensive results of the special emphasis as a part of the self-study and to being evaluated, in part, on the conduct of the outcomes achieved through the special emphasis;
- commitment to provide the Commission with follow-up, generally through a later consultative visit, on the recommendations (internal and external) and utilization of the findings resulting from the self-study and evaluation processes.

Upon execution of this agreement, Commission staff works with institutional representatives in organizing the special emphasis self-study, selecting team members, arranging the on-site visit, following the review process to completion, and monitoring institution/Commission follow-up.
The Consultant-Evaluators Team conducts the comprehensive evaluation visit to (a) determine the institution's fulfillment of the *Criteria for Accreditation*, and evaluate the special emphasis initiative under the agreed upon format and (b) provide consultative advice regarding the outcomes achieved and, under special conditions, participate in follow-up activities as may have been proposed as a part of the special emphasis focus.

Benjamin J. Allen, President

5/13/08

Date

Special Emphasis request accepted by the Higher Learning Commission.

Steven D. Crow, President

5/23/08

Date
Self-Study Design Outline

Part One: Introduction

Chapter 1: Overview of the University/Who We Are

Chapter 2: Response to 2001 Team Evaluation Report/Progress Since 2001

Part Two: Foundations of Excellence Dimensions

Chapter 3: Foundations of Excellence Model

Chapter 4: Philosophy Dimension

Chapter 5: Organization Dimension

Chapter 6: Learning Dimension

Chapter 7: Faculty Dimension

Chapter 8: Transitions Dimension

Chapter 9: All Students Dimension

Chapter 10: Diversity Dimension

Chapter 11: Roles and Purposes Dimension

Chapter 12: Improvement Dimension

Chapter 13: Foundations of Excellence Action Projects

Part Three: Higher Learning Commission Criteria

Chapter 14: Criterion One – Mission and Integrity

Chapter 15: Criterion Two – Preparing for the Future

Chapter 16: Criterion Three – Student Learning and Effective Teaching

Chapter 17: Criterion Four – Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge

Chapter 18: Criterion Five – Engagement and Service

Part Four: Conclusions
Accreditation Activities for 2008-09 Academic Year

Summer, 2008
Self-study Coordinator reviews criteria for accreditation and timelines with:
- Cabinet
- AAC

Fall, 2008
Accreditation process discussed with:
- University Faculty Senate
- College Senates
- Council of Department Heads
- Division Directors
- Merit Staff
- NISG

HLC Liaison visits campus.

FoE Task Force convened and Current Practices Inventory initiated, faculty/staff and student surveys administered.

Fall, 2008 – Spring, 2009
Subcommittees collect, analyze, and interpret data; conduct interviews; and develop draft reports for submission to steering committee.

Summer, 2009
FoE action plan refined.
Progress Report on the Assessment & Management of the General Education Program
University of Northern Iowa

INTRODUCTION

This document constitutes a progress report to the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association (NCA) of Colleges and Schools, on the management and oversight and the assessment of student outcomes of the University of Northern Iowa’s General Education program. Since receiving the NCA Report, the University has focused considerable attention and made significant advances in its General Education program.

This report begins with a brief background section noting relevant changes in the environment since the February 2001 NCA visit. We then review the recommendations identified by the NCA Team and describe a number of actions we have taken. Following this, we describe some continuing challenges and future initiatives related to the General Education Program. To simplify the narrative, we offer a detailed outline of the actions in Appendix A while Appendix B is our Student Outcomes Assessment (SOA) Plan.

The University of Northern Iowa completed its NCA Self-Study Report in 2000 and was pleased to host a Visiting Team the following year. In the report of its visit to the University of Northern Iowa (February, 19-21, 2001), the review team commended the University for its many strengths and recommended continued accreditation with the next comprehensive evaluation scheduled for 2010-2011. The team also required a progress report on the General Education program and assessment. “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” (Final Report, 2/2001, p.59).

