

ASSURANCE SECTION

REPORT OF A COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION VISIT

TO

University of Wisconsin-Whitewater
800 W. Main Street
Whitewater, Wisconsin

March 13-15, 2006

FOR

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

EVALUATION TEAM

Dr. Deborah W. Balogh, Interim Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs,
Ball State University, Muncie, IN 47306

Dr. Leon C. Book, Director, Student Transitions & First-Year Experience
Southeast Missouri State University, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

Dr. Jeffrey H. Chen, Director of Institutional Research & Analysis
Cleveland State University, Cleveland, OH 44115

Dr. Tamera S. Jahnke, Acting Associate Provost,

UW-W LIBRARY

Missouri State University, Springfield, MO 65897

Dr. Patrick Kyle Melia, Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs & Program Development
Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Dr. Charles R. Middleton, President
Roosevelt University, Chicago, IL 60605-1394

Dr. Ronald D. Sandstrom, Chair and Professor of (Team Chair)
Mathematics and Computer Science
Fort Hays State University, Hays, KS 67601

Mr. Stephen J Taksar, Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance
Indiana University Southeast, New Albany, IN 47150

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I. CONTEXT AND NATURE OF VISIT

A. Purpose of Visit

The visit is to conduct a comprehensive evaluation for continued accreditation at the Specialist degree level that is limited to the Educational Specialist Degree (Ed.S.) and to evaluate the institution's request that its Statement of Affiliation Status be changed to read , "No prior Commission approval required to offer online degree programs."

B. Organizational Context

The University of Wisconsin-Whitewater (UW-W) was founded in 1868 as a Normal School to train teachers. Since that time, it has progressed to State Teachers College, State College, and State University. In 1972, with the merger of the nine state universities and the former University of Wisconsin, UW-W became a member of the University of Wisconsin System (UW System).

UW-W has grown to over 10,500 students with more than 1,050 faculty, staff, and administrators. It is now a comprehensive university offering both undergraduate and graduate degrees. Forty-six majors are offered in four undergraduate colleges: Arts & Communication, Business & Economics, Education, and Letters & Sciences. The School of Graduate Studies & Continuing Education oversees 13 graduate degree programs.

Located in southeastern Wisconsin approximately 45 miles southeast of Madison, 50 miles southwest of Milwaukee, and 100 miles northwest of Chicago, the 410-acre campus includes 53 academic/auxiliary buildings, a 150-acre nature preserve and arboretum, and 43 acres for baseball, football, soccer, softball, track, and tennis.

C. Unique Aspects of Visit

A new Chancellor assumed the leadership role in August 2005.

The institution's request that its Statement of Affiliation Status be changed to read, "No prior Commission approval required to offer online degree programs" was evaluated and will be addressed in each of the five criterion sections.

D. Sites or Branch Campuses Visited

None.

E. Distance Education Reviewed

The institution's request that its Statement of Affiliation Status be changed to read, "No prior Commission approval required to offer online degree programs" was evaluated and will be addressed in each of the five criterion sections. The institution

has been offering the MBA online since 2002 using "Learning Space." The UW-System has adopted the platform "Desire2Learn". The institution has the infrastructure in place to offer online degree programs in terms of staff support, faculty development activities, and course design opportunities.

F. Interactions with Constituencies

Executive Management

1. Chancellor
2. Provost
3. Vice Chancellor for Administrative Affairs
4. Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
5. Assistant Vice Chancellor for Information Technology
6. Associate Vice Chancellor for Budget and Finance
7. Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Support Services
8. Assistant Chancellor for University Advancement
9. Deputy Assistant Chancellor for Student Affairs
10. Interim Dean, Graduate Studies and Continuing Education
11. Graduate Studies and Continuing Education, 2 people
12. Dean, College of Business and Economics
13. Dean, College of Education
14. Dean, College of Letters and Science
15. Dean, College of Arts and Communication
16. UW-W Foundation Director

Schools, Faculty, and Committees

1. Strategic Budget and Planning Committee/ full committee, 20 People
2. Associate Dean of Letters and Science
3. Chair, Languages & Literature
4. Chair Political Science
5. Online liberal studies faculty, 4 people
6. Criterion one sub-committee, 4 people
7. Criterion two sub-committee, 5 people
8. Criterion three sub-committee, 8 people
9. Criterion four sub-committee, 7 people
10. Criterion five sub-committee, 6 people
11. General Education Assessment Committee
12. General Education Committee, 5 people
13. Graduate Council, 15 people
14. Assoc. Dean, LEARN Center & Academic Assessment
15. Professor in Philosophy & Religious Studies
16. Asst. Professor in Languages & Literature
17. Assoc. Professor Management
18. Assoc. Professor Languages & Literature
19. Assoc. Dean, College of Letters & Sciences
20. Asst. Dean, College of Letters & Sciences
21. University Curriculum Committee, 6 people

Management and staff

1. Facilities and Planning and Management
2. Academic Advising Exploration Center, 3 people
3. Administrative Information
4. Advising
5. Advising Coordinator in College of Letters & Sciences
6. Assessment Coordinator
7. Director of Academic Standards
8. Director, Academic Advising & Exploration Center
9. Director, Admissions
10. Director, Career Services & Leadership Development
11. Director, Facilities Management
12. Director, Financial Aid
13. Director, Honors Program
14. Director, Library
15. Director, Research and Sponsored Programs
16. Director, Undergraduate Studies
17. Director, Travel Study & Distance Education
18. Library personnel responsible for online support
19. Dean of Student Life
20. Asst. Dean, New Student Programs
21. Institutional Research, 3 people
22. Human Resources, 2 people
23. Instructional Technology
24. LEARN Center, 2 people
25. Network Operations
26. Registrar
27. Risk Management Specialist
28. Senior Consultant, ITC
29. Strategic Budget and Planning

