

REPORT OF A COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION VISIT

TO

Illinois State University
Normal, IL

February 13-16, 2005

FOR

The Higher Learning Commission
A Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

EVALUATION TEAM:

Dr. Johnetta Cross Brazzell, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR 72701.

Dr. Jeffrey H. Chen, Director of Institutional Research and Analysis, Cleveland State University, 2121 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115.

Dr. Judith de Luce, Chair and Professor, Department of Classics, Miami University, Department of Classics, Oxford, OH 45056.

Dr. John D. Haeger, President, Northern Arizona University, P.O. Box 4092, Flagstaff, AZ 86011-4092.

Dr. Margaret A. Healy, Associate Professor, Education Leadership, University of North Dakota, P.O. Box 7189, 207 Education Building, Grand Forks, ND 58202.

Dr. William E. Knight, Director of Planning and Institutional Research, Bowling Green University, Bowling Green, OH 43403.

Dr. Betty Jo Licata, Dean, Williamson College of Business Administration, Youngstown State University, Youngstown, OH 44555-3064.

Dr. Katy E. Marre, Professor of English and Former Associate Vice President for Graduate Studies & Research, Department of English, University of Dayton, Dayton, OH 45469-1520 (Chair).

Dr. Mary E. Mazey, Dean, College of Liberal Arts, Wright State University, 3640 Colonel Glenn Highway, Dayton, OH 45435.

Mr. Wesley G. Tschetter, Assistant Vice President for Finance and Business, South Dakota State University, Brookings, SD 57007.

Table of Contents

ASSURANCE SECTION.....	3
I. CONTEXT AND NATURE OF VISIT	3
Unique Aspects of Visit	3
Sites or Branch Campuses Visited.....	3
Distance Education Reviewed	3
Interactions with Institutional Constituencies.....	6
II. COMMITMENT TO PEER REVIEW	10
Comprehensiveness of the Self-study Process.....	10
Integrity of the Self-study Report	10
Adequacy of Progress in Addressing Previously Identified Challenges	10
Notification of Evaluation Visit and Solicitation of Third-Party Comment.....	13
III. COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS	13
Title IV—Federal Compliance	13
Research Compliance with Federal Law	13
IV. FULFILLMENT OF THE CRITERIA.....	13
CRITERION ONE	13
CRITERION TWO	16
CRITERION THREE	18
CRITERION FOUR.....	20
CRITERION FIVE	21
V. STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS.....	24
RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION	25
VI. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND EXPLANATIONS.....	25
ADVANCEMENT SECTION.....	26

ASSURANCE SECTION

I. CONTEXT AND NATURE OF VISIT

The purpose of the visit was a comprehensive evaluation of Illinois State University (ISU) for continued accreditation.

- Organizational Context
- Fall 2004: 831 full-time faculty; 257 part-time faculty.
- Degrees awarded between July 1, 2003–June 30, 2004: 4,876 (4,148 bachelors; 678 masters; 7 post-masters; 43 doctoral). Six academic college divisions plus the Graduate College.
- Illinois State University was founded in 1857 as the state’s first public higher education institution.
- Today it serves as one of 12 public universities in Illinois. Its mission statement and strategic planning documents call for it to “serve the citizens of Illinois and beyond” and to “continue to be the first-choice public university in Illinois for high-achieving, motivated students who seek an individualized educational experience combined with the resources of a large university.”
- Significant developments since the last HLC team visit in 1995 include considerable turnover in administrative leadership (four presidents and four provosts have served in the last ten years and each of the other vice presidents is new since at least 1998).
- 1999, acquisition of the formerly stand-alone Mennonite College of Nursing,
- 1999, reorganization of the Academic Senate and other changes in shared governance.
- New construction and renovation involving numerous facilities: Science Laboratory Building, the Center for the Performing Arts, the South University Street Parking facility, *In Exchange*—a pedestrian mall and sculpture court, the relocated University Farm near Lexington, and a new College of Business building that opened in January 200.
- \$88 million capital campaign goal; surpassed by \$8 million.
- Since fiscal year 2002, state support for the University has declined by \$292 million or 11%

Unique Aspects of Visit

Illinois State University included three special emphases in its self-study: Enhancing Faculty Distinctiveness and Excellence; Partnerships for Student Learning; and Achieving Distinctiveness through Coordinated Planning. It also included an institutional change request: approval for an online Bachelor of Science in Nursing program.

Sites or Branch Campuses Visited

None

Distance Education Reviewed

ISU asked for approval of the on-line RN-BSN program. The team’s assessment of the request follows:

Online Program Fit with the Mission of ISU

In keeping with the mission statement of the University and with the spirit of *Educating Illinois 2003-2010* (the strategic plan) the online program provides access to the RN/BSN program

beyond the traditional classroom in a disciplinary area where there is an established need regionally and nationally.

Need for Online RN/BSN Program

The RN-BSN program started out as a campus program with some online coursework. The first few courses were changed to online format in Fall 2000. In time all courses were changed to the online format to meet the needs of working nurses who want to advance in their careers. The program was entirely online in Fall 2002 (with no on-campus cohort). It is the only complete on-line program at Illinois State University. In Fall 2004, there were 50 students enrolled in the program, and it was indicated to the team that the enrollment in the online program is growing and has tripled from what it was before.

Program Curriculum, Faculty, Graduation Requirements

The curriculum and graduation requirements in the online program are the same as they were in the on-campus program when it was offered. Faculty teaching in the on-line program also taught the on campus program.

According to nursing students met by the team, the College has a group of very dedicated and supportive faculty. This was evident in the meetings with MCN students from both the BSN and the RN/BSN programs. There are currently 18 full-time and 12 part-time faculty for a total of 22 FTE. Tenure-track faculty hold doctorates in nursing or education and all faculty have master's degrees in nursing related to the pedagogical and clinical areas they teach. Faculty maintain connections with their practice areas by working in the community as nurse practitioners, or working in their clinical specialties, or working as consultants to medical centers, or serving on boards and committees at local hospitals and health care agencies.

The dean of the College confirmed that with funding from the director of the Extended University, who is also the director of Distance Learning, all faculty currently teaching online have received training for teaching online courses.

MCN students mentioned that the current "Fall only" admission has delayed the start of their career track. A Spring admission, as resources and curriculum sequencing permit, might eliminate such delay. The College needs to seriously consider this option to provide full access to the program, barring any restrictions by its professional accreditation, the Commission of Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE).

Assessment

The College has a developed assessment plan that is in operation. The self-study states that the plan is responsive to both external practice and education environments, and the long-term needs of the College. Assessments done have been modified to be more useful and more cost effective, and the College demonstrates that it uses assessment data to improve student learning. It is used for continuous improvement of the program. For example, the faculty have moved the leadership/management capstone course to the last semester of the RN/BSN sequence, and continue to work with service providers to design clinical experiences in this course to provide students with greater opportunities for team leading and priority setting in acute care settings. Additionally, faculty work with employers through service liaisons and advisory groups to

prioritize nursing care for groups of clients. Assessment measures include course and faculty evaluations, exit survey, alumni survey, and a curriculum review committee for RN/BSN program. One advisor has been designated to be an associate director of the undergraduate program, whose responsibilities also include coordination of the RN/BSN program. The College's plan for assessment is on file in the University Assessment Office, and has been reviewed by the Assessment Advisory Council. It is to be noted that as part of ISU's program review process, the RN/BSN program will be required to demonstrate programmatic review and changes to improve student learning.

Advisement

Academic advisors monitor satisfactory student progress in meeting the objectives of the program, provide guidance to meet student special education needs, assist in the registration process, and provide clarifications of policies and processes. Each student is assigned an academic advisor and continues with the advisor throughout the program. Consistent advising is believed by the faculty to be key to student success in the program. Students evaluate the effectiveness of advisement in an exit survey.

Technological Support for Students in On-line Program

- The team held discussions with both MCN faculty and online students. MCN's online curriculum meets the requirement of a program delivery both instructionally and technologically. Online programs generally require extended and up-front technological investment and support, but MCN has been offering the online courses for the past two years and its online operation is mature. This is evident from interviews with faculty and students.
- All faculty teaching online have received training, and many of them have extensive online teaching experiences. MCN has one full-time technical support staff member who provides support to faculty in both equipment maintenance and course design/presentation. The self-study documents that the College employs a full-time local area network (LAN) coordinator who supports hardware and servers. The College also has another full-time Coordinator of Computer Support who supports web management, WebCT management, and supports faculty teaching web assisted and online courses. There is a new fully equipped classroom available to the College. Other distance education classrooms on campus are also available to the College.
- Faculty members (7-8) have participated as fellows in the State Farm Teaching Technology Fellows Program which provides opportunity to learn teaching methods with technology and to develop skills using technology in the Distance Education Training Program. Faculty have attended conferences and workshops on distance education and online teaching; they have presented at conferences about teaching online, and they have published on distance education. It should be noted, however, that the workload of the current faculty teaching in the online program will increase noticeably when the number of online students in the program increases, as the College projects it will do. The College needs to anticipate this and plan accordingly.

- Students admitted to the program are required to attend an orientation session at the beginning of the first semester to practice computer skills and to foster community among students.
- The campus hosts multiple secured web servers that enable students to register, use the library, and pay bills on-line. The University provides both wired and wireless internet access to student, faculty, and staff. In general, the students who take online courses have access to the internet either *via* their home computer or *via* the hospitals where they are currently employed.
- The team inquired of online students about their experiences of using the ISU library. Students responded that accessing the library is not an issue, indicating that they had sufficient access to the materials needed for their classes either through the library or the hospitals at which they work.

Cost Projections for Program

No additional costs are projected for the program other than the normal operating costs that are supported by the College. The self-study states that “thus the program is financially sustainable for as long as there is a need for it.”

Team Recommendation for Requested Institutional Change

Based on the above findings, the team recommends approval of ISU's request to offer the RN/BSN online program.