BACKGROUND

There have been some important changes in the environment since the review team departed four years ago. First, like most public universities (though Iowa may have been harder hit than most), UNI has undergone significant budgetary challenges. The University has experienced eight base budget reductions in three years (sometimes as many as three in a given year). Additionally, mandatory salary increases have not been funded. The cumulative impact has been on the order of $30,000,000. A recent report noted that, accounting for the Higher Education Price Index (HEPI), the university has lost 25% of its state appropriation. We are pleased to report, however, that the university has weathered these challenges relatively well through careful planning and collaboration among all divisions, faculty and staff and through improvement of policies and practices across the institution. The university has maintained its small class sizes, reduced its student faculty ratio and increased the proportion of courses taught by tenured and tenure track faculty. The Education Trust recently cited UNI as having the highest graduation rate among its peer intuitions and referred to UNI as a model of effective practice.
The second significant change has been a renewed university-wide commitment to general education at UNI as the foundation for lifelong learning. In 1999, Provost Podolefsky initiated a process with the Faculty Senate that renamed the general education program the Liberal Arts Core and provided a four-part plan for improving the program. He also created summer institutes that brought together faculty who teach the same or similar courses in the Core to collaboratively develop improved practices, especially related to the use of technology in the Core. In 2000, President Koob reinstated Convocation with a focus on the value of a liberal arts education and of the University’s Liberal Arts Core. During this event, as well as in other venues, the President highlights the importance of UNI’s Liberal Arts Core for students, faculty, staff and parents alike. These important initiatives and the President and Provost’s intentional efforts to make the Liberal Arts Core a central focus of their activities signaled a reinvigoration of the intellectual core of the undergraduate curriculum and enhanced the quality of the undergraduate experience.

When budget cuts impacted the summer institutes, Provost Podolefsky and Associate Provost Koch authored and received a grant from the Roy J. Carver Charitable Trust Fund (matched with university funds) to improve teaching and learning in the Liberal Arts Core. As a result, UNI Carver Fellows, faculty who teach in the Liberal Arts Core, have created ongoing faculty learning communities that are working together on numerous projects to enhance and assess learning in the Core. Carver Fellows and other faculty have also developed new Capstone courses for the Core that promote the development of higher-order thinking skills and dispositions associated with self-directed, life-long learning; make student diversity a strength; link theory to practice through applied problem-solving activities and play a vital role in our Liberal Arts Core SOA Plan.

Thus, the Liberal Arts Core has been the focus of much dialogue and change over the past four years. The President and Provost have maintained the Liberal Arts Core as a central focus of their activities; the Liberal Arts Core Committee and Coordinator have engaged the campus in important discussions of the Core; and faculty, staff and students are now actively involved in this process.

**RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS IDENTIFIED BY THE NCA TEAM**

**Recommendation 1: Management & Oversight of the General Education Program**

The NCA team suggested that a coordinator “could more effectively oversee the entire General Education Program, providing leadership and cohesiveness to a fragmented program” (Final Report, 2/2001, p.22).

This recommendation was enacted in September 2001 when the Provost appointed Dr. Beverly Kopper, Professor of Psychology & Special Assistant for Academic Affairs to serve as Coordinator of the Liberal Arts Core. This administrative change has resolved the concerns about leadership for the Core that the Team expressed.

The Liberal Arts Core (LAC) Coordinator has focused on activities designed to increase
understanding of and commitment to the role and value of the UNI Liberal Arts Core as the foundation of a university education and the importance of student outcomes assessment. The Coordinator has also facilitated the development of a University wide communication network to enhance the overall effectiveness of the Core and to establish a critical feedback loop in the student outcomes assessment plan. The Coordinator has four primary roles: a) to provide leadership for the Liberal Arts Core Committee, b) to oversee the LAC student outcomes assessment activities and category review process, c) to serve as a liaison to the University and College Senates, Academic Councils, Educational & Student Services Offices, Advising Staff and Student Government, and d) to monitor data regarding the Liberal Arts Core, such as enrollment patterns, class size, and percentage of courses taught by tenured tenure track professors.

The LAC web site (http://fp.uni.edu/lac) developed in 2002, offers a means of sharing information and promoting understanding of the Core. This site provides a mechanism for students, faculty, staff, parents and prospective students to access information about the importance of a liberal arts education, student outcomes assessment principles, the purpose and goals of UNI’s Core and each Category within the Core, specific course descriptions and other valuable information. The web site includes an essay by the Provost, originally written for the Alumni Magazine, which addresses the importance of the Core’s new name and reflects on the importance of the liberal arts in a student’s education.

**Recommendation 2: Student Outcomes Assessment Program**

The NCA Team recommended improvement in student outcomes assessment processes related to the general education program.