Students

1. Open meeting 40 attendees
2. LBTQA committee

General Meetings

1. Online BBA/MBA Faculty and Staff, 15 people
2. Online Political Science Faculty, 5 people
3. Open Faculty Meeting, 60 people
4. Academic non-Instructional Staff, 70 people
5. Academic Instructional Staff, 38 people
6. Department chairs, 23 people
7. Graduate Council, 15 people
8. Members of the Community, 7 people

G. Principal Documents, Materials, and Web Pages Reviewed

UW-W Administrative Documents {sampled from each of the following}

1. Campus climate Study
2. 1996 Strategic Plan

3. 38 University Goals (2002)
4. University Core Values, Select Mission, Objectives, and Goals
5. Academic Advising and Exploration Center
6. Academic Support Services
7. Copyrightable Instructional Materials Ownership, Use and Control Policy
8. Curriculum Procedure Handbook
9. Enrollment Management Plan 21
10. Field Education Program Agreements
11. Financial and Administrative Policies
12. General Purpose Revenue History (FY96-05)
13. Guiding Principles for Budget Reduction Planning (2003 & 2005)
14. A Guide for Citizenship in the UW-Whitewater Community
15. LEARN Center Strategic Plan (2005)
16. Grade Appeal Process
17. Graduate Catalog (2004-2006)
18. Graduate School Admission Information
19. Graduate School Graduation Requirements and Policies
20. School of Graduate Studies Appeals and Grievance Processes
21. School of Graduate Studies Strategic Plan (2005)
22. Information Technology Strategic Plan (2005)
23. Cooperative & Exchange Agreements with International Universities
24. Inter-institutional Agreements: UW-W Wisconsin Innovation Center and UW-System Extension
25. Institutional Response to the UW-W Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Issues Task Force Report (1995)
26. HLC Self-Study Steering Committee (Agenda & Minutes)
27. National Association for School Psychologists
28. Office of Research and Sponsored Programs Strategic Plan (2005)
29. Agreements/Partnerships with Postsecondary Institutions (Palmer College of Chiropractic, UW-Platteville, UW-Rock County, UW-Stevens Point)
30. Professional Development Plan Guidelines
31. Royal Purple
32. Guiding Principles for Budget Cuts
33. Radiation Safety Manual
34. New Student Seminar information folder
35. A Guide to Solving Student Problems
36. Student Handbook
37. Student Academic Disciplinary Procedures
38. Student Non-Academic Disciplinary Procedures
39. Good Standing, Graduation, and Completion Policies
40. Transfer Agreements with Wisconsin Technical College System
41. Undergraduate Academic Probation and Dismissal Regulation
42. Undergraduate Grievance Procedures and Grade Appeals Process
43. Undergraduate Admission Information
44. Undergraduate Catalog (2004-2006)
45. University Research Day
46. University Handbook (contains information for faculty, students, and staff)
47. Very Important Parents Association Bylaws
48. Request & Approval from UW-System to Offer General Business (BBA), Liberal

- Studies BA&BS, Political Science BA&BS
49. UW-W Annual Security Report and Policy Statement
 50. UW-W Foundation Strategic Plan (2001)
 51. UW-W Library Intellectual Freedom Statement
 52. UW-W Institutional Animal Care and Use Policies and Procedures
 53. UW-W Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects Policies
 54. UW-W Six Year Physical Development Plan 2005-2011
 55. UW-W Policy on Intellectual Property Rights
 56. UW-W Revised Strategic Plan (2006, Draft)
 57. UW-W Sabbatical History
 58. UW-W Reporter
 59. UW-System School Library Education Consortium Agreement
 60. UW-W Foundation Inc. Board of Directors Members (2005-06) & UW-W Foundation Bylaws
 61. UW-W Alumni Advisory Board Membership(2006-08)
 62. UW-System Mission Statement
 63. UW-System Policy on Intellectual Property Rights
 64. UW-System Financial Report 2004 (including UW-W's Statement of Net Assets; State of Revenues, Expenses and Changes in Net Assets; and Statement of Cash Flows
 65. UW-System Financial Report 2003 (including UW-W's Statement of Net Assets; State of Revenues, Expenses and Changes in Net Assets; and Statement of Cash Flows
 66. Wisconsin Idea
 67. World Affairs Seminar Agreements

UW-W Website/Digital Resource Room {sampled from each of the following}

1. edu/index.html
2. edu/adminaff/riskmgmt.htm
3. edu/Learn
4. uwworsp.org
5. 1996 Strategic Plan
6. 38 University Goals
7. Revised Strategic Plan (2006, Draft)
8. Academic Staff Assembly (Agenda & Minutes, 1996-2006)
9. Academic Staff Constitution
10. Academic Staff Bylaws
11. Academic Advising & Exploration Center
12. Accreditation Self-Study Reports
13. UW-System Administrative Code
14. A&R Self-Study Report
15. A&R Reports of Academic Programs
16. Campus Climate Study
17. Career Services
18. Plan 2008 for Diversity
19. Plan 2008 Phase 1 Report (2003)

20. Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Policy
21. Faculty Senate (Agenda & Minutes, 1996, 2006)
22. Faculty Constitution
23. Faculty Bylaws
24. Online Fact Book
25. New Freshman Satisfaction Survey
26. General Education Data
27. GERC Full Review
28. Graduate School Graduation Requirements and Policies
29. Strategic Plan of School of Graduate Studies (2005)
30. Graduate Council (Agenda & Minutes, 1996-06)
31. Graduate Faculty Constitution
32. Guiding Principles for Budget Reduction Planning (2003, 05)
33. HawkCard Business Plan (2004-05)
34. International Education Committee
35. Institutional Annual Accountability Report
36. Institutional Research
37. LGBTQA Task Force Report
38. Leadership Development
39. LEARN Center
40. Learning Technology Center
41. Online MBA Program
42. Master Teachers
43. UW-System Mission Statement
44. UW-W Minority/Disadvantaged Students Programs Fiscal Report FY 04-05
45. Office Performance Reports
46. UW-W Annual Report on Program Planning and Review (2003, 04, 05)
47. Peer Coaching Program
48. Professional Development Plan Guidelines
49. Policies and Process for Review of Tenure-Track Faculty (Purple Book)
50. National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education
51. WW-W Residence Hall Association Constitution (Minutes, 2005-06)
52. Search and Screen Policies (Faculty and Academic Staff)
53. Student Affairs Goals (2004-2006)
54. new student programs
55. Request & Approval from UW-System to Offer General Business (BBA); Liberal Studies (BA & BS); Political Science (BA & BS)
56. Whitewater Student Government (Agenda & Minutes, 1996-2006)
57. Whitewater Student Government Constitution
58. Annual Staffing Plans
59. University Handbook

UW-W Internal Academic Review/Assessment Documents {sampled from each of the following}

1. 2006 Self Study
2. 2004 University Report Card
3. Accounting Advisory Board (Membership & Minutes, 2005)
4. American Chemical Association (2003)

5. Plan for Academic Assessment at UW-W (1993)
6. Academic Staff Personnel Policies and Procedures
7. Academic Affairs Staff Meetings (Agendas & Minutes)
8. Academic Support Services: King/Chavez Scholars Seminar
9. Academic Support Services: McNair Scholars Program
10. Summary of Academic Appeals for Extenuating Circumstances
11. Rates of Undergraduate Academic Dismissals (1998-2005)
12. Summary Report on Academic Staff Workload Survey (2005)
13. Report from Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care, Inc (2005)
14. All Assessment (Institutional-Level) Data Sets
15. The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB)
16. Sampling of Audit and Review Reports of Academic Programs (includes departmental academic assessment)
17. Program Improvements Resulting from Assessment (A&R reports 1999-2004)
18. Content Analysis of Recommendations Made by UG and GRAD Audit and Review Committees (1999-2004)
19. Summary of Results of UW-W Campus Summit (2005)
20. Camps and Conferences
21. Campus Inventory of University Engagement and Service for AY 2004-05
22. Comparative Dynamics of NSSE's Student Perceptions of Diversity, Expectations, and Mental Activities (2001-05)
23. Credit Outreach Course Evaluations (Spring and Fall 2005)
24. Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education
25. Council of Social Work Education (undergrad 2002)
26. Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology
27. College of Arts & Communication Advisory Board (Minutes 2005)
28. Communicative Disorders Advisory Board Summary (2000-06)
29. Counselor Education Advisory Council (Members & Minutes 2002-05)
30. Curriculum & Instruction Advisory Board (Members & Minutes, 2005-06)
31. Dean's Council (Agendas & Minutes)
32. Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Policy
33. Face-to-Face Reviews of Faculty and Instructional Staff
34. Faculty Scholarly and Creative Accomplishments (2000-05)
35. General Education Assessment Data
36. Information Technology Advisory Board (Minutes & Accomplishments, 2003-05)
37. Information Technology Industry Consortium (2005-06)
38. Lab Modernization Committees and Projects (1996-2006)
39. Management Computer Systems Advisory Board (Minutes 2001-05)
40. National Association for the Education of Young Children Commission Decision Report(2003)
41. Accreditation Visit Report: National Association of School Psychologists
42. National Council for the Accreditation for Teacher Education (2004)
43. Report of Ad-Hoc Committee on Results of NSSE and FSSE (2003)
44. Department of Occupational and Environmental Safety & Health Advisory Board (Memberships, Minutes, & Report, 2004-05)
45. Office Performance Reports (non-instructional programs)
46. Office of Research and Sponsored Programs PI Client Feedback (2005)
47. Operations Management Advisory Board (Minutes for March 2006)

48. Report of Outside Activities
49. Participant Satisfaction Summaries: World Affairs Seminar (2004 & 2005)
50. Physics Department Advisory Council (Minutes 2003-05)
51. Placement Data: Career Services Reports(1995-1996, 2003-2004)
52. Policies and Process for Review of Tenure-Track Faculty
53. Policies and Process on Authorization, Recruitment, and Initial Appoint of Faculty
54. Policies Relevant to Faculty Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion
55. Post-Tenure Review Process
56. Quality Assessment of Summer Session (1998)
57. Research and Sponsored Programs Funding Reports (1999-2005)
58. School Business Management Advisory Committee (Membership & Minutes, 2005)
59. School Psychology Program Advisory Board (Membership, 2005-06)
60. Teacher/Scholar Task Force Report (1994)
61. UW-W Summer Camps Evaluations (2005)
62. UW-W Alumni Learning Outcomes Survey Results(2005)
63. UW-W Annual Report (2004-05)