Interactions with Institutional Constituencies

Principal Documents, Materials, and Web Pages Reviewed:

Self-study	Institutional Research Self-study
The Illinois Commitment (Illinois State Board of Education strategic planning document)	A/P Ethics and Grievance Process
<i>Educating Illinois 2003-2010</i> (Illinois State University strategic planning document)	Accountancy Report (NASBA - 2002)
The Master Plan (facilities plan)	Administrative Information Systems Self-study
Performance Results Reports for 2002, 2003, and 2004 (related to state planning goals)	Affirmative Action Plan (2004-2005)
Educating Illinois Status Report 2004	AIF - Academic Impact Fund Assumptions
Board of Trustees Vision Statement	Appropriate Use Policy
The Illinois Commitment	Budget Office Self-study
Report of the Comptroller for Fiscal Years 2002 and 2003	Budget Request and Position Request Forms
Illinois State University Institutional Snapshot January 2005	Business Services and Human Resources Self-study
Illinois State University Fact Book Fall 2004	Campus Dining and University Housing Services, Long Range Plan
Undergraduate catalog	Capital Requirements Plan FY 2003, Resource Allocation and Management Program
Graduate catalog	Comptroller's Office Self-study
International Affairs guidelines, newsletters, and program information	Consensual Relations in the Instructional Context and Outside the Instructional Context
Resource Room Exhibit D: History, Social Sciences	Consolidated Annual Report, Planning Document and Position Request

Education, Sociology and Anthropology, Chemistry	
Resource Room Exhibit E: Alumni Magazines	CORE Alcohol and Drug Survey
Resource Room Exhibit H: Foreign Languages, Campus Technology, Biology	Dell Institutional Buying Program
Resource Room Exhibit L: Philosophy	Downtown Normal Redevelopment Plan
Resource Room Exhibit O: Cross Chair and Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, Carnegie Conference Center for the Advancement of Teaching	Facilities Services Self-study
University Assessment Office	Fell Trust Guidelines
Academic Plan, 2004-2009	Financial Interest Disclosure Policy, Significant
Integrity in Research and Scholarly Activities Policy	Funding Sources and Assumptions, Summary
Intellectual Property Rights policy	Human Resources Training and Development-Course Descriptions
Institutional Review Board--Committee Members and Policy and Procedures manual for the Protection of Human Research Subjects	iCampus Portal Project Phase III Planning for FY 04
Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee and Policy	Illinois Commitment
College Research mentoring Programs (MCN & CAST)	Illinois Public Act 93-0228 (Tuition Guarantee)
National Association of State Boards of Accountancy Report (2002)	Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee and Policy
Outstanding Researcher Guidelines Outstanding Researcher Guidelines	Institutional Review Board--Committee Members and Policy and Procedures manual for the Protection of Human Research Subjects
Outstanding Teaching Award Guidelines	Integrity in Research and Scholarly Activities Policy
Distinguished Professor Guidelines	Intellectual Property Rights Policy
Graduate Student Association Outstanding Graduate Student Award Guidelines	Kiplinger Report
Foundations of Excellence in the First College Year	Long Range Plan for Campus Dining and University Housing Services
American Democracy Project	Master Plan 2000-2020
Graduate School Bylaws	Performance Reports (BOT)
Guidelines for Program Review Self-study for Undergraduate programs	Request for New Program Approval
Guidelines for Program Review Self-study for Graduate Programs	Requests for Approval of New On- and Off- Campus Units of Instruction, Research, Public Service at Public Institutions
Graduate Curriculum Committee Guidelines	Resource Allocation and Management Program Capital Requirements Plan FY 2003
Undergraduate and Graduate Research Symposium Guidelines	Site License Subcommittee Report
Graduate Student Association Bylaws	Summary of Funding Sources and Assumptions
Campbell & Company Readiness Audit	Truth in Tuition (Public Act 93-0228)
Assessment Materials	US News and World Report article
College of Business Recruiting Materials	Walker Parking Study
Report of the Tech Tuition Subcommittee	College of Applied Science and Technology Comprehensive Campaign brochure
Campus Mobile Computer Initiative	College of Applied Science and Technology View Boo
Computer Lab Subcommittee Report to ECAT 2001	College of Applied Science and Technology annual planning document
Student Experiences with Technology 2001	College of Applied Science and Technology facilities plan
Commitment to Diversity Statement	College of Applied Science and Technology Strategic Issues and Planning
University Commitment to Diversity Statement	College of Applied Science and Technology Research Annual Report
Plan for Diversity (2001)	College of Applied Science and Technology Curriculum Committee materials
Underrepresented Groups Reports (FY 02 and 04)	University College Review Report

Minority Scholar in Residence Program	Financial Aid Office Annual Report 2003-2004
Facilities Services Self-study NCATE Self Study	Office of Enrollment Management and Academic Services FY05 Consolidated Annual Report and Planning Document NCATE Team Report

www.masterplan.ilstu.edu	www.mlb.ilstu.edu/learn.vision.htm
www.campaign.ilstu.edu	www.rsp.ilstu.edu/training
www.policy.ilstu.edu/policydocs/eoaa.html	www.cat.ilstu.edu/events/index.shtml
www.propertycontrol.ilstu.edu/forms	www.ftss.ilstu.edu/index.php
www.legis.state.il.us/commission/lac/lac_home.html	www.cat.ilstu.edu/services/#trg
www.policy.ilstu.edu	www.internationalstudies.ilstu.edu/studyabroad
www.policy.ilstu.edu/policydocs/grievance_eoaa.htm	www.internationalstudies.ilstu.edu/fulbright
www.crr.ilstu.edu	www.mediarrelations.ilstu.edu/news_releases/0304/Feb/foundersday.asp
www.provost.ilstu.edu/aspt	www.grad.ilstu.edu/thesis_dissertation/competition_desc.pdf
www.provost.ilstu.edu/policydoc/ap/ap_ethics.htm	www.rsp.ilstu.edu/reports
www.policy.ilstu.edu/policydocs/civil_service-grievance.htm	www.homecoming.ilstu.edu
www.illinoisstate.edu/reportcards	www.illinoisstate.edu/alumni/awards.shtml
www.pir.ilstu.edu/benchmarking/peercomparisoninst.shtml	www.ilstu.edu/home/outreach
www.ucollege.ilstu.edu	www.academicssenate.ilstu.edu/Documents/GenEdReportFRomAcadAffairsCom-Findings-Recom2004-04-01.htm
www.msac.ilstu.edu	www.pir.ilstu.edu/accountabilityreports/resultsreport/fy04_performance_report.pdf
www.ctsg.ilstu.edu/planning_documents	www.assessment.ilstu.edu/tracdat
www.ilstu.edu/home/technology	www.pir.ilstu.edu
www.assesment.ilstu.edu	coe.ilstu.edu/ncate/Intascmatrix.htm
www.illinoisstate.edu/educatingillinois	www.ilstu.edu/home/technology/fac_staff.shtml
www.illinoisstate.edu/masterplan	www.policy.ilstu.edu/archives/appropriate_use.htm
www.assessment.ilstu.edu/program	www.ilstu.edu/home/catalog
www.coe.ilstu.edu/cecp/TeachingRedbirds/TE%20Requirements12.pdf	www.crr.ilstu.edu/about%5Fcrr
www.provost.ilstu.edu/foundations	www.policy.ilstu.edu/policydocs/intgrity.html
www.illinoisstate.edu/american democracy	www.policy.ilstu.edu/policydocs/code_of_ethics.html
www.ilstu.edu/depts/ucc/ucc2004-2005	www.policy.ilstu.edu/policydocs/financial.html
www.grad.ilstu.edu/faculty/Curriculum.shtml	www.policy.ilstu.edu/policydocs/consensual_relations.html
www.cat.ilstu.edu/events/nfo.shtml	www.studentlife.ilstu.edu/studentclubs/specialsessions.phtml
www.cat.ilstu.edu/events/utw.shtml	www.uhs.ilstu.edu/Employment/prostaff.shtml
www.illinoisstate.edu/carnegie	www.shs.ilstu.edu/hpo
www.cfkeep.org/html/snapshot.php?id=9244212	www.internationalstudies.ilstu.edu
www.studentaffairs.ilstu.edu/assessment/CPR.shtml	www.assessment.ilstu.edu/resources/workshops.shtml
www.policy.ilstu.edu/constitution/const_doc.htm	www.cat.ilstu.edu/sotl
www.policy.ilstu.edu/policydocs/academicfreedom.pdf	www.policy.ilstu.edu/policydocs/intellectual_property.htm
www.rsp.ilstu.edu/policy/IRB/IRB_policy.pdf	http://www.coe.ilstu.edu/news/2004accomp.shtml

Interactions with Individuals:

President	Mennonite College of Nursing Director and Associate Director of Undergraduate Programs
Provost	Mennonite College of Nursing distance education students in telephone meeting
Vice President for Planning and Finance	Mennonite College of Nursing distance education students in open meeting
Vice President for Student Affairs	Mennonite College of Nursing technical support staff

Vice President for University Advancement	Mennonite College of Nursing Distance Education Undergraduate Coordinator
Assistant to the President	Dean and Associate Dean, Milner Library
Associate Provost	Milner Library faculty in open meeting (21)
Self-study Steering Team	President's Executive Committee for Diversity
Mayor, City of Bloomington	Faculty Distinctiveness Special Emphasis team chairs (3)
City Manager, City of Bloomington	Director, Honors Program
Mayor, City of Normal	Honors Advisory Council
County Commissioner	Honors Students
Athletic Director, Staff, and Head Coaches	Interim Director, University College
Faculty Athletic Representative	Associate Director, International Studies
Faculty members in open meeting (11)	Students in open meeting (3)
Academic Senate (24)	Director of Women's Studies
Planning Special Emphasis Team Chairs	Interim Director, Office of Diversity and Affirmative Action
Board of Trustees members (5)	Cross Chair in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
Educating Illinois Coordinating Team (9)	Interim Director, Center for Teaching and Learning
Illinois Board of Higher Education staff (4)	Director, Student Volunteer Center
Partnerships for Student Learning Special Emphasis Team (8)	Staff from the Office of Student Life
Director, University Assessment Office	Associate Vice President for Research, Graduate, and International Studies
University Assessment Advisory Council (10)	Staff of the Lauby Teacher Education Center
College Dean and Associate Deans, College of Applied Sciences and Technology	Alumni in open meeting (4)
College of Applied Sciences and Technology College Council (9)	Council on Teacher Education (16)
College of Applied Sciences Chairs and Directors (8)	Dean of Students
College of Applied Sciences and Technology faculty members in open meeting (11)	Dean of Students leadership team
College of Applied Sciences and Technology students in open meeting (6)	Director of University Housing
College Dean and Associate Deans, College of Arts and Sciences	Associate VP for Enrollment Management and Academic Services
College of Arts and Sciences College Council	Executive Director of the Extended University
College of Arts and Sciences Chairs (11)	Staff of the Extended University (7)
College of Arts and Sciences faculty members in open meeting	Associate VP for Student Affairs
College of Arts and Sciences students in open meeting	Assistant VP for Student Affairs and Interim Director of the Career Center
College Dean and Associate Deans, College of Business	Career Center professional staff (5)
College of Business Team Coordinators (4)	Student Affairs senior staff (4)
College of Business Chairs (3)	Staff in open meeting
College of Business faculty members in open meeting (15)	Assistant VP for Administrative Information Systems
College of Business students in open meeting (8)	Director of Planning and Institutional Research
College of Business Graduate Council	Assistant VP for Academic Computing
College of Business Director of Graduate Studies	Staff of Planning and Institutional Research (6)
College Dean and Associate Deans, College of Education	Campus Technology Policy and Planning Council
College of Education College Council (7)	Director of Facilities Planning
College of Education Chairs and Laboratory School Directors (3)	Controller
College of Education faculty members in open meeting (12)	Assistant Controller (Grant Post Award Accountant)