During the fall of 2001, in response to this recommendation, the Liberal Arts Core Committee formed a Subcommittee to begin work on a comprehensive student outcomes assessment program for the Liberal Arts Core. The Liberal Arts Core SOA Subcommittee facilitated the development of a statement of purposes, goals and proficiencies. A pilot project using two standardized instruments (Academic Profile and the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency – Critical Thinking) was initiated in March 2002. The Subcommittee concluded that the Academic Profile was better suited to our needs and it has been adopted as a measure of student learning for the Core. Student outcomes assessments of first-year and senior students were then completed. At meetings in spring, 2004 these results were shared and discussed with the President and his cabinet and the Provost and Academic Affairs Council. At a retreat this summer, the full faculty Senate engaged in a positive discussion of the results and there is much enthusiasm on the Senate for continued review of these and other measures.

In 2004, the student outcomes assessment plan was refined (see Appendix B) and data from the College Student Experiences Questionnaire, Alumni & Public Views of UNI Survey, and UNI Graduating Senior Survey were analyzed, reviewed and integrated into the Plan for Student Outcomes Assessment of the Liberal Arts Core.

The student outcomes assessment plan includes two major assessment components as discussed in greater detail in Appendix B:
• Assessment of student learning through direct assessments and self assessments
• Review of the assessment results during the biennial curricular change process. The item analysis of student behaviors and their correlates with self-assessed learning will be used to guide curricular and pedagogical changes.

CONTINUING CHALLENGES & FUTURE INITIATIVES

With the involvement of many faculty, staff and students throughout the University, we have made great progress in improving the overall management and coordination of the Liberal Arts Core and in developing and implementing a comprehensive assessment plan for the Core. This progress has included the appointment of a Liberal Arts Core Coordinator who has management responsibility for the Core; the LAC web site; the development of the Purposes, Goals and Proficiencies for the Liberal Arts Core and specific learning goals; the improvement of pedagogy; the completion of several pilot assessment projects; and the establishment of a communication network and feedback loop. As we continue in our efforts, we are challenged to fully engage the entire University in a culture (collective and shared values) of continuous reflection about the Core. The following future initiatives are designed to address these continuing challenges and to insure that continuous improvement is being made in the Liberal Arts Core.

Reexamination of the Purposes, Goals & Proficiencies of the LAC
The LAC Committee is continuing to dialogue with the University community regarding the LAC Purposes, Goals and Proficiencies. We have had lively campus-wide debate regarding our Liberal Arts Core that culminated in several improvements being made in April 2004. Our goal is to make the continuous review of the Core as routine as the review of departmental major programs. The LAC Committee also plans to continue campus-wide discussions focusing on the learning outcomes and their assessment. The President and Provost are also highlighting the importance of learning outcomes assessment to the mission of the University and its academic programs. The Provost’s review of the outcomes data at the summer Senate retreat is a prime example.

Shared Responsibility for the LAC Assessment Program
The LAC Committee, in conjunction with the Provost, is examining the category review process (see Appendix B, p.10) to determine what changes need to be made to insure that planned student outcomes assessment programs provide useful data, are completed in a timely manner, and are then used for curriculum improvement and institutional decision-making. Likewise, the Committee in conjunction with the Provost is discussing ways to continue to develop a sense of shared responsibility by the faculty and students for improving the Liberal Arts Core.

Institutional Culture & Support of Assessment in the LAC

Through many signs visible to students, faculty and staff, the President and the Provost have made the Liberal Arts Core a central focus of many of their activities during the past five years and will continue to do so in the coming years. For example, during UNI’s recently reinstituted
convocation, the President addressed the importance of the Liberal Arts Core to a university education and to each student's future. In his writings and his talks to faculty, the Provost has similarly focused on the Core, not only in words, but also in the allocation of resources. Even in the struggles over recent changes, the prevailing sense was that the Liberal Arts Core was important to the administration as well as the faculty. Similarly, both the President and the Provost routinely ask, "how do you know, and how will you make it better" the essential question of assessment, feedback, and action. The prevailing sense on campus, and one that will be continuously fostered, is that the Liberal Arts Core is important to the administration, as well as to faculty, staff and students.