II. COMMITMENT TO PEER REVIEW

A. Comprehensiveness of the Self-Study Process

In May 2004, UW-W began the process of preparing for the re-accreditation when the Provost appointed Interim Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and Continuing Education to serve as Campus Coordinator of the self-study process and Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs to serve as Vice Coordinator. In August 2004 the 19-member Self-Study Steering Committee convened to review its role in the self-study process, identify and recruit faculty, administrators, staff, and students to serve on criterion committees, and adopt five goals to guide the self-study process:

- Evaluate the extent to which the University's recently identified "Core Values" and recently revised "Select Mission" permeates its policies, procedures, decision-making and operational activities.
- Develop a detailed profile of the evolution and growth of the institution since its 1996 self-study completed for the North Central Association.
- Identify current and pending challenges that face the University, and initiate organizational mechanisms to address these challenges.
- Affirm the presence of, and further identify, "areas of excellence" with the University.
- Gather information and evidence necessary to evaluate the institution's ability to meet the Higher Learning Commission's five Criteria of Accreditation.

During the 2004-05 academic year, each academic department and non-instructional unit across the campus was asked to complete a Self-Study Questionnaire Report that inquired about resource adequacy, mission and planning processes, student learning and assessment, relationships with external constituencies, and data-driven conclusions about strengths and weaknesses. Each criterion committee hosted a campus-wide lunch hour workshop designed to promote the self-study process, review the new criteria, share preliminary findings, and gather feedback. The six sessions attracted more than 210 attendees. Each criterion committee was given guidelines for drafting chapters and charged with submitting a draft of its chapters. In November, 2005, drafts of the self-study report were shared with the campus and feedback was gathered from faculty, staff, and students through the campus's HLC website and a series of campus-wide workshops. Thus, the self-study report reflects input from the entire university community. The team found every member of the institution's community with whom we interacted knowledgeable about the self-study process and the contents of the report.

B. Integrity of the Self-Study Report

The self-study report addressed the challenges and recommendations identified during the 1996 comprehensive visit, and the Criteria for Accreditation. The Document Room and Digital Resource Library, supported by an institution web site dedicated to the self-study process, provided a full range of materials that supported the evidence contained in the self-study report. Moreover, the self-study report

clearly identified institutional strengths, challenges, and strategic planning initiatives related to the criteria and the four cross-cutting themes: UW-W as a Future-Oriented, Learning-Focused, Connected and Distinctive Organization.

C. Adequacy of Progress in Addressing Previously Identified Challenges

The team considers the response of the organization to the previously identified challenge to be adequate.

D. Notification of Evaluation Visit and Solicitation of Third-Party Comment

Requirements were fulfilled.

Three third-party comments were received. They all dealt with the changes instituted by the previous administration regarding workloads, compensation, and evaluation of academic instructional staff. The Chancellor is aware of the issues and has appointed an ad-hoc committee to suggest possible avenues to resolve the concerns.

III. COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

The team reviewed the required Title IV compliance areas and the student complaint information.

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.

1. Evidence that Core Components are met

Core Component 1a

Review of the documents prepared for the Self-study and interviews with administrators, faculty members, and others on campus confirmed the institution's governance structures are consistent with its role as a master's level institution within the University of Wisconsin System. The Strategic Planning Budget Committee (SPBC) is representative of all constituencies and is the focal point of discussions on the future of the institution. The SPBC has undertaken the difficult task of managing budget reductions in a differential manner so that the integrity of the Strategic Plan has been maintained despite difficult fiscal times over the last three biennial budget cycles. The protection of the academic and student affairs areas in this process has helped to assure that the Core Values of the institution have been honored. The Core Values and Mission of the institution infuse the campus because they receive much public expression in both informal and formal settings such as new student orientation programs and campus publications. Administrative structures are traditional in their scope and include wide representation in the deliberative process both on governance and policy matters. The importance of diversity is articulated clearly in these mission documents and in the administrative structures, including senior administrative positions such as the Assistant to the Chancellor for Affirmative Action, and committees such as the Chancellor's Committee on Disabilities. Several examples of the successful implementation of the commitment to diversity as a governance matter are in place, including the King-Chavez Scholars and McNair Scholars Programs.

The change request "No prior Commission approval required to offer online degree programs" is aligned with the select mission and has been approved by the UW-System and all relevant local governance structures.

Core Component 1b

The recognition of diversity and service is identified prominently in the state designated mission of all public institutions of Wisconsin. The Whitewater campus expands upon this mandated mission with the incorporation of a commitment to these goals by integrating, diversity and disability services throughout the campus, and by supporting integration of these goals into the policies and procedures for all campus offices.

The institution maintains clear expectations for both academic and non-academic programs. This is seen in the Audit and Review Process (ARP) for academic programs, coupled with the Office of Performance Review (OPR) for support units,

which enable the ongoing evaluation of all units and their compliance with the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan. There are several deliberative bodies for various constituent communities on the campus (Faculty Senate, Academic Staff Assembly, and various student organizations) to facilitate broad participation and engagement on important campus issues. External involvement in these deliberations is assured by the existence of a wide array of advisory boards for colleges and programs. Overall, these interlocking and participatory organizations assure that the integrity of the institution is maintained.