College of Education students in open meeting (13)	University Research Council (2)
College Dean, Associate Deans, and Assistant to the Dean, College of Fine Arts	Director and Assistant Director of Human Resources
College of Fine Arts College Council	Assistant Director, Financial Aid Office
College of Fine Arts School Directors	Loan Collections Officer
College of Fine Arts faculty members in open meeting	Associate Director, Facilities Planning
College of Fine Arts students in open meeting	Director of Admissions
Mennonite College of Nursing Dean and Associate Dean	Assistant Registrar
Mennonite College of Nursing distance education faculty in open meeting	Director of Enrollment Communication and Academic Services
Mennonite College of Nursing faculty members in open meeting Mennonite College of Nursing students in open meetings (both RN/BSN and BSN programs Mennonite College of Nursing technical support staff	

II. COMMITMENT TO PEER REVIEW

Comprehensiveness of the Self-study Process

The self-study process was well organized and inclusive of a wide range of campus constituencies. It was organized to achieve a thorough assessment of the institution and its components. It was overseen by a 22 member steering Committee with sub-committees for each Criterion, for each one of the three Special Emphases, for Federal Compliance, for preparing fiscal cost estimates, and for program review. There was evidence of broad involvement across the constituencies, both internal and external, of all aspects of the institution.

There is ample evidence that the self-study process involved the ISU community in a constructive evaluation of the institution and its future prospects. The meeting with the steering committee validated that the self-study process and document were good mechanisms not only for recognizing the institution's key strengths and its progress in key areas over the last ten years, but also for good communication across campus and for planning for its preferred future. It revealed how well different units of the University coalesced around student learning. The process further revealed that the institution was united philosophically on shared values for the education of students.

The self-study committee felt that Educating Illinois 2003-2010 prepared them well to do the self-study document. The three Special Emphasis areas surfaced during the self-study process as areas that were desirable to pursue further. The self-study process, the committee indicated, was particularly good for making internal connections. It highlighted internal benchmarks such as the number of undergraduate students working with faculty in science departments. The self-study document and the visit validated the student-centered focus of the University. The two self-study coordinators provided very valuable and timely assistance to the team both before and during the visit, and worked diligently with the team and the team chair to facilitate the visit.

Integrity of the Self-study Report

The self-study is evaluative in nature. Each chapter corresponding to a Criterion for accreditation ends with appropriate recommendations. It focuses on the shared governance process used by ISU. However, it would have been helpful to the team if the self-study had included more self-assessments of issues.

Adequacy of Progress in Addressing Previously Identified Challenges

Concern 1

The University has continued facilities renovation and new construction. Since the last NCA visit, the University has the following new constructions: Science Laboratory Building, the Center for the Performing Arts, the South University Street Parking facility, *In Exchange*—a pedestrian mall and sculpture court, the relocated University Farm near Lexington, and a new College of Business building that opened in January 2005.

According to industry standards, ISU has a substantial amount of maintenance backlog for campus buildings and infrastructure. On the other hand, among other stated priorities, ISU just completed the College of Business building and is in the middle of renovating Schroeder Hall. The team feels that the University has satisfied the concerns of “renovating and upgrading facilities” as outlined in the NCA 1995 report. It, however, points out that there are “pockets” or areas of facility needs that should be addressed as early as possible (indicated in the body of the report). It encourages ISU to periodically align its facility needs, assign maintenance funds according to the generally accepted percentage set-aside for maintenance, and address needs according to its Master Plan. Currently the funds for maintenance are lower than the recommended set-aside.

Concern 2

The 1995 NCA report identified the following concern: “location of major institutional responsibilities within central administration may be jeopardizing the effectiveness of important administrative functions and program initiatives.” Illinois State has effectively dealt with this concern as it related to the structure and role of Graduate Studies in the University. Following the 1995 NCA visit there was continual turnover in Graduate Studies and much consultation regarding ways to maximize effectiveness through a change in organizational structure. Currently, the director of Graduate Studies reports to the associate vice president for Graduate Studies, Research, and International Education. Although the associate vice president reports to the provost, he reports directly to the president with regard to his lobbying work in Washington, D.C.

Direct reports to the associate vice president include the director of Graduate Studies, the director of International Education, the director of sponsored programs, and the director of the Center for Math, Science and Technology. The director of Graduate Studies is responsible for centralized support for graduate programs such as admissions, graduate assistantships, some research support, and decisions related to graduate faculty status. The administrative changes and allocation of responsibilities in the School of Graduate Studies have effectively addressed the concern raised in the 1995 NCA report.

Concern 3

In 1993 in an effort to reduce administrative costs and protect core academic units, the University disbanded the College of Continuing Education and Public Service. Extended University was created in 1997 to create partnerships with the campus, community, schools, and businesses. Today Extended University has an impressive array of outreach activities that are framed by its commitment to and understanding of the University’s mission. It is the outreach arm of the institution with a documented high level of community participation through a wide range of offerings.

Concern 4

The Office of the Provost no longer reflects an inability to make decisions or seems unable to make or delegate responsibility. The provost's office now has a clear chain of command, has excellent staff and faculty assistance, and a fully functioning structure for working with deans and chairs. The provost, who is relatively new to ISU, has quickly established his place within the administration.

Concern 5

The 1995 HLC team identified a concern about providing academic support for students who have not been admitted to one of the Colleges, and it suggested the thoughtful establishment of a University College. The University established a University College in 1996 that is comprised of multiple units that share the common goal of promoting retention and providing academic support services for students. University College is meeting its goals and has established appropriate evaluation procedures to ensure that it continues to do so. Although the University must address the issue of General Students (undeclared majors) who are unable to get into desired majors, the team concludes that University College is functioning well and that no further follow-up on this issue is necessary.

Concern 6

Illinois State University clearly has established a new system of shared governance that works well and brings a sense of common purpose among all campus citizens. The University exhibits this shared governance formally through the Academic Senate which represents students, faculty, and staff. In addition, the president works well in communicating with the board of trustees and the Senate. Two highly visible signs of the new sense of common purpose are that the faculty Senate chair has an office near that of the president of the University and that the vice presidents sit in the Senate as active participants. The team considers this concern met.

Concern 7

Even though most of the undergraduate degrees at ISU are bachelor of science degrees, the undergraduate catalog (73) clearly delineates the difference in a B.A. degree vs. a B.S. degree. ISU has addressed this concern from the last team visit.

Concern 8

While the team compliments the University for creating a new associate vice president position for Technology, it suggests that follow-up steps may be necessary to provide the person who occupies that position the resources—human and financial—necessary to do the job. Failing that, dissatisfaction with the computer applications component of instructional technology will continue.

To implement the NCA 1995 report recommendation, the University has consolidated academic computing under the associate vice president for Instructional Technology. Currently, the functions are hosted in the provost's Office. Although ISU has advanced in areas such Faculty and Staff Technology Support, iCampus Portal, Resnet, TechZone, Telecommunications, Networking, the overall University computing and technology functions remains a concern. It appears that the computing functions are segregated and the hardware, software, licensing agreements, and support services are not well coordinated. For example, the computing functions are reporting to three vice presidential areas (instructional to the provost, administrative computing to vice president of Finance, and students to vice president of Student Affairs). In light of insufficient funding from the state, of budget reduction in instructional

computing, and of the diminishing campus pool available for “charge back,” there is no budget guarantee to the computing function. It is evident that whereas each “computing unit” is stretched thin campus-wide, there is also ineffective use of staff and resources. The team recommends that ISU re-examine the overall computing and technology functions for better coordination and efficiencies to address this issue. The team noted that Campus Technology Policy And Planning Council is in place to address this concern.

Notification of Evaluation Visit and Solicitation of Third-Party Comment

No comments were received.

III. COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

Title IV—Federal Compliance

The institution has policies and procedures to assure compliance with Title IV of the Higher Education Reauthorization Act. Self-evaluation of practices conducted by its financial aid office is in place. Good practices as recognized by professionals in student financial aid and NASFA such as separation of duties, required loan participant counseling, and management of cash assets are in place. The University complies with Title IV requirements.

Research Compliance with Federal Law

The University has adopted policies and procedures within its research and sponsored program activities to ascertain integrity in its research and scholarly activities and to comply with relevant federal and state laws. Committees are in place for the oversight of ethical treatment of animals and use of human subjects. Professional codes of conduct applying to all staff and students have been adopted and are made available to staff, students, and the public. The institution has met the compliance requirements of the Animal Welfare Act, United States Department of Agriculture, the Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare, and it has an Institutional Review Board for research oversight. ISU also complies with applicable OMB Circulars.

IV. FULFILLMENT OF THE CRITERIA

CRITERION ONE: MISSION AND INTEGRITY

The organization operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.

Salient Evidence Related to the Criterion

Recommendation of the Team

1. Evidence that demonstrates core components are met

- The mission statement of the University is clearly articulated in the self-study, the undergraduate and graduate catalog, and its website. In addition, other important statements of the University’s vision, goals and commitment include *Educating Illinois: An Action Plan for Distinctiveness and Excellence at Illinois State University 2003-2010*, *The Master Plan: Achieving Distinctiveness and Excellence in Form, Function, and Design at Illinois State University*, *Redefining “normal:” The Campaign for Illinois State University*, and *Academic Plans and Program Reviews*. The University through its collaborative governing model has aligned its vision, mission, values, and short, medium, and long-term goals with its planning

documents *Educating Illinois*, and the *Master Plan*. The president, vice presidents, board, faculty, staff, and internal governance groups demonstrate strong commitment to *Educating Illinois* and to the shared governance approach through the Academic Senate. Campus constituents are committed to this definition of the University's preferred future.