CONCLUSION

This report complies with the Higher Learning Commission requirement for a progress report (due October 1, 2004) on UNI's General Education program and assessment. The NCA recommendations to more effectively oversee the General Education Program and to improve student outcomes assessment processes related to the General Education Program have stimulated the establishment of an effective management framework for the program and a student outcomes assessment plan that is already providing important feedback for program improvement. With the accomplishment of these recommendations having been achieved, the University of Northern Iowa looks forward to continued progress and to the next accreditation visit in 2010.
APPENDIX A

Recommendation 1: Management & Oversight of the General Education Program

Actions Taken:

A. General Education Coordinator Appointed
B. General Education Name Changed to Liberal Arts Core
C. Statement of Purposes, Goals and Proficiencies Developed
D. Communication Network Developed with the:
   1. Provost, Associate Provost and College Deans
   2. University Faculty Senate
   3. College Senates
   4. Academic Affairs Council
   5. Council of Department Heads
   6. Academic Advising Advisory Committee
   7. Registrar's Office & Academic Advising
   8. Northern Iowa Student Government
   9. Student Orientation Staff
   10. Academic Advising Orientation Staff
   11. New students and their parents
   12. First Year Experience Advisory Committee
E. Convocation Reinstated with a focus on the importance of the Core
F. LAC Website Developed
G. Category Reviews Completed
H. Category & Course Review Process Updated
I. Data Regarding the Liberal Arts Core Regularly Monitored
J. Capstone Workshop Conducted (Summer, 2001)
K. Humanities I & II 2001 Summer Institute
L. On-going Participation in Phase 2 of the Program of Study Project
M. Receipt of Roy J. Carver Grant: Using Faculty Learning Communities & Innovative Technology to Improve Learning in the Liberal Arts Core
N. Innovative Instructional Strategies & Educational Technology 2004 Summer Institute
O. Integrating Disciplines in the Liberal Arts Core 2004 Summer Institute

Recommendation 2: Student Outcomes Assessment Program

Actions Taken:

A. Student Outcomes Assessment (SOA) Subcommittee Formed
B. Purposes, Goals & Proficiencies Document Developed
C. Extensive Review of SOA Programs at Other Institutions Conducted
D. UNI Student Outcomes Assessment Policy Reviewed
E. SOA Subcommittee Members Attended AAC&U Working Conference on General Education & the Assessment of Student Learning
F. Student Outcomes Assessment Integrated into the Category Review Process
G. First Year Experience Pilot Project Conducted
H. Pilot Project of Academic Profile (AP) and Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) with Capstone Students Completed
I. Data From Survey Instruments Analyzed and Reviewed
J. Draft: Student Outcomes Assessment Plan Developed
K. Report on Student Outcomes Assessment Data Prepared
L. Pilot Project of Academic Profile with First-year and Senior Students Completed
M. Feedback Loop Established
N. LAC Coordinator attends NCA Annual Meeting in March 2004
O. LAC SOA Pilot Results Discussed with the President and his Cabinet
P. LAC SOA Pilot Results Discussed with the Provost, Associate Provost, Deans and other Members of the Academic Affairs Council
Q. LAC SOA Pilot Results Discussed with the University Faculty Senate
R. Student Outcomes Assessment Plan Finalized
APPENDIX B

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

STUDENT OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT PLAN

PURPOSE OF THE LIBERAL ARTS CORE

The Liberal Arts Core is the part of UNI's undergraduate curriculum that encompasses knowledge that should be held in common by all UNI graduates. This knowledge, organized into curricular categories each consisting of one or more courses, is foundational for realizing one's potential within and contributing to modern societies.

The Liberal Arts Core serves three purposes. First, it develops the broad base of knowledge and intellectual proficiencies that is characteristic of well-educated people. Second, the Core expands student awareness of their selves and of the worlds—natural, social, artistic, and others—in which they live, hopefully instilling a life-long desire to learn about these worlds. Finally, without directly teaching values, the Liberal Arts Core fosters those values and dispositions upon which effective inquiry, personal achievement, and societal well being depend. The success of the Liberal Arts Core is ultimately reflected in the extent to which UNI graduates go on to lead lives that are thoughtful, productive, personally meaningful, and socially responsible.

LEARNING OUTCOMES OF THE LIBERAL ARTS CORE

1. Communication: students should be able to speak, listen, read, write, and view effectively, adapting appropriately to the audience and material at hand.

2. Information: students should be able to use both traditional sources and modern technologies to access, analyze, and manage information.

3. Thinking: students should be able to address complex issues and problem situations with sound reasoning, reflective judgment, creative imagination, and a critical, analytical bent of mind.