Core Component 1c

Evidence of the mission of the institution and its acceptance by all members of the institutional community were present throughout the campus. Faculty spoke of incorporating the mission in their classes (incorporation of diversity issues, the value of research and creative endeavors, professional integrity, etc.) and administrators and staff discussed with pride their services and the manner in which their offices align with the mission. While the institution suffers from a declining base of support from the state, all levels of personnel at the institution, expressed that the institution has continued to meet and surpass the level of service to its many constituents as expressed in the mission statement.

2. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components need organizational attention

Core Component 1a

While the institution's governance mechanisms and practices support its overall mission and core values, it is not always clear whether the structures are fully utilized to attain maximum benefit. Web membership lists for administrative committees, for instance, are several years out of date suggesting that perhaps not all committees are active. In addition, attention needs to be given to assuring that the recommendations of the Audit and Review Process are reviewed annually and that they explicitly are used to help guide program development in all units. The SPBC faces another round of budget reductions and will be hard pressed to maintain the principles that have so effectively guided them in previous reductions. Every effort should be made to do so, even though this might mean applying the principles in differential ways among academic units and among student support units.

Core Component 1b

Although the support for diversity is a major item in the mission and the attempt to address shortcomings in diversity recruitment has drawn great attention, there is still a noticeable lack of diversity, in the faculty, staff, and student body. Reference by members of the staff was made to progress achieved over the past 10 years, and the institution still needs to focus on expanding the representation of diverse groups on the campus.

Core Component 1d

The institution's administration works to promote an effective structure but the (reasonably new) Chancellor is still identifying policies and procedures that impede progress within the organization. The financial future of the institution is of some interest due to decentralized budget management at the college level and the ability to maintain segregated carry-forward funding. While this approach encourages decision making at the unit level the trade off is minimal aggregation of resources at the institutional level and the potential shift of those resources to the UW system. This coupled with recent increases of academic instructional staff loads to 5-4 that is perceived as an overload place great pressure on the Chancellor to address these issues or potentially compromise the good will of the faculty and staff.

Core Component 1e

There is a strong feeling of integrity that pervades the campus from top to bottom. The team found ample evidence to support statements in the self-study report that it adheres to state and federal laws, UW system requirements, and local policies by holding open meetings, establishing and following research protocols, addressing complaints, grievances, and appeals, all in a thorough and consistent manner as laid out in the *University Handbook* and in numerous other documents and policy statements cited in the self-study report. Nonetheless, in a community of scholars it is not surprising that strong-minded individuals among the professorate expressed some dissatisfaction with the administration over the resources the institution had at its disposal and the distribution of those resources. The fact that their voices were and are heard is further evidence of the institution's overall integrity.

3. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components require Commission follow-up.

None

4. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components are not met and require Commission follow-up. (Sanction or adverse action may be warranted.)

None

Recommendation of the Team

Criterion met; no Commission follow-up recommended.

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, improve the quality of its education, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

1. Evidence that Core Components are met

Core Component 2a

The Chief Information Officer (CIO) and the University Technology Committee (UTC) have developed and periodically updated the *Information Technology Strategic Plan (ITSP)* with built-in flexibility to cope with constant technology changes. The team interviews and interactions with various offices on campus confirm that the institution is up-to-date in renewing/upgrading its technology. However, in order to be better prepared for the anticipated cost increase and to sustain the vision of providing students with "cutting edge" technology in future, there appears to be a need to exert more central coordination and control in selection/purchase, upgrade, and support of technology.

The institution has many state, regional, and national reports available to it that outline expected trends that will impact the institution as it tries to meet the needs of its students and other constituencies as it enters into the 21st Century. This includes the detailed plans set forth by the UW System plan, and the Enrollment Management Plan for the 21st Century. The institution has also developed sources of local information and employs the use of local advisory boards for almost all of its academic and non-academic programs. Local community members serve with the institution's personnel to improve Town-Gown relationships, are full members of search committees to fill administrative and faculty positions, and are surveyed to identify what additional social and entertainment programs interest the local community.

The organization has engaged in several multi-dimensional processes and studies to evaluate its role, position, and capacity in response to market trends and the university system. Evidence of this perspective is the recognition that online degrees allow the campus to expand its offerings while utilizing technology and existing infrastructures already in place. Based on reviewing several documents and discussions with faculty and staff, it is clear that the campus has a clear perspective on its opportunities and has developed strategies to achieve their long-term goals.

Core Component 2b

The institution has demonstrated clearly its ability to plan, respond and implement resource allocation models which align and support educational quality. The broad based strategic planning process, the strategic planning and budgeting committee, and campus involvement on budget reductions are clear evidence that resources are aligned with institutional priorities. This is further demonstrated by the institution's commitment to professional development and information technology resources in a declining resource environment as well as preservation of academic resources.

Professional developments for faculty; such as, the First Year Program for newly hired tenure-track faculty and the Peer Coaching Program, are highly commended by the faculty. It is evident that these programs not only assist new faculties at the beginning of their career but also foster a continued collaboration on pedagogical improvement and academic research after completion of the programs. The institution's commitment and budget priority in maintaining these programs, in light of recent state imposed budget reductions, is remarkable.

While the institution is in the midst of a state-wide diminishment of resources dedicated to higher education, the discussions with all groups indicate that a well determined and reasonably well supported process has been instituted to allow the institution to cope adequately with the declining levels of state support. The core values of the institution have been used to determine areas where budget cutbacks will occur and these cuts have been discussed publicly at many levels of the university. An adjustment in the full time academic instructional staff course loads have been instituted increasing the loads from a 4-4 load to a 5-4 instructional course load along with a change in the compensation levels for full time faculty. The institution has worked to identify "efficiencies" that can be instituted without the loss of services or quality of programs.