- Campus understanding of and support for the mission of the University is clear, broad-based, and effectively communicated by all constituencies. Meetings with students, faculty, staff, trustees, and members of the community revealed a strong sense of identity resulting from extensive consensus on ISU's mission to foster a "small-college atmosphere with large university opportunities." Faculty, in particular, embrace the balance and synergy created among teaching, research, and service. The emphasis on undergraduate education with select masters and doctoral programs is clearly identified and resources are aligned to support these emphases.
- Illinois State University has a remarkable tradition of shared governance. Its strategic plan *Educating Illinois 2003-2010* is based upon its mission statement, and budget decisions flow from it. It has clear statements of planning and financial priorities that are consistently referred to and adhered to in its decision making process. The board, public constituencies, administrative units, faculty, support staff and students are in agreement on the institutional priorities as evidenced in *Educating Illinois*. Performance indicators defined in *Educating Illinois* are also closely related to the mission. The Academic Planning Committee, an external committee to the Academic Senate, annually reviews the mission statement, and recommended to the Academic Senate in 2002 that the 1993 mission statement should more closely reflect the strategic plan. That revision was completed in 2002. Faculty, staff, and students are actively involved as teams in the implementation of the strategic plan, and the results are presented to all governance groups. College and departmental plans are integrated with the mission and the strategic plan. The campus is comfortable with this approach to self-governance. The University demonstrates integrity in the manner in which it engages in shared governance.
- The University has disclosed its financial condition through the use of financial statements, schedules and explanatory comments in a manner that state of Illinois policy makers, external stakeholders and the public know the financial condition of the organization. Further, investors in its bonds such as for parking, student housing and student activities are made aware of its financial condition according to generally accepted accounting and disclosure standards.
- Consistently in meetings with faculty, administrators, students and alumni there was a clear acknowledgement of the challenges that faced the University and a belief that it will meet those challenges. Some attribute the positive environment to the fact that the University has *Educating Illinois* to guide institutional decision-making; thus, the plan allows faculty and staff to understand priorities and decisions. Many attribute the current success of the University to the president's leadership and his leadership team. The observed hard work of the senior administrative team as well as the effective, open communication among members of the University community were both noted as a source of the positive spirit on campus. It was also observed that faculty and administrators did not dwell on the negative; rather, they

often balanced comments about what was wrong with a statement about what was right. There is a commitment to focus on the positive.

- ISU’s mission statement and planning documents demonstrate a commitment to high academic standards through the entering student profile, to retention and graduation rates, emphasis on student academic engagement, comparison to peer institution benchmarks on National Survey of Student Engagement results, results of certification and licensure exams, and employment of graduates. The facilities, technology, and fundraising infrastructure support this commitment.
- The commitment of the University to shared governance and accountability in academic programs is exemplified for instance by the Standards of Professional Behavior and Ethical Conduct recently developed and implemented by the College of Business. These standards articulate the commitment of the College to “the principles of professional behavior and academic integrity” and were developed through an extensive process involving students, faculty, and staff.
- ISU’s shared governance model allows divisions to plan effectively. For example, in the College of Fine Arts planning begins at the College level and engages an elected council collaborating with the dean in preparation of planning and budget documents. In the Council on Teacher Education, its conceptual framework is aligned with *Educating Illinois 2030-2010*. It is also aligned with national and state standards for the various certifications as well. In this way faculty are able to articulate how courses and programs support *Educating Illinois*.

2. Evidence that demonstrates one or more specified core components need organizational attention.

- Illinois State’s commitment to diversity as a core value is made public in its Mission Statement, *Educating Illinois*, in *Illinois State University Plan for Diversity*, its equal opportunity/affirmative action policy statement, and its *Board of Trustees Governing Document*. However, there appears to be a gap between these statements and institutional actions. In the Office for Diversity and Affirmative Action which is responsible for implementing the 1997 *Plan for Diversity*, there has been consistent turnover in staffing. The Office appears to have multiple responsibilities for fostering diversity and fulfilling its commitment to affirmative action. It has responsibilities for the diversity plan, for federal compliance, and the grievance process that may not be complementary, and at best is understaffed to carry out its full mission.
- It may be helpful to codify the variety of diversity initiatives -- e.g., infusing diversity into the curriculum, creating co-curricular experiences that immerse students in other cultures, providing exposure to different cultures and perspectives for ISU students, recruiting students from diverse backgrounds, and developing partnerships with organizations that can contribute to the diversity aspirations of the University -- to understand the multiple strategies that are being used to achieve this goal. Further, it may be beneficial to review the desired outcomes and the strategies that will be used to accomplish the 1997 *Plan for Diversity* when it is updated following the collaborative model used for *Educating Illinois* and the *Master Plan*.

- The Division of Student Affairs reflects strength in its ability to work as a cohesive unit to define itself and its work. In 2001 it embarked on an ambitious effort to realign its mission and develop strategic planning processes that aligned it with *Educating Illinois*. Its vision, mission and goals were tempered through a rigorous effort that used the Triangle Process that included assessment, strategic planning, and resource allocation. Now, it has an opportunity through the newly created dean of students office, in concert with all other areas in the division, to redefine its culture of student learning which it needs to do.

3. Evidence that demonstrates one or more specified core components require Commission follow-up.

None noted.

4. Evidence that demonstrates one or more specified core components is not met and Requires Commission follow-up.

None noted.

CRITERION TWO: PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

The organization's allocation of resources and its processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate its capacity to fulfill its mission to improve the quality of education, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

1. Evidence that demonstrates core components are met.

- The organization demonstrates that it has embraced a strategy of planning and budgeting to accomplishing its mission. The organization represents to its constituencies the need for reallocation from low priorities to stated higher priorities. Planning statements are directed to enrollment management, class size, student-faculty ratios, scholarship and space needs. These statements will require new resources or prioritizing existing available resources even as the state appropriations were reduced for FY 2002, FY 2003 and FY 2004. Increased costs for technology, maintenance, and repair are recognized in the self-study document. Dealing with a backlog of deferred maintenance is also being recognized as part of the plan to expend 2% of the value of buildings on maintenance and repairs, although the reallocation for Fiscal Year 2004 from maintenance funds resulted in a decrease in maintenance funding that is inconsistent with this stated planning objective.
- The University planning processes not only feature broad participation and flexibility but also built in processes to respond to any unanticipated needs such as changing budgets, administrative restructuring, and potential downsizing/growth. It is evident that ISU has maintained an ongoing plan – implementation - evaluation process. Examples are the ongoing *Educating Illinois 2003-2010* bi-annual updates and results reports, scheduled update for The Master Plan, board of trustees Performance Report. According to the self-study, University planning and accountability reporting go hand in hand with a system for “checking off” and monitoring the institutional progress. Examples of using campus and peer data in planning and goal setting process are also evident. Though its Institutional Research reports, program review, Annual *Educating Illinois* Updates, and Results Reports, the University is proactively monitoring its progress towards its planned goals.
- There is strong alignment between *Educating Illinois* and college/departamental planning. Resource allocation decisions are made based on the extent to which college/departamental proposals support *Educating Illinois* priorities. Faculty, administrative and support staff personnel, students, and the public are effectively included in the planning process through

committees, open meetings and a website. The “report card” method of monitoring, assessing, and reporting progress in planning -- a method to which the entire community has access -- prevents *Educating Illinois* from being consigned to a shelf. For example, increasing the number of full-time faculty (or instructional capacity), reducing student to faculty ratio, increasing faculty/staff salary, and student affordability are all mission/vision related goals. According to the Annual Educating Illinois Updates and Results Reports, the University continues to make progress on its planned priorities despite decreased state assistance for higher education.

- ISU’s plan to improve student teacher ratios by reducing the average faculty student credit hour load by adding new faculty and to increase staff compensation to levels of its peers demonstrates willingness to direct resources to stated priorities. Despite a reduction in state appropriation during the past two fiscal years, the organization has continued with its plan. Rather than dwelling on matters of resources the institution can not directly control such as the level of state appropriation, the organization’s focus is on its resources it can control and impact such as its administrative costs, tuition rates, attracting and retaining students, increasing its grant capacity and increasing its support through the Foundation.
- Outcomes assessment plans are required of all undergraduate and graduate programs and are in integral part of the regular five year program review processes. To strengthen the development of outcomes assessment plans in the College of Business, for example, the College has engaged an outside expert in assessment of business programs to assist with faculty training and critique of departmental assessment plans.

2. Evidence that demonstrates one or more specified core components need organizational attention.

- ISU has made substantial budget cuts over the past three years resulting in reductions in the number and frequency of course offerings. Because of these reductions, students may take longer than four years to complete degree requirements. With a four year tuition guarantee, students who do not complete in four years will face a substantial increase in tuition and other costs. The institution needs to address the impact of this student issue. ISU’s goal for national recognition of affordable student costs means control on tuition increases that, in turn, could mean less revenue to support existing programs. Currently, there is the issue of General Students (undeclared majors) being unable to enter majors in high demand in a timely fashion. It is the team’s information that about 2500 students are in this situation; about 750 of these are juniors and seniors. The inability to gain entry into a major in a timely fashion and to successfully complete degree requirements within a reasonable time requires the administration’s immediate attention. Students in the College of Nursing also voiced their concern about the limited (virtually no) summer undergraduate offerings. This prevented motivated students from enrolling during the summer. It was indicated to the team that one of the reasons that courses are not offered in summer is budgetary constraint.
- Faculty were positive about administrative leadership and decision-making. However, they acknowledge that the time frame in which replacements for retiring and departing faculty are made is creating stress and increasing their workloads. The administration needs to ensure that faculty are aware that according to the policies governing the University’s use of its open position pool of funds, there is a one year waiting period for replacement of retiring and departing faculty, a period during which the position is replaced with a non tenure track hire. It was reported that the hiring freeze on Administrative Professional personnel is having a similar adverse effect on faculty because of reduction of services and support for those services especially in the technology area. The College of Education, for another example, needs to include competitive salary and benefits such as funding for professional

development, commitment to travel support, course release for research, start-up funds for research agenda, and graduate assistant support to attract its top choice in new faculty.