4. Inter-Personal: students should understand human emotions, motivations, and idiosyncrasies, and be able to participate effectively in relationships, groups, and citizenship activities.

5. Quantitative: students should be able to make effective use of quantitative data, and to intelligently apply relevant mathematical and statistical concepts and methods on appropriate occasions.
STUDENT OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT PLAN COMPONENTS

The LAC Student Outcomes Assessment Plan includes two major assessment components:

- Outcome assessments of performance indicators and item analysis for the LAC learning outcomes
- Review of performance indicators and item analyses of self reported behaviors during the University's biennial curricular change process

The Student Outcomes Assessment Plan includes two types of outcome assessment measures:

- Direct measures of student learning
  - Assessment using a standardized instrument (Academic Profile-abbreviated form)
  - Course-embedded assessment
- Self report measures:
  - Surveys of students
  - Faculty, staff, administration surveys
  - Alumni surveys

DIRECT ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR THE LIBERAL ARTS CORE

Assessment Using the Academic Profile-Abbreviated Form

The Academic Profile-abbreviated form is a test of undergraduate reading, writing, critical thinking, and math skills and humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences context based skills published by the Educational Testing Service. This test provides norm-referenced and criterion-referenced proficiency classifications. The LAC Coordinator and other members of the LAC SOA Subcommittee oversee the administration of the Academic Profile.

Course-embedded assessment

Course-embedded pre-post test assessments are particularly useful for assessing writing and speaking. Graded essays in the College Reading & Writing courses and graded oral presentation in the Speaking and Listening courses are employed as pre-tests, while written and/or oral assignments in the Capstone Experience (typically taken in their junior and senior years following completion of their other LAC courses) provide a post-test.

The SOA Committee is responsible for assessing whether the pre-test post-test strategy adds value over a more simple senior level assessment of writing and speaking.
SELF REPORT ASSESSMENT MEASURES

The LAC Student Outcomes Assessment Plan draws on several survey instruments administered by the Office of Information Management & Analysis, the Center for Social & Behavioral Research, and the Academic Advising Services.

- College Student Experiences Questionnaire (CSEQ)
- UNI Graduating Senior Survey (UNI-GSS)
- UNI Alumni & Public View Survey (APVS)

The CSEQ is a measurement of student progress, quality of student effort and the quality of students’ experiences inside and outside the classroom. The CSEQ asks students to estimate the gains they have made in various intellectual capacities. It also asks students to report certain behaviors. The fourteen scales of the CSEQ measure: 1) course learning, 2) library experiences, 3) art, music, theater, 4) scientific and quantitative experiences, 5) student union, 6) athletic and recreation facilities, 7) campus residence, 8) experiences with faculty, 9) clubs and organizations, 10) experiences with writing, 11) personal experiences, 12) student acquaintances, 13) topics of conversation, and 14) information in conversation.

The estimates of gains can be used as an outcomes measure while item analysis of the behaviors can assist in understanding how to improve student outcomes through curricular or pedagogical change. This is the focus during the biennial review and provides a strategy for improvement.

The UNI-GSS asks graduating seniors to respond to questions regarding their perceived preparation for the future, skills gained as a student, and satisfaction with their experiences at UNI.

The APVS addresses the contribution of UNI to the state, satisfaction with the undergraduate educational experience, preparation for post-graduation, communication with UNI, and involvement with UNI.

CLOSING THE LOOP:

REVIEW OF ANNUAL SOA DURING THE BIENNIAL CURRICULAR CHANGE PROCESS

The results of the assessment of the learning outcomes will be shared with the University SOA Committee and committees representing each of the LAC category faculty as part of the University’s Biennial Curricular Change Process. Using the Item Analysis, focus groups, and faculty dialogue, each category will report recommended curricular and pedagogical changes. This process will create a regularly scheduled, structured opportunity for review of the Liberal Arts Core. This will also align the review of the Liberal Arts Core with the other University academic program reviews and curricular change processes.
STUDENT OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT IN THE CATEGORY REVIEW PROCESS

Each year, one of the six categories of the LAC undergoes a comprehensive review. Student Outcomes Assessment will now be a central element in this process. To facilitate this change, the LAC Student Outcomes Assessment Committee will meet with the each Category Review Team and serve in an on-call capacity for the team throughout the review process.