The institutional library has taken the necessary steps to guarantee that the collection has stayed current and new materials are purchased and shared with all students at the institution, students at a distance, and throughout the state system.

Several new buildings are planned or are ready to become operational. The administration has been diligent in making sure these facilities are the most up to date both physically and with the best equipment. Future care of these facilities has already been built into the regular budget and they will bring endless benefits to the education of the students.

Core component 2c

The organization integrates multiple evaluation processes into their planning to facilitate planning and continuous improvement goals. Most notable, are the Audit and Review process for academic units and Office Performance Reviews for non-academic units which are completed every five years.

The faculty and academic instructional staff have been able to maintain high quality of instruction and significant scholarship and service in spite of an increased work load. Faculty, instructional staff, and students clearly indicate that the general education program is well-conceived and delivered. Substantive changes have been made in the program in recent years as a direct result of assessment of the program core courses.

Core component 2d

The institution has responded thoroughly and carefully to external budget pressures over the last several years. Despite the unusually high degree of turnover in senior

level positions, the institution has been able to adapt different planning and evaluation processes and maintain momentum in achieving their long-term goals. Creative problem solving, through establishing all materials provided to the team both before arrival and following arrival indicate that the planning is aligned with the mission.

A differential fee structure for first-year student programming/advising, tiered tuition for the online MBA, and technology fees for online courses are evidence of good planning. This planning provides evidence that the institution has been effective at aligning resources to its academic priorities and its select mission.

2. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components need organizational attention

Core Component 2a

The Plan for Academic Assessment at UW-W (1993) has not been evaluated and updated in light of the current HLC expectations. Although significant assessment activities are taking place at the unit level, these activities are uneven; the aggregation, evaluation, and use of these data at the institutional level are minimal. In addition, evaluation of program structure and learning outcomes of all courses in general education as part of the regular review cycle is inadequate.

Core Component 2b

The institution has made great progress in delivering online courses, particularly with the MBA degree program. Title III funds have been used effectively in providing professional development workshops as evidenced by the number of faculty who have placed course materials online. The institution also has provided online access to student services, student records, and library services. Although the institution has the infrastructure in place to offer online degree programs in terms of access to technology, staff support, faculty development activities, and course design opportunities, it recognizes it does not possess the resources to offer all degree programs online immediately. The institution indicated it would concentrate its resources and efforts by offering the BBA, Political Science BA/BS, and Liberal Studies BA/BS degree programs first. Then as faculty learn about designing and implementing from workshops and collaboration with experienced MBA faculty, and the support infrastructure grows to meet the expanding demand it would offer more such programs. The team agrees with this approach and suggests the institution would be served well to create internal business plans for any new online degree offerings that more clearly articulate marketing strategies, timing of revenues and expenses, and the overall agreed upon funding model for emerging technologies.

The institution has increased its capacity of Institutional Research (IR) function to accommodate expanding demands of data for state and federal reports, assessment and evaluation. This added support of IR function has generated ample data and statistical reports that are widely accessible to the campus community. Evidences show that transformation from data to information and knowledge starts to take place

in areas of student learning outcomes assessment and program evaluation. However, the maturation of this process needs continued institutional support and nurturing.

The new Student Center plans do call for a phased removal of the older section of the Center as a new portion is built on the site. Many student complaints were heard that this was not deemed to be the best solution since many of the services housed at the Center will have to be relocated for construction to take place. There were also comments that the students believed the current facility was adequate to provide for the needs of students and these new projects would stretch the resources of the students and the institution unnecessarily. The institution needs to make sure that alternative scenarios are discussed adequately with students and that the student's concerns and views are addressed effectively.

Core Component 2c

The overall institutional plan for academic assessment has not been updated in more than 13 years. Assessment at the unit level is systematic but assessment at the campus level is uneven and inhibits the institution from making continuous improvements at the institutional level. However, there is ample evidence that assessment data have been used in general education and other programs to drive curricular and program changes.

Core Component 2d

There were a few occasions that did not indicate that sufficient discussions had been held with the faculty to share all the information regarding the budget situation facing the institution. There is considerable concern that the faculty support, under this strain of budget cuts, increasing work-load, and higher expectations of research and publication, will begin to erode and cause dissonance among the faculty which could in the long run lead to the institution losing some of its most talented faculty members.

There is a published policy which limits the number of dual-level courses that can be counted toward a graduate degree. The effect on the overall program of having too many of them is to have a weaker program than competitors who have graduate-only level courses in the same discipline. The Graduate Council needs to have a discussion about what really constitutes the difference between a graduate level program and a corresponding undergraduate program how it should ensure that such a difference exists and is maintained.

- 3. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components require Commission follow-up.**

None

- 4. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components are not met and require Commission follow-up. (Sanction or adverse action may be**

warranted.)

None

Recommendation of the Team

Criterion is met; no Commission follow recommended

CRITERION THREE: STUDENT LEARNING AND EFFECTIVE TEACHING. The organization provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

1. Evidence that Core Components are met

Core Component 3a

The institution, at the program level, has demonstrated a history of using direct and indirect measures in assessing student learning outcomes and there is ample evidence that the results of such assessment are widely shared with the campus community. Some curriculum and program changes in select units, based on assessment data, are evident. The team concluded that the Institution has, and will continue to fulfill its educational mission.