- While there have been major renovations to Ropp Hall which houses the Agriculture Department, there are other facilities issues within the College of Applied Science and Technology that need to be addressed. Some departments (particularly Kinesiology and Recreation) are distributed between buildings and nearly all laboratories in programs using them are not up-to-date. These laboratory issues may affect the quality of the education students receive in those programs and may also affect faculty and student recruitment and retention in them.
- The condition of the facilities in the College of Fine Arts compromises student learning and faculty productivity, and requires immediate attention. Centennial and CVA are outmoded, but more importantly, the conditions in these buildings pose hazards to the health of those studying and working there. The accrediting body of the School of Art previously identified this concern. ISU needs to attend to this at the earliest possible time. Growing out of concern for the quality of facilities is concern for the placement of fine arts programs on campus. Music faculty are scattered across campus. The Honors program not only has facilities which are far too small to support programming, but it is located on the far edge of campus. As the campus continues to be developed and space becomes available, ISU would be advised to consider the best location for departments and programs, especially as the location has an impact on student learning.
- It is evident in the self-study and further reinforced through on-site interviews that faculty and staff recognize the need to more closely and transparently align the University's financial resources with academic and institutional goals in all units. Specifically, in the area of graduate studies, increasing program quality and, in some programs, the quality of graduate students, will depend upon the University's ability to increase graduate stipends to competitive levels, increase marketing and recruitment activities, and effectively manage tuition waivers (which currently account for 57% of graduate tuition).

3. Evidence that demonstrates one or more specified core components require Commission follow-up.

None Noted.

4. Evidence that demonstrates one or more specified core components is not met and requires Commission follow-up.

None Noted.

CRITERION THREE: STUDENT LEARNING AND EFFECTIVE TEACHING

The organization provides the evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

1. Evidence that demonstrates core components are met.

- It is evident that the faculty determine curricular content and strategies for instruction and that ISU supports professional development designed to facilitate teaching and learning. Furthermore, ISU values teaching and recognizes effective teaching. This is evident through the redesign of the University's General Education curriculum, broad faculty participation of the development activities provided by the Center for the Advancement of Teaching (CAT), sponsoring Carnegie Academy conferences, and the incorporation of faculty promotions and tenure based on criteria related to effective teaching.

- ISU indicates that in the 2002-2003 academic year, 872 faculty and staff took part in 21 Center for the Advancement of Teaching (CAT) development activities, and CAT provided \$34,000 of support to 114 faculty which was an increase of 43% over the previous year. There is a University Teaching Committee that makes the selections for the two CAT grant programs. To further support effective teaching, the University has an endowed chair for support of scholarship in higher education instruction and supports original research on pedagogy in the disciplines. The K. Patricia Cross chair, for example, works with organizations such as the AAHE and the Carnegie Foundation and thus provides visibility for ISU in these national organizations. Other examples of the University's involvement in supporting effective teaching include the American Democracy Project and the Foundations of Excellence in the First College year. Finally, there is the Carnegie Academy for Scholarship of Teaching and Learning campus program which has supported research projects related to student engagement.
- The University indicates that assessment is a high priority. All academic programs have assessment plans and processes which include stated student learning outcomes, measurement systems, and documentation of the results. Both Academic Affairs and Student Affairs are involved in assessment. The Assessment Advisory Council reviews academic assessment plans, and there is an oversight committee in Student Affairs. The General Education program was reviewed in 2003 with a major report to the Senate in 2004. An assessment plan is in place for General Education. The University, however, has yet to implement it fully. There is a General Education Coordinating Committee, and the new assessment plan, it is anticipated, will align with the intended outcomes in that area. Regarding discipline specific assessment, there is a director of the University Assessment Office who works with the departments to support strategies for program assessment. In addition, web-based software has been purchased to assist the departments in managing the assessment plan. The examples given in the self-study of the use of capstone experiences and portfolios indicate that the programs are moving forward with assessment of student learning.
- ISU has been involved in program review on a continuous basis. Each program is reviewed every eight years. A subcommittee of the Academic Senate, chaired by the associate provost evaluates all program reviews and provides feedback and response to the units. It utilizes assessment data as part of the program review process. Assessment data also is used for continuous improvement and is linked to the continuous feedback loop of information. ISU has been designated by the Illinois Board of Higher Education as the state institution with the "Best Practice" for program review.
- It is evident that ISU provides an education environment that supports all learners and respects the diversity on campus. The ISU vision of "small college environment with large-university opportunities" (mission statement) and its improvement of Milner Library, Faculty and Staff Technology Support, Mornings with the Professors, iCampus Portal, Resnet, TechZone, Telecommunications and Networking are all examples of fostering a nurturing and positive learning environment. Service learning initiatives connect students with their community environment.

2. Evidence that demonstrates one or more specified core components need organizational attention.

3. Evidence that demonstrates one or more specified core components require Commission follow-up.

None noted.

4. Evidence that demonstrates one or more specified core components is not met and requires Commission follow-up.

None noted.

CRITERION FOUR: ACQUISITION, DISCOVERY, APPLICATION AND KNOWLEDGE

The organization promotes life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff and students by fostering and supporting Inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility in ways consistent with its mission.

1. Evidence that demonstrates core components are met.

- Support for faculty is provided through a variety of offices on campus such as the Research and Sponsored Programs Office, Center for the Advancement of Teaching, and Faculty Technology Support Services. Student engagement is highly prized and faculty performance evaluations include the assessment of collaborative engagement with students. Opportunities that support student engagement in research include the University Research Grant Program, internal Scholarship of Teaching and Learning grants and support programs, the Center for the Advancement of Teaching, and the Honors Research Mentoring program. In the College of Business, areas such as Professional Selling, Entrepreneurship, and Financial Markets will be further developed to strengthen the academic programs and better position students for careers. It is important to note that these enhancements are the result of academic planning, and made possible by the new COB building. This 125,000 square foot building provides the quality of space necessary to support teaching-learning innovations.
- Students are encouraged, supported, and recognized for the creation and use of scholarship, engaging in active independent learning, and pursuing opportunities that promote social responsibility. The extensiveness of these activities is highlighted by the following: In spring 2004, there were 141 internship and student-teaching courses offered across the curriculum. These courses enrolled 3684 students. Residence halls provide an opportunity for students to live with those who want to focus on service and leadership. Several programs are offered that focus on the principles and practices of democracy, and the campus sponsors two scholarly journals that are written and managed by students. Survey results indicated that ISU students who enrolled in Fall 2003 exceed the national average for national doctoral research intensive universities on the level of academic challenge and the degree of active and collaborative learning within the National Survey of Student Engagement. The self-study report highlights the many ways in which ISU ensures its students are positioned to live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society.
- The single and most striking undertaking is the massive revision of the General Education program in the mid 1990s (five-year review of the General Education Program). According to the self-study, faculties from different departments which teach the common core curriculum have met regularly to compare teaching strategies and share resources and materials (such as the faculties who teach the course in American Family).
- ISU's central library facilities and programs, a key learning resource, place a strong emphasis on supporting life-long learning through its programs, services, and collections. University planning and financial allocation also demonstrate a strong commitment to life-long learning, especially the funding *via* Human Resources to provide a variety of professional development opportunities to students, faculty, and staff (including retirees and alumni). Furthermore, the University publicly acknowledges the achievements of students and faculty in acquiring, discovering, and applying knowledge via events such as Founder's Day Convocation, the publication "Point of Pride," James L. Fisher Thesis and Sorensen

Dissertation Competitions, Homecoming, and increased research contribution (seen in Redefining Normal) among others.

- The Library is a full partner in creating a dynamic learning environment for students. They make a major commitment to the Foundations of Inquiry (FOI); students evaluate library instruction as one of the critical components of FOI. Since students see the library as a key resource for their learning, student government led a response when library hours were reduced due to budget reductions. Student initiated a student volunteer project, now in its third term. The library receives 1,000 hours of student volunteer service each term. The volunteer initiative allows the library to reinstate and expand hours of service.
- There is extensive use of external advisory boards to ensure the currency of academic programs, establish strategic partnerships for faculty and students, establish internship opportunities, and assist with increasing the visibility of the programs. A core value of ISU is “the active pursuit of learning and scholarship” with a premium placed upon student engagement in these pursuits. It is evident that ISU values a life of learning, and fosters educational programs and professional endeavors that demonstrate intellectual inquiry, research, and creative activity that result in publicly disseminated outcomes.

2. Evidence that demonstrates one or more specified core components need organizational attention.

None noted.

3. Evidence that demonstrates one or more specified core components require Commission follow-up.

None noted.

4. Evidence that demonstrates one or more specified core components is not met and requires Commission follow-up

None noted.

CRITERION FIVE: SERVICE AND ENGAGEMENT

As called for by its mission, the organization identifies its constituencies and serves them in ways both value.

1. Evidence that demonstrates core components are met.

- Illinois State University aspires to a statewide mission of “education, research and outreach.” Numerous examples of college level involvement in the community are detailed especially the College of Education’s connection to Chicago’s K-12 system. Active advisory boards and internships in all programs in the College of Applied Science and Technology demonstrate community engagement as does the service learning requirement for Presidential scholars. There are, however, fewer examples of active partnerships with community groups, county and city government, or social agencies.
- The organization has shown remarkable ability to reach its external constituencies as evidenced by its successful conclusion of its latest capital campaign which is funded beyond its target goal of 88 million.
- ISU provides a range of services and outreach of value to its constituencies. In fiscal year 2002 there were 330 identified public service and outreach initiatives sponsored by 113 different campus entities, including each of the seven colleges. Ranging from on-campus

conferences to off-campus training programs, these initiatives involved over 200,000 people outside of the University community and assisted numerous areas and statewide constituencies (Self-study, p.124). Many students and student organizations have provided public services either by participating service learning experiences or volunteering services/hours in local service projects. In addition, ISU supports its constituencies by making the facilities available to and used by the community. Such facilities are the Performing Arts Center, the University Galleries, the Golf Course, the Recreation Center, the Bowling and Billiards Center, numerous conferencing facilities, Milner Library, Redbird Arena, Bone Student Center, Braden Auditorium, Horton Field House, Eyestone School, etc.

