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Preface

University of New Hampshire. Self-Study Steering Committee

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PREFACE

This self-study is intended to serve two interrelated purposes. The first is to assess the University's compliance with the 11 Standards of Accreditation outlined by the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education (CIHE) of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). The second purpose is to advance the University's Academic Plan (<http://www.unh.edu/academic-affairs/pdf/academicplan.pdf>). While an accreditation review occurs once in a decade, strategic planning must be an ongoing process. The Steering Committee did not want the NEASC self-study to be an isolated episode, an exercise unto itself. Rather, to the greatest extent possible, the NEASC self-study has been linked to academic planning. This was both a challenge and a new opportunity.

An Alternative Model

During the academic year 2000-01, the University embarked on a broad-based planning process. (See Standard Two and "Institutional Effectiveness" for more detail.) At the same time, we were reminded that a decennial NEASC self study was due in the fall of 2003. It made sense to somehow link these two efforts. The University's 1993 self-study (available at: <http://www.unh.edu/neasc/index.htm>) followed the "traditional" approach of documenting 11 Standards. CIHE's *Self Study Guide* (p.19) offers an alternative approach:

the Commission recognizes that there may be circumstances when it would be advantageous for an institution to take a different approach. Among these might be the self-study with special emphasis.... Here an institution identifies a limited number of salient and challenging issues currently affecting it and engages in rigorous self-examination with an eye toward enhancing performance in these areas, and thus having a positive impact on its overall effectiveness.

Over the last few years Yale, Bowdoin, Wellesley, MIT, Dartmouth, Northeastern, and UVM have chosen an alternative, focused self-study. This approach offered the hope of tying the NEASC self-study to strategic planning. In August 2001, President Joan Leitzel, the Vice Presidents, the Provost's staff, and a representative from the Faculty Senate met with the Director and Deputy Director of CIHE to discuss the prospect of an alternative self-study. CIHE supported an alternative approach, as long as it would advance the University's mission.

The Provost's staff spent the summer of 2001 evaluating the Academic Plan for possible areas of focus. Three areas in the strategic plan were chosen for study: The Undergraduate Experience, Engagement Through Research and Scholarship, and Institutional Effectiveness. While each could stand alone, they are a balanced set. The first two areas form the poles of the University's vision statement: "The University of New Hampshire will be distinguished for combining the living and learning environment of a New England liberal arts college with the breadth, spirit of discovery, and civic

commitment of a land-grant research institution.” In order to achieve this vision, however, UNH must maximize its effectiveness as an organization and culture.

During the fall of 2001, the themes and the alternative self-study process were discussed with the Faculty Senate, the Council of Chairs, the Deans’ Council, and the President’s Staff, all of whom endorsed the format. As part of the strategic planning process, the Provost had organized task forces to study the undergraduate experience and engagement. Several of these task forces were reshaped into NEASC self-study committees during spring 2002. At the same time, an Institutional Effectiveness committee was organized for the first time. The committees were appointed in consultation with a wide range of people, including the Faculty Senate, the PAT/Staff Council President, the Undergraduate Student Body President, the President’s staff, Deans and Directors.

The Committees

Self-Study Steering Committee

Chair: Stephen Hardy – Professor of Kinesiology, Faculty Fellow in Academic Affairs

Ann Weaver Hart - President (ex officio)

Andrew Lietz - Trustee

David Hiley – Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Candace Corvey – Vice President for Financial Affairs

Kevin Charles – Vice President for Student Affairs

Donald Sundberg – Vice President for Research and Public Service

Karol Lacroix – Dean, UNH-Manchester

Bruce Mallory – Dean of the Graduate School

Victor Benassi – Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies

Sally Ward – Professor of Sociology

Michael Merenda – Professor of Management

Julie Williams - Associate VP, Research and Public Service

Roy Torbert, - Professor of Physics

Barbara Krysiak – Associate Professor of Education and Chair of Faculty Senate

Sean Kay – Undergraduate Body President

The Eleven Standards

Victor Benassi – Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies

Stephen Hardy – Professor of Kinesiology, Faculty Fellow in Academic Affairs

Undergraduate Experience Committee:

Chair: Sally K. Ward, Professor of Sociology,

Bryan Ames, Junior Communication Major, student member

Kelly Black, Associate Professor of Mathematics

Donna Brown, Director of Undergraduate Research

Denny Byrne, Director of Campus Recreation

Bill Condon, Professor of Animal and Nutritional Sciences

Val Harper, Associate Professor, Library

Gavin Henning, Director of Assessment, Office of Student Life

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Ted Howard, Professor of Forestry and Director, Center for International Education
Anne Lawing, Senior Vice-President of Student Affairs
Pam McPhee, Director, Browne Center
Bob Mennel, Professor of History and Director of Honors Program
Susanne Paterson, Assistant Professor of English, UNH-Manchester
Mark Rubinstein, Vice Provost for Academic Achievement and Enrollment Management
Janet Sable, Professor of Recreational Management and Policy
Marty Scarano, Director of Athletics
Judy Spiller, Associate Provost for Academic Achievement and Support
Katie Whittemore, Sophomore English/IA Major, student member

Engagement Through Research and Service

Co-Chair: Julie Williams, Associate VP, Research and Public Service
Co-Chair: Roy Torbert, Professor of Physics
Eleanor Abrams – Associate Professor of Education
Mike Gass – Professor of Kinesiology Karen Graham – Professor of Mathematics
Marc Hiller – Associate Professor of Health, Management, and Policy
Ginger Lever – Director of Enrollment Management and College Relations, UNHM
Bruce Mallory - Vice Provost and Dean, Graduate School
John Pike – Dean and Director of Cooperative Extension
Bill Ross – Director of Special Collections, Dimond Library
Jim Varn – Assistant to the Provost

Institutional Effectiveness

Chair: Michael Merenda - Professor of Management
Thomas Ballestero – Associate Professor of Civil Engineering
Victor Benassi – Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies and Professor of Psychology
David Butler – Assistant VP of Human Resources
Pam Dinapoli – Assistant Professor of Nursing and Member of the Graduate Council
Taylor Eighmy – Research Professor of Civil Engineering
Allison Grappone – Undergraduate student, Whittemore School of Business and Economics
John Griffith – Assistant VP for Financial Planning and Budget
Linda Hayden – Assistant Director of Campus Recreation
Karol Lacroix - Dean UNH-Manchester
James McCarthy – Dean of the School of Health and Human Services
Leigh Anne Melanson – Assistant Provost for Academic Administration
Gay Nardone – Associate Professor and Chair of Theater and Dance
Peter Pekins – Professor of Natural Resources
Dan Reid – Associate Professor of Decision Sciences

In May 2002, the area committees received their general charges, as follows:

The Undergraduate Experience

- **Greater Expectations:** Examine the existing learning goals, attitudes, and behavior of UNH undergrads; recommend ways to elevate and clarify goals for all students.
- **Greater Integration:** Describe and appraise how well we integrate learning across all environments from classroom to lab, dorm, playing fields, internships and beyond, from the first year to graduation. This will include identifying the key change agents at UNH. Evaluate opportunities to improve the integration of General Education, International Education, and Undergraduate Research. Develop other recommendations for better integration of learning.
- **Greater Clarity In Assessment:** Recommend measures and a structure for assessing the integrated UG Experience, in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

Engagement Through Research and Scholarship

- Describe and appraise funding/student involvement/ productivity related to engagement
- Identify UNH's key constituent groups
- Determine how well we engage them
- Develop measures that assess our impact on above groups

Institutional Effectiveness

- Evaluate the strategic planning process
- Lay the framework and criteria for a major 5th year review of the new budgeting system, Responsibility Centered Management (RCM).
- Examine how well each Responsibility Center (RC Unit) is using assessments and planning to drive the budget.
- Examine developments in student learning assessments and their integration into curriculum planning.
- Lay the groundwork for a standing committee on Institutional Effectiveness.

These charges represented general targets, since the University was clearly at different stages of development in each area. For instance, General Education committees had for years monitored some aspects of the undergraduate experience, but efforts to examine Engagement had been minimal until the fall of 2001. While assessments had been ongoing throughout the Schools and Colleges, no formal mechanism had existed at an institutional level evaluate effectiveness.

During the summer of 2002 the Provost's staff developed a web site dedicated to the NEASC Self-Study (<http://www.unh.edu/neasc/index.htm>). This was used to post information (such as the committee rosters and charges), to display electronic drafts of the self-study, announce meetings and forums, and host an on-line survey.