The Category Review Team is composed of faculty and administrators having direct knowledge of the courses in a specific category. The review process includes an examination of the category goals, outcomes and competencies; the review of student outcomes relevant to the category; student and faculty analysis of courses; and an analysis of enrollment data. As a result of the review process, the Review Team makes recommendations within their Report to the LAC Committee regarding proposed changes in the Category. Following review of the report, the LAC Committee provides the University Faculty Senate with a copy of the Review Report and a written summary of the findings of the LAC Committee. This information is also shared with the Provost, Associate Provost and the Dean(s) involved in the Review.
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication: students are able to speak, listen,</td>
<td>1. Core Competencies:</td>
<td>AP-Reading, Writing</td>
<td>CSEQ Estimate of Gains:</td>
<td>CSEQ Writing Experience:</td>
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<td>read, write, and view effectively, adapting</td>
<td>A. College Reading &amp; Writing</td>
<td>Graded essay, Graded presentation, Graded Capstone</td>
<td>9-10</td>
<td>1-7 Reading/Writing:</td>
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<td>appropriately to the audience and material at hand.</td>
<td>B. Speaking &amp; Listening</td>
<td>Essay &amp; Presentation</td>
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<td>Information: students should be able to use both</td>
<td>4. Natural Science &amp; Technology</td>
<td>AP-Natural Sciences, Social Sciences</td>
<td>CSEQ Estimate of Gains:</td>
<td>CSEQ Library Computer &amp; Information Technology:</td>
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<td>traditional sources and modern technologies to access</td>
<td>A. Life Sciences</td>
<td></td>
<td>11. 18-20</td>
<td>1-9 Scientific &amp; Quantitative Experiences:</td>
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<td>and analyze, and manage information.</td>
<td>B. Physical Sciences</td>
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<td>Thinking: students should be able to address</td>
<td>2. Civilizations &amp; Cultures</td>
<td>AP-Critical Thinking</td>
<td>CSEQ Estimate of Gains:</td>
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<td>complex issues and problem situations with sound</td>
<td>A. Humanities</td>
<td>AP-Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, Humanities</td>
<td>21, 23</td>
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<td>reasoning, reflective judgment, creative imagination,</td>
<td>B. Non-western Cultures</td>
<td>Graded Capstone</td>
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<td>and a critical, analytical bent of mind.</td>
<td>C. Fine Arts</td>
<td>Essay &amp; Presentation</td>
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<td>D. Literature, Philosophy or Religion</td>
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<td>E. Nature of Science &amp; Technology</td>
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<td>F. Life Sciences</td>
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<td>G. Social Science</td>
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<td>H. Socio-cultural &amp; Historical Perspectives</td>
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<td>I. Individual &amp; Institutional Perspectives</td>
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<td>J. Topical Perspectives</td>
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<td>K. Capstone</td>
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<td>Inter-Personal: students should understand</td>
<td>1. Core Competencies</td>
<td>AP-Humanities, Social Sciences</td>
<td>CSEQ Estimate of Gains:</td>
<td></td>
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<td>human emotions, motivations, and idiosyncrasies, and</td>
<td>A. Personal Wellness</td>
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<td>12-17</td>
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<td>be able to participate effectively in</td>
<td>B. Non-western Cultures</td>
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<td>relationships, groups, and citizenship activities.</td>
<td>C. Fine Arts</td>
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<td>D. Literature, Philosophy or Religion</td>
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<td>H. Topical Perspectives</td>
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<td>Quantitative: students are able to</td>
<td>1. Core Competencies</td>
<td>AP-Mathematics</td>
<td>CSEQ Estimate of Gains:</td>
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<td>effectively use quantitative data, and to apply</td>
<td>A. Quantitative Techniques &amp; Understanding</td>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
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<td>relevant mathematical and statistical concepts and</td>
<td>B. Methods</td>
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<td>methods on appropriate occasions.</td>
<td>C. Technical Practice</td>
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AP = Academic Profile; CSEQ = College Student Experiences Questionnaire; UNI-GSS = UNI Graduating Senior Survey; APVS = Alumni & Public View Survey.
LAC LEARNING OUTCOMES & ASSESSMENT MEASURES ITEMS

**Learning Outcome 1: Communication:**
Students should be able to speak, listen, read, write, and view effectively, adapting appropriately to the audience and material at hand.