- ISU has undertaken a university-wide initiative to emphasize its work in civic engagement. The American Democracy Project was established as a joint endeavor by the Provost and Vice President of Student Affairs and is a part of the American Association of Colleges and Universities initiative to promote civic engagement of students. Over 80 faculty and staff have volunteered their time to plan and implement this university-wide civic engagement effort.
- Illinois State demonstrates the capacity and commitment to engage faculty, staff, and students with its constituencies. For example, the College of Fine Arts offers performances, gallery shows, the Illinois Shakespeare Festival, Saturday Arts programs for young learners. All programs share the talent and experience of students, staff, and student in the arts with the constituencies. The College of Business has strong partnerships with the regional business community as evidenced through the Katie School of Insurance, Voluntary Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program, and an extensive number of hands-on projects required in a variety of courses. The Department of Marketing requires two courses in the major to include hands-on projects in the business community.
- The University has the capacity and the commitment to engage with its identified constituencies and communities. The Extended University offers an impressive array of outreach activities bridging the campus, the community, neighboring schools and businesses, including training programs, public service and outreach, and work with senior professionals.

2. Evidence that demonstrates one or more specified core components need organizational attention.

- The University provides examples of how it uses community-based advisory groups, and is to be commended for opening its facilities, resources, and expertise to the community and regional citizens. The self-study indicates that all facilities are available for public use from the arts venues to the library and recreational and athletic facilities. Through the Student Volunteer Center students are involved in service activities. It also uses various media sources to increase the public interest and involvement in its activities. However, even though a public service and outreach coordinator has been hired, and Extended University is fully functional, it is difficult to determine what the overall University strategy is to engage its identified constituencies and communities. ISU needs to assess its current activities to engage its community constituents and articulate what it desires to accomplish with the engagement.
- Illinois State University's Department of Athletics does not figure prominently in the self-study. In the future, Athletics must be more thoroughly integrated in the undergraduate and residential experience. Athletics is now funded completely by student fees but is not completely understood by the campus as a whole. The president has established a task force on Intercollegiate Athletics which should help resolve some of the issues.

3. Evidence that demonstrates one or more specified core components require Commission follow-up.

None noted.

4. Evidence that demonstrates one or more specified core components is not met and requires Commission follow-up.

None noted.

V. STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS

A. Affiliation Status:

ACCREDITED 1913-

Rationale for recommendation:

B. Nature of Organization

1. **Legal status:** Public institution
2. **Degrees awarded**

C. Conditions of Affiliation

1. Stipulation on affiliation status

None

2. Approval of degree sites

3. Approval of distance education degree

Online RN/BSN degree program in the Mennonite College of Nursing.

The Mennonite College of Nursing has demonstrated the fit of the RN/BSN program with the College and University's missions, as well as the need for the program.

Faculty for the program are the same faculty who taught in the on-campus RN/BSN program when it was offered in the past; the curriculum and graduation requirements for the program are also the same as the on-campus program. Technology learning support for faculty and students is adequate, and faculty teaching in the program are required to get training in offering courses online. They are also well versed in online education.

4. Reports required

Progress Report

None

Monitoring Report

None

Contingency Report

None

5. Other visits scheduled

None

6. Organization change request

Recommend approval of online RN/BSN degree program

D. Commission Sanction or Adverse Action

None

E. Summary of Commission Review

Next comprehensive visit 2014

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The team having carefully reviewed the self-study and the related resource materials, websites, and having met with the trustees, faculty, staff, administrators, students, alumni, community officers concludes that Illinois State University is fulfilling the five Criteria for accreditation. Evidence is seen further in the University's positive responses to the 1995 team challenges, its continued student-centeredness and emphasis on student learning in its educational and co-curricular programs, and dedicated faculty and staff.

The team further finds that the evidence obtained from the many documents examined and from the interviews during the comprehensive evaluation visit demonstrate strong institutional leadership, an appropriate governance structure, resourcefulness and creativity in developing its strategic plan *Educating Illinois 2003-2010*, a strong focus on teaching and learning, and on service to the state of Illinois. The University has a clear vision of its identity – what it is, what it can be in the hierarchy of higher education, and how it wants to be known. It understands the strengths of its current programs and has outlined plans for its preferred future. It is comfortable with its current identity, and prides itself on its focus on the undergraduate education mission on which it builds its graduate programs. There is consensus across all constituent groups that its shared governance processes will safeguard the institution as it moves forward on realizing its strategic plan *Educating Illinois 2001-2010*. Thus, it has created a common vision which should sustain it in the current challenging higher education environment.

The evidence discovered by the team indicates that the University has the institutional knowledge, self-determination, and commitment to meet challenges and opportunities it faces in the context of the current decrease in funding for higher education in the state of Illinois. The Academic Senate is fully committed to the strategic plan, as are the trustees, faculty, staff, and students. The team's evidence includes its perception of strong institutional leadership of the president and his team, a dedicated faculty and staff, a physical plant that serves the University adequately, a self-study that reflects great effort, a campus culture that uniformly embraces and practices student-centeredness and collegiality, and a high level of integrity in the operations of the University. The team believes that the University is in a position to address the challenges identified in a reasonable time-frame. Based on its findings, the team recommends another ten year cycle for Illinois State University.

VI. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND EXPLANATIONS

Recognition of Significant Accomplishments, Progress, and Practices

Illinois State University should be especially recognized for institutionalizing its mission and strategic plan *Educating Illinois 2003-2010* across all aspects of the campus. It is a singularly successful effort in planning for its preferred future. The institution is to be applauded in designing a strategic plan that it uses functionally to guide itself.

ADVANCEMENT SECTION

The team has made a concerted effort to provide the University with detailed consultation as peers in the Advancement Section in response to the three special emphases the self-study process identified as areas that ISU specifically wants to pursue: (1) Enhancing Faculty Distinctiveness and Excellence; (2) Partnerships for Student Learning, and (3) Achieving Distinctiveness Through Coordinated Planning. The following comments address concerns identified by the team as well as these areas of special emphasis. The team hopes the comments are useful to the University as it seeks to enhance quality through continuous improvement as identified in its strategic plan *Educating Illinois 2003-2010*.

Enhancing Faculty Distinctiveness and Excellence

Balance in Teaching, Research, and Service

Educating Illinois 2003-2010, commits ISU faculty to balance superior classroom teaching with active research, scholarly, and creative agendas, and the University provides faculty members with an environment that supports teaching, and an extensive set of support services and programs. Noteworthy among these are the University's strong reputation in the area of teaching, validated by students who believe that faculty give them time and attention both in and outside of the classroom. The University also has initiatives that acknowledge good teaching. It has, for instance, an annual conference on teaching, workshops, and grants associated with the Cross Chair for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning which connects it with the higher education national community in the Carnegie Association for Teaching and Learning and AAHE, to name two. Assessment of student learning is very much in the forefront of the University's reputation and is used appropriately for continuous improvement in its programs. To keep current with advances in assessment, there are intensive summer workshops for faculty. Nearly half of the faculty utilizes the Center for the Advancement of Teaching. But, faculty recruitment, retention, and evaluation practices, limited funds to support faculty travel, faculty development, and declining resources to support faculty research all threaten the ability of the institution to enhance faculty distinctiveness.

The self-study makes references to the traditional understanding of research and scholarship, but not to creative activity. Including and recognizing "creative activity" would recognize the work of an entire division which appears to be excluded from documentations of research and scholarship. Although some documents do include references to creative or artistic activity, this apparent oversight in the self-study raises an issue of concern to faculty in Fine Arts. As ISU strives to identify and nurture the distinctiveness of its faculty, it needs to address matters such as this to ensure that all ISU faculty efforts are acknowledged and that all faculty have equal access to available funding opportunities.

ISU faces, as do other institutions, a number of challenges as it actively supports faculty distinctiveness. Faculty distinctiveness at ISU can be enhanced by means of reward and recognition policies and procedures that reflect a balance in teaching, scholarship and research, creative activity, and service. The University's reward structure and promotion and tenure process is decentralized. Its goal to increase salaries and benefits to make the institution more competitive in retaining faculty is to be applauded and should be pursued aggressively. Cuts in research summer support for faculty, decreases in internal grants, and inadequate travel and equipment budgets are examples of issues that need to be addressed. Currently, there seems to be an uneven level of support for faculty development. Travel funds are insufficient to support faculty attending conferences to present papers or to develop expertise in teaching and public service. At present with only \$250-500 per year in some departments could limit a faculty member in his/her ability to participate in professional development activities. In addition, the University needs to ensure that all of faculty members have adequate technology to support their teaching, scholarship, and service.

The team found that faculty value a balance in teaching, scholarship and research, creative activity, and service, but don't see the reward system or policies that would support this balance. They cite the challenge of sustaining long-range scholarly and creative activity in the absence of adequate resources to do so. To address this issue the University might consider developing with faculty help a report that includes a set of principles considered central in defining balance in teaching, creative activity, scholarship and research, and service at ISU supported by best practices collected internally and externally. The report could also include perceived obstacles to the balance desired and suggest initiatives that acknowledge the close relationship among teaching, research and service – thereby defining balance as understood by the campus and identifying ways of acknowledging and fostering it. The self-study concludes that improving the reward system will enhance faculty distinctiveness, and the team agrees with this assessment. The team also suggests that the University review the tenure and promotion policies in the various units to see where adjustments may be made to let faculty grow their diverse skills in teaching, scholarship and research, creative activity, and service. The support for the desired balance must come from deans, provost, and president if the concept of balance in teaching, research and service is to have the currency and credibility it must have on campus. The chapter on Enhancing Faculty Distinctiveness and Excellence concludes with a statement that the University facilitate an intentional balancing of faculty activities to continue to enhance faculty distinctiveness and excellence. The team agrees with this assessment. Teaching, scholarship and research, creative activity, and service are interdependent of course, and a report such as the one suggested might be helpful in considering this issue further.

Unfortunately, the University's internal support for faculty research activities has declined as a result of state funding cuts. While this is understandable, ISU must continue to seek creative ways to strengthen its research infrastructure if it intends to accomplish its goals concerning research as outlined in *Educating Illinois 2030-2010*.

The mechanism of interdisciplinary research teams to recruit and retain faculty and promote research appears to be successfully used in the College of Arts and Sciences, where the Dean has undertaken 16 initiatives in which faculty receive released time, graduate assistant support, and extra travel funding. In addition, the Dean has initiated a new faculty mentoring program that lasts for three years and provides new faculty with the knowledge they need for promotion and tenure.