This demonstrated history also provides evidence that online degree programs will be evaluated adequately and the data will be an integral part to making changes in the programs.

Core Component 3b

Teaching is highly valued at the institution. There are strong evidences gathered through interviews with faculty, academic staff, staff, and students that the institution has a long tradition of being a teaching focused institution. In recent years, however, another emphasis has been added to faculty expectations that include more research and peer reviewed publications. The institution, in light of shrinking state support, has provided resources that help faculty to manage this added requirement. The team concluded that the institution remains successful in student learning and effective teaching and that these attributes will carry forth in the online degree programs.

Core Component 3c-3d

The institution has provided students with an excellent learning environment that promotes effective learning and teaching. It is evident that, from when the students first set foot on campus to graduation, the Institution has provided, within its budget limitations, many valuable services and programs designed to help student success. Examples of such programs include student orientation to career/placement services, library services, and technology support/upgrades. Specifically, conversations with students revealed that they value the quality of teaching they receive, both in their areas of specialization and in general education. Equally, conversations with faculty and with academic program leaders underscored evidence in the self-study that the quality of instruction is a high priority for faculty. Indeed, concerns expressed to the team about teaching loads or about pressure to publish and/or present research related directly to their ability to be effective instructors. The team concluded that the institution has provided, and is in the position to continue to provide environment and services that foster effective learning and teaching whether using traditional or online delivery modes.

2. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components need organizational attention

The institution, with its success in collecting and analyzing student learning assessment and program evaluation data, has made changes in areas such as general education core courses. However, the team observed that such changes, although data driven were not consistently present across programs. The institution should focus more on using assessment and evaluation results in all program areas that have direct impact on student learning. Furthermore, assessing student learning should be fostered as an institutional culture in addition to satisfying specific regional/national accreditation demands.

It is widely perceived by the faculty and, especially by, the academic instructional staff that the current reward system has gradually shifted its emphasis from mostly teaching focused to more research focused. Teaching loads appear to be high compared to other research focused institutions within the UW-System. The institution needs, in consultation with faculty and academic instructional staff, to revisit its "niche" in the UW system, identify additional efficiencies, and find ways to balance its desire to contribute to scholarship across the disciplines and maintain its long tradition of teaching excellence.

3. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components require Commission follow-up.

None

4. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components are not met and require Commission follow-up. (Sanction or adverse action may be warranted.)

None

Recommendation of the Team

Criterion is met; no Commission follow recommended.

CRITERION FOUR: ACQUISITION, DISCOVERY, AND APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE.

The organization promotes a 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 Core Components are met

Core Component 4a

Review of documents and interviews with faculty, academic instructional staff, administrative staff, and students validate the institution's Core Value that it is committed to "the pursuit of knowledge and understanding." This value is articulated and implemented in a variety of ways across the institution – in its published statements regarding freedom of inquiry, in its continuing education and educational outreach activities, in the support programs that facilitate student and faculty engagement in research, and in its post-tenure review policies. The institution's change request "No prior Commission approval required to offer online degree programs" in itself is evidence that it values a life of learning for the citizens of Wisconsin.

Core Component 4b

A culture of life-long learning is evidenced by professional development opportunities for faculty, academic instructional staff, and classified staff. A funded plan is in place for all staff development and significant professional development programs are offered to faculty through the Office of Professional and Instructional Development and the Learning Technology Center. In addition, the LEARN Center and Research and Sponsored Programs are commended for the support services they provide to faculty and instructional staff. Finally, there are a number of award programs that demonstrate the value the institution places on the research and creative achievements of the faculty, staff, and students.

The faculty and academic instructional staff have been able to maintain high quality instruction and significant scholarship and service in spite of an increased work load. Faculty publications and increases in external grant funding over the past 10 years demonstrate the high value placed on research and creative activity that is expressed in the statement of Select Mission. The institution's commitment and budget priority in maintaining these programs, in light of recent state imposed budget reductions, is remarkable.

Core Component 4c

The General Education Program aligns the Mission and Core Values of the institution with specific learning objectives and desired outcomes, thereby offering evidence that the institution seeks to provide students with a breadth of knowledge and skills in its educational programs. In addition, the capstone course for the General Education Program, *The World of Ideas*, provides a means of integrating knowledge and skills across content areas covered in other courses.

The institution has defined a “commitment to develop a sense of community, respect for diversity, and global perspectives” as one of its Core Values in support of the UW-W Select Mission. It assesses the relevance of its curricular offerings through an Audit and Review process that links this value to learning goals and objectives that are intended to prepare students to live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society. A review of outcomes of program and course audits confirms that the process has been used successfully to modify curricula in ways that ensure currency and relevancy in these areas. In addition, institutional NSSE findings for students and faculty reveal that the institution is making progress with respect to providing opportunities for students to increase their understanding about multicultural issues.

Core Component 4d

Evidence to support institution’s attention to ensuring that its students, faculty and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly is available in several forms. Policies concerning academic misconduct, appropriate use of technology resources, and ethics are readily available in print and web-based formats. In addition, the institution has processes in place to ensure compliance with federal regulations concerning treatment of human research participants, laboratory animals, and hazardous materials. Finally, policies and procedures related to development and ownership of intellectual property, including patents and copyrights, are widely available.

2. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components need organizational attention

Core Component 4a

The dialogue regarding faculty and academic instructional staff work loads has been significant in recent years, due to the cutbacks in state assistance. The increased load jeopardizes the institution’s ability to carry out the institution’s intent to engage in scholarly activity, including research, scholarship and creative endeavor that support its programs at the associate and baccalaureate degree level, its graduate programs, and its select mission. Therefore, conversation regarding faculty/instructional staff work load should continue with the goal of identifying ways to alleviate this challenge.

Core Component 4b

Although assessment processes relevant to Criterion 4 appear to be in place at the course, and, in some cases, program levels, the institution needs to expand its assessment efforts to include aggregation of data at the macro level. Such efforts would enable the institution to demonstrate that it is able to use assessment data to determine whether institutional outcomes are achieved and whether a need exists to make institution-wide changes to facilitate desired outcomes.

Core Component 4c

The results of the 2005 Campus Climate Survey reveal that some campus groups (including respondents who identified themselves as ethnic minorities, as having a disability, as women, as lesbian/gay/bisexual, and as non-Christian) perceive the institution's climate for diverse groups to be unfavorable. These findings point to a need to intensify efforts across campus to ensure a safe, accessible, and supportive environment for all members of the institution's community.

3. **Evidence that one or more specified Core Components require Commission follow-up.**

None

4. **Evidence that one or more specified Core Components are not met and require Commission follow-up. (Sanction or adverse action may be warranted.)**

None

Recommendation of the Team

Criterion is met; no Commission follow up recommended.

CRITERION FIVE: ENGAGEMENT AND SERVICE. As called for by its mission, the organization identifies its constituencies and serves them in ways both value.

1. Evidence that Core Components are met

Core Component 5a/5d

Interviews with faculty, administrators, alumni, and community partners confirm the institution's stated commitment to service and regional engagement with external constituencies in meaningful ways that are consistent with its mission and core values. The recent Engagement Survey provides evidence of the meaningful links between the institution and the local and regional community. Reports from community partners reveal that these links are mutually beneficial. Students are engaged in internships and other experiential learning opportunities that are connected to their coursework and assist the business community; their service learning activities comprise a significant volunteer effort for local agencies and public service organizations. Institutional personnel serve on advisory boards for businesses and other organizations, and have been active participants in partnerships with community leaders that involve community planning and economic development initiatives such as Whitewater First and the Main Street program. Finally, the rich performing arts programming produced and/or hosted by the institution offers cultural opportunities to the region while giving music, theatre, and dance students significant performance opportunities.

Core Component 5b

Evidence available from interviews with institutional personnel and community partners reveals that the institution has the capacity and the commitment to engage with its identified constituencies and communities. Centers affiliated with the College of Business and Economics, such as the Innovation Service Center, the Small Business Development Center, and the Global Business Resource Center, provide expertise needed to energize and accelerate new and existing businesses. Faculty members in the College of Education engage in research that benefits professionals in the field and they provide professional development workshops for local teachers. In addition, personnel in the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs serve as consultants to local counties and assist them in identifying and securing external funds to support community programs.

Core Component 5c

The institution is responsive to the needs of its community partners. The institution has secured federal funding to support programs such as the McNair Scholars Program, Upward Bound, and Talent Search that help meet educational needs of traditionally underserved populations. In response to the needs of a growing Latino population, the institution has initiated an ESL Learners Program. The World Affairs Seminar, offered to 800-1,000 domestic and international students each summer, is a collaborative effort that assists the local chapter of Rotary to achieve its international mission. The institution is responding to the needs of time and place

bound adults seeking to earn a baccalaureate degree or an MBA through its online distance education opportunities.

2. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components need organizational attention

Core Component 5a

Although the institutional community is engaged with its external constituencies, a mechanism for determining the value added by this activity at the institutional level has not been developed. A decentralized, stakeholder-centered approach dominates engagement efforts, and although this approach allows individual units to respond nimbly to the needs of external groups, it hampers the institution's ability to evaluate and expand upon its effectiveness in service and engagement, especially with regard to student learning. In addition, some members of the campus community perceive an absence of an "enabling body" for engagement activities that could provide a common measure of effectiveness and that could serve as a vehicle for evaluating institutional effectiveness in outreach, service learning, and other engagement initiatives.

3. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components require Commission follow-up.

None

4. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components are not met and require Commission follow-up. (Sanction or adverse action may be warranted.)

None

Recommendation of the Team

Criterion is met; no Commission follow recommended.

V. STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS**A. Affiliation Status**

No Change

B. Nature of Organization

1. **Legal status** No change
2. **Degrees awarded** No Change

C. Conditions of Affiliation

1. **Stipulation on affiliation status**
No change
2. **Approval of degree sites**
No change
3. **Approval of distance education degree**

No prior Commission approval required for delivery of online degree programs.

4. **Reports required** None.
5. **Other visits scheduled** None
6. **Organization change request**

No prior Commission approval required for delivery of online degree programs.

Rationale: The UW-System has adopted the platform "Desire2Learn". UW-W has the infrastructure in place to offer online degree programs in terms of infrastructure, staff support, faculty development activities, and course design opportunities.

D. Commission Sanction or Adverse Action

None

E. Summary of Commission Review

Timing for next comprehensive visit (academic year – 2015-2016)

Rationale for recommendation: There is ample evidence that the institution satisfies the five criteria and has the policies, procedures, infrastructure, and financial resources to fulfill its select mission during the next ten years.

VI. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND EXPLANATIONS

[Optional]