I. Learning Outcomes Measures

- Academic Profile (Reading; Writing)
- Graded Essay Pre-Post-tests (Speaking & Listening; College Reading & Writing; Capstone)

II. Self Report Measures

In thinking about your college or university experience up to now, to what extent do you feel you have gained or made progress in the following area?
(very little, some, quite a bit, very much) [CSEQ Estimate of Gains]

- Writing clearly and effectively
- Presenting ideas and information effectively when speaking to others.

Think about your future/career goals, please rate how well UNI has prepared you for…
(1=poor, 2=fair, 3=average, 4=good, 5=excellent) [UNI Graduating Senior Survey]

- Speaking effectively
- Communicating through writing
- Understanding written communication
- Listening effectively

A number of qualities have been suggested to be important in a person’s work or main life activities. Please rate your undergraduate experience in preparing you for each quality.
(5=very low, 4=low, 3=moderate, 2=high, 1=very high) [UNI Alumni & Public View Survey]

- Understand written information
- Communicate through writing

III. Item Analysis for Review and Improvement

In your experience at this institution during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following? (never, occasionally, often, very often) [CSEQ]

- Used a dictionary or thesaurus to look up the proper meaning of words.
• Thought about grammar, sentence structure, word choice, and sequence of ideas or points as you were writing.
• Asked other people to read something you wrote to see if it was clear to them.
• Referred to a book or manual about writing style, grammar, etc.
• Revised a paper or composition two or more times before you were satisfied with it.
• Asked an instructor or staff member for advice and help to improve your writing.
• Prepared a major written report for a class (20 pages or more).

During this current school year, about how many books have you read? (none, fewer than 5, between 5 and 10, between 10 and 20, more than 20) [CSEQ]

• Textbooks or assigned books
• Assigned packs of course readings
• Non-assigned books
• Essay exams for your courses
• Term papers or other written reports

**Learning Outcome 2: Information:**
Students should be able to use both traditional sources and modern technologies to access, analyze, and manage information.

**I. Learning Outcomes Measures**

• Academic Profile (natural sciences, social sciences)

**II. Self Report Measures**

In thinking about your college or university experience up to now, to what extent do you feel you have gained or made progress in the following area? (very little, some, quite a bit, very much) [CSEQ]

• Using computers and other information technologies.
• Understanding the nature of science and experimentation.
• Understanding new developments in science and technology
• Becoming aware of the consequences (benefits, hazards, dangers) of new applications of science and technology

Think about your future/career goals, please rate how well UNI has prepared you for… (1=poor, 2=fair, 3=average, 4=good, 5=excellent) [UNI Graduating Senior Survey]

• Using basic computer skills (word processing, spreadsheets, etc.)
• Planning projects
• Using research skills
A number of qualities have been suggested to be important in a person’s work or main life activities. Please rate your undergraduate experience in preparing you for each quality. (5=very low, 4=low, 3=moderate, 2=high, 1=very high) [UNI Alumni & Public View Survey]

- Use research skills
- Use computer skills (technical)
- Apply scientific principles

III. Item Analysis for Review and Improvement

In your experience at this institution during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following? (never, occasionally, often, very often) [CSEQ]

- Used the library as a quiet place to read or study materials you brought with you
- Found something interesting while browsing in the library
- Asked a librarian or staff member for help in finding information on some topic
- Read assigned materials other than textbooks in the library (reserve readings, etc.)
- Used an index or database (computer, card catalog, etc.) to find material on some topic
- Developed a bibliography or reference list for a term paper or other report
- Gone back to read a basic reference or document that other authors referred to
- Made a judgment about the quality of information obtained from the library, World Wide Web or other sources

In your experience at this institution during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following? [CSEQ]
(never, occasionally, often, very often)

- Used a computer or word processor to prepare reports or papers.
- Used e-mail to communicate with an instructor or other students.
- Used a computer tutorial to learn material for a course or developmental/ remedial program.
- Participated in class discussions using an electronic medium (e-mail, list-serve, chat group, etc.)
- Searched the World Wide Web or Internet for information related to a course.
- Used a computer to retrieve materials from a library not at this institution.
- Used a computer to produce visual displays of information (charts, graphs, spreadsheets, etc.)
- Used a computer to analyze data (statistics, forecasting, etc.)
- Developed a Web page or multimedia presentation.