The faculty survey reveals that responding faculty believe that policies and procedures now in place are more helpful in engaging students than in supporting faculty efforts to instill in students critical thinking and lifelong scholarly habits. Respondents saw greater support for applying research to teaching or publication than seeking external funding or work on long-term research agendas; for local service (University, College, departmental) than service to external professional organizations, and the like. The self-study itself points to the need to explore the reality behind these perceptions. The exploration may provide an avenue for discourse on the desired balance in teaching, scholarship and research, creative activity, and service that is the focus of this special emphasis.

As Illinois State continues to build its faculty, phases or reasonable target goals may be identified to strengthen the diversity of the faculty. The self-study states that lack of clarity about evaluation procedures and criteria, and lack of institutional support on gender and minority issues, affect low levels of satisfaction among new faculty. ISU needs to discover the extent to which this is a major concern and if it is, then to address it.

It is evident in the self-study and further reinforced through on-site interviews that the faculty and staff recognize the need to align more transparently the University's financial resources with academic and institutional goals. To achieve goals related to lowering class sizes, lowering student-faculty ratios, increasing faculty scholarship, and addressing space needs, the University must engage in "comprehensive, long-range fiscal planning and policy formulation to support and enhance its capacity" (self-study, 37). The team agrees with this assessment. Investments must continue to be made in hiring tenure-track faculty to replace faculty leaving ISU. Increasing graduate program quality, and in some programs the quality of graduate students, will also depend upon the University's ability to increase graduate stipends, increase marketing and recruitment activities, and effectively manage tuition waivers (which currently account for 57% of graduate tuition). The University's competitive position is based upon a strong faculty, a focus on undergraduate education, small class sizes, and a closely aligned planning and budgeting process. This, the team perceives to be its niche.

The program review process for graduate programs is thorough and incorporates outcomes assessment data. However, to strengthen the process, the Graduate Council may want to consider the use of external reviewers. By utilizing the knowledge of external reviewers across the country, graduate programs could enhance their continuous improvement process, lend credibility to the review process, and bring additional ideas for consideration.

Partnerships for Student Learning

Partnering of Curricular and Non-Curricular Areas

Illinois State University has an outstanding track record and a philosophical ethos that centers on creating a student-centered academic environment. The work of the institution is tightly framed around Educating Illinois: An Action Plan for Distinctiveness and Excellence. Goal 2 supports pursuit of national excellence in undergraduate and graduate education. There is recognition that the learning outcome that is centered on the “discovery, transmission, integration, and application of knowledge” will be achieved through a variety of venues, curricular and co-curricular. There is also recognition that the learning outcomes of critical thinking, developing global perspectives, and utilizing interdisciplinary approaches in the General Education program must happen in curricular and co-curricular arenas. Goal 3 seeks to develop an educational environment that “fosters creativity and growth among its students, faculty, and staff”. There is recognition here also that students must be active and engaged learners. To accomplish this, there must be systemic and strategic collaborations between faculty and student affairs staff directly tied to student learning outcomes.

Academic programs and co-curricular programs have defined learning outcomes and a plan to assess those outcomes. Service learning initiatives are strong in the institution. However, in no single place does the University make explicit for students the learning outcomes that will characterize them as “an educated person” or an ISU graduate. Many departments have articulated learning outcomes and, in fact, there are some commonalities among them. However, nowhere does the University state the outcomes of the whole ISU education in the curriculum and the co-curriculum. Such a statement might read “An ISU graduate/alum will be characterized by his or her ability to function effectively in a diverse global community, to be an effective citizen through service and leadership, and to demonstrate intellectual curiosity and critical thinking.” (These particular outcomes were selected based on learning outcomes observed in the general education program as well as academic majors and Student Affairs programs.) It would be beneficial for students to know that they will be expected to demonstrate growth and change on the critical outcomes that the University believes characterize an educated person regardless of major.

It appears the committee working on enhancing partnerships for learning has two intertwined purposes for seeking partnerships. The first is to create seamless learning environments as articulated in the AAHE/NASPA/ACPA white paper *Powerful Partnerships*. The second is to insure that students benefit from those learning experiences through engagement in the curriculum and the co-curriculum. While these two purposes are complimentary and reinforcing, they are different. Thus, it is as important to assess and work to enhance student engagement as it is to develop effective partnerships.

Successful partnerships between the academic and student service areas usually require that institutional learning outcomes are discerned through a collaborative process that includes all members of the University community in full partnership. ISU has already identified a number of programs and services where partnerships are established, such as the American Democracy Project and the Foundation of Excellence in the Freshmen Year Experience, or where partnerships will be initiated. Further, the committee has completed an examination of the role of departmental clubs and academic honor societies that may provide insight into student engagement and increased opportunity to establish partnerships between Academic Affairs collaborators and Student Affairs collaborators. The committee has a clear understanding of what is in place and what could be put in

place. It now needs to move on its collective knowledge in this area to strengthen these collaborations.

To bring about a seamless learning environment the University needs to go “deeper” in facilitating and supporting such connections. Better connections may be made by increasing campus-wide coordination of service learning, community outreach, and learning partnerships. The University needs to identify clear outcomes that involve shared participation in their achievement by both Academic Affairs and Student Affairs.

In addition to *Powerful Partnerships* the committee may want to consult the recent NASPA/ACPA white paper *Learning Reconsidered* to guide their work. *Learning Reconsidered* suggests a way for Student Affairs and Academic Affairs to begin these conversations:

- (1) Form a consensus about the competencies and skills that students who complete in an undergraduate degree should have.
- (2) Be descriptive about the contexts within which they can be acquired.
- (3) Create a process through which students will acquire them
- (4) Have a clearly defined method by which student learning will be measured and evaluated.

In creating this stronger, systemic alliance between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs at Illinois State University, the following are some areas to which particular attention may be paid:

- Reinstitute a Student Affairs presence on the Assessment Advisory Council.
- Engage Student Affairs as a partner in a strategic plan around service learning in order to utilize the Division’s volunteerism center as part of the reflection process. While there are pockets of such experiences at ISU, there are no centralized ways that would focus the institution’s commitment to this approach to learning.
- Continue to develop a stronger, more collaborative and cohesive relationship between Student Affairs and Enrollment Management. University College is involved with students in the first one or two years. Students are required to live on campus their first two years. Critical career decisions are being made in choosing a major during these years. Therefore, a closer working relationship between the Career Center and Advising is needed. The difficulty many students experience transitioning into an academic major might be alleviated with a cogent plan that utilizes the coordinated strengths of both departments focusing together on these first two years of students’ time at ISU.

The imperative is there for these two areas to have a working consensus of the outcomes being sought during the first two years. Additionally, the quality of campus life for which Student Affairs has a major responsibility is critical to the success of the Admissions Office’s ability to recruit desired students. Expressed concerns centered on the age and quality of residence halls and the lack of a viable student center. Bone Center as currently configured and

programmed caters less to student needs and more to community groups. All the students who met with the team indicated that the Bone Center had long outlived its attraction for active use by students. Each unit has a vested interest in the success of the other.

- Support and acknowledge faculty as they integrate campus activities or programs into their courses.

During the budget downsizings of the last three years, Student Affairs has borne budget cuts like other units have. It is subject to the hiring freeze of all non-academic units. It sustained a 25% reduction in its administrative budget, as did other units in the University, due to a mandate from the state. The confluence of these realities makes for a difficult fiscal environment in which the division must operate and thus, threatens its viability. A more closely aligned working relationship between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs would also suggest that the latter be more visibly supportive of the former so that their mutually agreed goals for students may be carried out.

The self-study documents that faculty generally perceive that the institutional climate values the relationship between the curriculum and co-curriculum, but there is less agreement that this relationship is an effective one. In addressing the roles professional staff may have in Academic Affairs, the self-study observes that while faculty may be involved in Student Affairs programs, the opposite is not the case. The self-study also recognizes the need to address the opinion faculty have of Student Affairs staff.

The previous NCA team had identified concern for academic support services and had advised ISU that a University College might address these concerns but needed to be watched carefully. Academic Planning reviewed University College in 2003-2004. The Office of the Provost continues to keep track of the quality of the services offered. Academic Advisement Center in University College provides advisement to all students with fewer than 24 hours (namely, freshmen) and all undeclared majors (identified as General Students). University College also provides critical help as students make the transition from its advising system to what they will encounter in their divisions and majors. Other services in University College (tutoring, financial aid assistance) are open to all students, including academic advising for entering students, student athletes, and General Students. In view of the General Students' inability to get into their majors of choice in a timely fashion, the team strongly recommends that various sectors of the University (the provost's office, the colleges, the associate vice president for Enrollment Management and Academic Services, University College, and the division of Student Affairs) work together with students who are unable to get admitted into highly selective majors.

While the integration of various academic support services into University College has been a success, the unit seems to suffer from the misunderstanding by many people of its role as a college. A name change to something such as Student Academic Services might promote greater understanding and emphasize its component services as directly supporting *Educating Illinois*. Pulling all of the University College's component services into one physical location would also increase their effectiveness. Additionally, services for students of color appear to be duplicated between the Divisions of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. Integrating these services would not only strengthen them and serve students better; it would allow ISU to use its limited resources more effectively.

Achieving Distinctiveness Through Coordinated Planning

The team concludes that Illinois State University enjoys an extremely effective institutional strategic planning process. The University has adopted an integrated planning model that provides an understanding about its strategic agenda at all levels of the organization. The team was particularly impressed with the level of understanding and awareness of the students, faculty, staff, trustees and administrators of *Educating Illinois 2003-2010*. College and division plans, the budgeting process, the facilities *Master Plan*, the fundraising plan (*Redefining "normal"*), academic and administrative program review, and assessment activities appear to be well integrated with one another and with *Educating Illinois*. Furthermore, the University has an Energy Management and Utility Infrastructure Plan, a Parking Plan, a Housing and Dining Services Plan, and a Capital Requirements Plan, and each of these seems to be aligned with *Educating Illinois*. The University is to be highly commended for its planning process and operationalizing the strategic plan through alignment with internal plans.

Planning efforts are undergirded by reliable and useful information on the University's internal and external environments. The planning process enjoys both the rich and diverse perspectives of the *Educating Illinois* Coordinating Council and also the staff leadership and support of the Office of Planning and Institutional Research. While comprehensive, the planning process is not overly burdensome, and tangible benefits clearly accrue from the process. It is regularly evaluated and improved upon, as evidenced by the recommendations in the self-study (204-205), which are entirely appropriate.