In your experience at this institution during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following? [CSEQ]
(never, occasionally, often, very often)
• Memorized formulas, definitions, technical terms and concepts
• Used mathematical terms to express a set of relationships
• Explained your understanding of some scientific or mathematical theory, principle or concept to someone else (classmate, co-worker, etc.)
• Read articles about scientific or mathematical theories or concepts in addition to those assigned in class
• Completed an experiment or project using scientific methods
• Practiced to improve your skill in using a piece of laboratory equipment
• Showed someone else how to use a piece of scientific equipment
• Explained an experimental procedure to someone else
• Compared the scientific methods with other methods for gaining knowledge and understanding
• Explained to another person the scientific basis for concerns about scientific or environmental issues (pollution, recycling, alternative sources of energy, acid rain) or similar aspects of the world around you

**Learning Outcome 3: Thinking:**
Students should be able to address complex issues and problem situations with sound reasoning, reflective judgment, creative imagination, and a critical, analytical bent of mind.

I. Learning Outcomes Measures

• Academic Profile (Critical Thinking, Natural Sciences, Humanities, Social Sciences)
• Graded Essay & Presentation (Capstone)

II. Self Report Measures

In thinking about your college or university experience up to now, to what extent do you feel you have gained or made progress in the following area? (very little, some, quite a bit, very much) [CSEQ]

• Thinking analytically and logically
• Putting ideas together, seeing relationships, similarities, and differences between ideas

Think about your future/career goals, please rate how well UNI has prepared you for… (1=poor, 2=fair, 3=average, 4=good, 5=excellent) [UNI Graduating Senior Survey]

• Defining problems
• Solving problems
• Learning new things
• Thinking creatively
- Bringing information/ideas together from different areas
- Making decisions

A number of qualities have been suggested to be important in a person’s work or main life activities. Please rate your undergraduate experience in preparing you for each quality. (5=very low, 4=low, 3=moderate, 2=high, 1=very high) [UNI Alumni & Public View Survey]

- Define, analyze, solve problems

**Learning Outcome 4: Inter-Personal:**
Students should understand human emotions, motivations, and idiosyncrasies, and be able to participate effectively in relationships, groups, and citizenship activities.

I. Learning Outcomes Measures

- Academic Profile (Humanities, Social Sciences)

II. Self Report Measures

In thinking about your college or university experience up to now, to what extent do you feel you have gained or made progress in the following area? (very little, some, quite a bit, very much) [CSEQ]

- Becoming aware of different philosophies, cultures, and ways of life.
- Developing your own values and ethical standards.
- Understanding yourself, your abilities, interests, and personality.
- Developing the ability to get along with different kinds of people.
- Developing the ability to function as a member of a team.
- Developing good health habits and physical fitness.

Think about your future/career goals, please rate how well UNI has prepared you for…
(1=poor, 2=fair, 3=average, 4=good, 5=excellent) [UNI Graduating Senior Survey]

- Conducting yourself in a professional manner
- Upholding ethical standards
- Adapting to change
- Working under pressure
- Working independently
- Working with people of diverse backgrounds
- Working as a team
- Leading others
A number of qualities have been suggested to be important in a person’s work or main life activities. Please rate your undergraduate experience in preparing you for each quality. (5=very low, 4=low, 3=moderate, 2=high, 1=very high) (UNI Alumni & Public View Survey)

- Work under pressure
- Adapt to change
- Work as a team member
- Lead others
- Respect the natural world and act responsibly toward it
- Act professionally
- Accept new responsibilities

**Learning Outcome 5: Quantitative:**
Students should be able to make effective use of quantitative data, and to intelligently apply relevant mathematical and statistical concepts and methods on appropriate occasions.

I. Learning Outcomes Measures

- Academic Profile (Mathematics)

II. Self Report Measures

In thinking about your college or university experience up to now, to what extent do you feel you have gained or made progress in the following area? (very little, some, quite a bit, very much) [CSEQ]

- Analyzing quantitative problems (understanding probabilities, proportions, etc.)

Think about your future/career goals, please rate how well UNI has prepared you for… (1=poor, 2=fair, 3=average, 4=good, 5=excellent) [UNI Graduating Senior Survey]

- Making basic calculations and computations

A number of qualities have been suggested to be important in a person’s work or main life activities. Please rate your undergraduate experience in preparing you for each quality. (5=very low, 4=low, 3=moderate, 2=high, 1=very high) [UNI Alumni & Public View Survey]

- Make basic calculations