The team believes that increased external sources of revenue must be secured to achieve the performance indicators outlined in *Education Illinois 2003-2010* and the *Master Plan*. To achieve goals related to lowering class sizes, lowering student-faculty ratios, increasing faculty scholarship, and addressing space needs, the University must engage in "comprehensive, long-range fiscal planning and policy formulation to support and enhance its capacity" (self-study,37). To achieve the above goals, investments must continue to be made in hiring tenure-track faculty to replace faculty leaving ISU. The University competitive position is based upon a strong faculty, a focus on undergraduate education, small class sizes, and a closely aligned planning and budgeting process.

The team's primary recommendation concerning the planning process is to continue all current efforts and to continue to regularly evaluate and revise them so that the process becomes even better woven into the fabric of the culture at ISU.

Additionally, the University is advised to broaden the *Educating Illinois* Coordinating Council in three ways:

- First, the Council may be well served to take on the function of an environmental scanning reading group. It could, for example, through additional assessments in external environment strengthen the institutional knowledge base (concerning, technological trends) that will serve it well in its consideration of internal strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats that it faces now or may affect it in future.

- The team also believes that ISU will benefit greatly from initiating a systematic effort to get additional information support for planning efforts. While ISU benefits from the fact that many people have access to information for the purpose of operational reporting, it is important to emphasize the coordinating role of the Office of Planning and Institutional Research as the official provider of University information to undergird planning efforts of the Educating Illinois Coordinating Council as described above.
- Third, the Council might find it helpful to aggressively work to maintain students among its membership. Students' strong interest in a new student union and recreation center and their concern about understaffing in the Office of Student Financial Aid are examples of issues that students can bring to the table.

As planning continues at ISU, the team recommends the University ensure that all colleges and departments continue have their own strategic plans that align with the University strategic plan. In addition, we recommend that in any future planning the athletic program be incorporated as part of the plan. Furthermore, the University needs to carefully examine its use of the feedback loop in planning. If a goal is not met, then how will the goal be modified or what action will be taken to meet the goal in the future? At present, if a goal is not met, then the budget becomes what may be an excuse. Such an exercise hinders the feedback loop in the planning process.

Long-term Resource Planning

In future planning a long term resource plan needs to be developed. At present, it is not difficult to get student support to raise tuition because most of the current students are not impacted. However, there is no long-term perspective on how to deal with the budget problems of decreasing state resources at a time of increasing need. For example, there is not a plan for future technology, infrastructure, and equipment. All of these will be critical needs in the long-term. In fact, faculty are already critical of outdated equipment. Yet, there is not a plan to address the situation.

ISU might also consider developing a plan for the reallocation of internal resources to meet critical University needs. There is a perception among faculty in the different academic units with whom the team met that open tenure track positions have been filled with adjuncts and temporary faculty for longer than one year until the open tenure line positions can be filled. Such a strategy in the long run could hinder the quality of education provided to students. In addition, the situation of juniors and seniors who cannot get into majors in a timely manner must be addressed. A planned reallocation of resources to meet the needs of these students should be identified in an immediate time-frame.

The ability and associated policies for internal resource reallocation from one academic unit to another academic unit within the instructional programs is not clear. It may exist but it is not a part of *Educating Illinois* or the self study document. Enrollment growth and trends suggest that there are academic units that have additional student demand and other

programs that have a declining demand. Planning documents that outline the process for resource allocation and reallocation, especially for tenure track positions, would be consistent with a planning system that is linked to budget and priority development.

Except for athletic facility planning, there is very little reference to athletics in the self study or in planning documents. Accountability of intercollegiate athletic programs to the public, boards of trustees and university chief executive officers is increasing. The organization may recognize this accountability. Planning documents provide a good opportunity for a university to inform its constituencies, including faculty, staff and students, of the interrelationships of intercollegiate athletics with the institution and contribution that intercollegiate athletics makes to student learning.

In the area of facilities planning the University might consider having a contingency plan for facilities in case budget cuts impact the current facilities plan. Additionally, the facilities issues in the fine arts must be addressed, especially those issues dealing with outmoded equipment, and the conditions of buildings where there could be health hazards to those studying and working in them. Additionally, ISU needs to consider ways to address the inefficiency of multiple physical locations of the College of Fine Arts, and whether these multiple locations contribute or not to support student learning and faculty/staff productivity. As indicated earlier, the placement of fine arts programs on campus is problematical. Music faculty are scattered across campus in seven locations. The Honors program not only has facilities which are far too small to support programming, but it is located on the far edge of campus. As the campus continues to be developed and space becomes available, ISU would be advised to consider the best location for departments and programs, especially as the location has an impact on student learning.

The University should continue to implement its own recommendations of the self- study document that indicate how it plans to continually improve its distinctiveness in planning.

Diversity

Illinois State University has made its commitment to diversity evident in many ways. The mission statement states that the members of the University community "...work as a diverse community of scholars." *Educating Illinois* details the commitment to diversity in Goal 5: "The diverse community fostering teamwork and support among its members." The narrative goes on to discuss how community, the curriculum, co-curricular events and services, library services and collections, and University events are all strategies to fulfill this goal. Further, the institution acknowledges the importance that faculty, staff, and students "... develop skills and competencies to succeed in the global community...." The goal goes on to identify the initiatives the University is and will undertake to accomplish this goal: the Leadership Institute, *Illinois State University Plan for Diversity* (which outlines the blueprint for the recruitment and retention of traditionally underrepresented groups in the student body and the University workforce), the American Democracy Project, and the National Network for Educational Renewal. Finally, the plan enumerates nine outcomes that will "increase and celebrate diversity." The *Educating Illinois* ReportCard benchmarks the University's progress on four outcomes: minority undergraduate enrollment, minority freshman retention, minority graduation rates, and the adUS News Diversity Index. These are all noteworthy achievements.

Having illustrated the many ways in which the University has demonstrated its commitment to diversity, the team found there was only limited progress on campus in meeting the diversity aspirations described in *Educating Illinois*. The self-study states that turnover in leadership in the Office for Diversity and Affirmative Action has slowed the progress in renewing the *Plan for Diversity*. While acknowledging the need for leadership, the team identified other factors that may interfere with accomplishing the critical goals in the *Plan for Diversity*.

The University has an Office of Diversity and Affirmative Action. It appears that the office has an institutional leadership role in helping ISU accomplish Goal 5. At the same time, the website for the office states "... for technical assistance for compliance with laws, regulations, and policies..." which communicates the equally important role the office has for compliance. An unfortunate reality that many institutions find is that the dual obligations of leadership and compliance are difficult to balance. Indeed, the campus perception may reflect a belief that one of these two roles has been forsaken. Illinois State University has the commitment to insure that its commitment to "compliance with laws, regulations, and policies" has equal attention with the leadership for accomplishing very important goals in student enrollment, academic programming, co-curricular programming, library programs and services, and University events. It may be useful to consider separating these two major responsibilities so that each may have the full attention of the staff hired to lead and manage these obligations. Further, it may allow the University to identify potential employees who have very different skill sets and can provide different types of leadership and work.

ISU aspires to be a "public ivy" and has moved toward that goal by increasing the admissions requirements for entering students. It also aspires to make substantial gains in the number of minority students who matriculate, persist, and graduate from the University. A reality in today's student recruitment environment is that minority students who meet Illinois State University's admissions requirements can choose from many outstanding colleges and universities when making a decision where to attend college. Institutions competing for minority students, also will offer, as will ISU, quality academic programs, enhanced opportunities for learning, and student life experiences. Furthermore, highly qualified minority students will receive multiple attractive scholarships and financial aid packages that will eliminate cost as a factor in college decision-making. At this time, it appears Illinois State's resources for minority student scholarships may be limited to be competitive in this market sector, and the team suggests that if the University doesn't already have a strategy in place which is monetary or incentive-based to bring in the desired numbers of minority students, it should consider establishing one. Further, the University can assist its many publics in understanding how it will demonstrate its commitment to recruiting, retaining, and graduating minority students through its existing diversity goal.

While visiting the campus, the team noted a number of curricular and co-curricular initiatives that demonstrate the work of academic and student affairs departments in fulfilling their responsibilities to progress on Goal 5. These initiatives and programs give evidence that students do have the opportunity to learn the skills and competencies that are required to work and live in a global community. However, these initiatives and programs

are scattered across the campus and are not organized as part of a larger institutional effort. If the University intends to impact all students, it would be beneficial to be more systematic in its efforts. Currently a student may choose to forgo any opportunity to become more educated about diversity (other than what is required in General Education) or may simply miss the opportunity to become more educated. The efforts to engage students in this important topic appear to be uncoordinated; thus, the impact is random. Good things occur for the students who find the opportunity to learn more about diversity but student access to those opportunities appears to be serendipitous.

The team would recommend that the University consider several strategies to engage in a more systematic effort in meeting Goal 5:

- First, describe learning outcomes that can be accomplished through multiple experiences, both curricular and co-curricular. Assess the outcomes for both the curricular and co-curricular learning on diversity through a single assessment strategy.
- Develop a framework for thinking about diversity that permits students to have multiple, reinforcing experiences that grow their skills and competencies throughout their undergraduate education or graduate education. This framework also can guide faculty and staff thinking as they develop learning environments, programs, and services in support of the University goal.
- Finally, the University has initiated long term strategies (e.g. the Chicago Pipeline) to address the diversity goal. Careful thinking and planning has gone into developing the plans for these initiatives. Using the Chicago Pipeline as an example, the plan will take eight to ten years before the full impact of the initiative will be felt on the ISU campus. Certainly the relationships that are being developed now with schools in Chicago will have immediate benefit for the current faculty both at the University and in the partner schools. Further, ISU students will benefit through their field experiences at the partner schools. However, the impact on future student enrollment will be experienced when students who are currently in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades begin to make college choices. The ultimate benchmark of program success will be the successful retention and graduation of those fourth, fifth, and sixth graders from Illinois State University. This long term strategy has the potential to be a model for the future. However, the institutional commitment to this strategy will require a continuity of commitment even though the primary participants at Illinois partner schools may change. For all its long term strategies to accomplish its diversity goal, the University will need to be vigilant to insure that changes in leadership do not undermine the ultimate outcomes for those initiatives.

Illinois State University has a demonstrated commitment to diversity. Further, there are numerous examples of individual faculty, staff and departments moving forward in their efforts to fulfill the commitment and to meet the University's diversity goal and its *Plan for Diversity*. Nonetheless, diversity needs institutional attention if Illinois State University is to fulfill its aspirations to "work as a diverse community of scholars."