The Eleven Standards: An Alternative Timetable

At the suggestion of Charles Cook, Executive Director of the CIHE, preparation of the 11 Standards report was streamlined, in order to avoid doing two comprehensive self-studies. Two members of the Provost's staff took on this task, understanding that the Steering Committee would insure a wide review of the draft. The Steering Committee

also believed that if the true focus of the Self-Study was to be on the three “areas,” it was necessary to address the Eleven Standards well in advance of the team visit in October 2003. In consultation with NEASC and with Dr. David Roselle, Chair of the Visiting Team and President of the University of Delaware, it was agreed that a small subcommittee of the Visiting Team would visit the campus in early May 2003 to review the University’s compliance with the Eleven Standards.

During the summer of 2002, all Vice Presidents, Deans, and Directors submitted information pertinent to the 11 Standards; this provided the basis for a draft, which was reviewed by the Steering Committee in early February and distributed to the campuses. The Steering Committee held a series of open forums on the Eleven Standards in February, revised the report and posted a final draft on the web site. The Eleven Standards Self Study was sent to NEASC in late March 2003.

From Visitors to Consultants

At the first meeting with NEASC (August 2001), members of the Steering Committee outlined a desire to make the alternative self-study a more consultative process by seeking input from the Visiting Team early in the self-study process rather than at the end. Charles Cook agreed and promised to collaborate in the selection of the visiting team. The University recommended that the visiting team include an expert in each of the three areas of focus: undergraduate experience, engagement, and institutional effectiveness.

In October 2002, the Steering Committee met via videoconference with President Roselle. The discussion focused on the University’s vision for a different kind of self-study, including the ways in which the area committees would advance strategic planning. President Roselle supported both the alternative timetable and the consultative model. The videoconference presented a model for efficient interaction with other members of the visiting team. The plan was that each area committee would consult with the expert during the self-study, thereby improving both the self-study and the quality of the team visit. Each consultant would also lead an area group during the October team visit.

In the ideal model, the consultants would have been able to help the area committees develop strategies for data collection. For several reasons, initial contact with the consultants occurred too late for that. The “Engagement” committee made initial contact (with Dr. Lorilee Sandmann) in December 2002. The Undergraduate Experience and Institutional Effectiveness Committees made initial contact (with Dr. Michael Flusche and Dr. Beverly Swan) in January 2003. All three were enthusiastic about the alternative model. It was clear that during the next few months they could assist the committees in the appraisal and projection phases of self-study. At the same time, they could get better oriented to the University, which would make the October team visit more productive.

Timetable

August 2001	Meet with NEASC on Self Study (SS) design
September 2001	Provost's staff communicates with key constituencies about the options for SS, especially the possible link between the strategic plan and SS.
October 2001	Make decision on SS approach NEASC SS Workshop at UNH on 10/25, 10/26
November 2001	Provost's staff meets with UNH-M faculty to discuss SS
February 2002	Provost's staff begins to line up members of SSTF and its subcommittees
Spring 2002	Complete line up of committee members. 1-2 meetings of Area Committees to outline info to be gathered for Fall meetings. Work with NEASC to secure Chair of Visiting Team, President David Roselle of Delaware. Steering Committee chair provides NEASC update to Faculty Senate
Summer 2002	Provost's staff begins to gather info on 11 Standards and for Area Committees First formal meeting of Steering Committee
Sept-Nov 2002	Area Committees conduct research via documents and interviews Provost's writing draft of 11 Standards Steering Committee videoconference with David Roselle; work with NEASC to secure consultants for visiting team
December 2002 - January 2003	Steering Committee Chair provides NEASC update to Faculty Senate Area Committees complete research and make contact with "Consultant" from NEASC Visiting Team Provost's staff completes draft of 11 Standards
February 2003	Steering Committee circulates a draft of 11 Standards to UNH community and holds forums. Area Committees consult with NEASC Visiting Team members and submit drafts of reports to Steering Committee
March 2003	Steering Committee circulates drafts of Area reports to UNH community and begins forums Area Committees continue consulting process Final Report on 11 Standards sent to NEASC Circulate Public Disclosure Statement about 11 Standards and visit
April - May 2003	Steering Committee continues open forums on Area draft reports Area Committees continue consulting process Small NEASC team on campus to review 11 Standards, May 1 and 2
June 2003	Committees revise drafts based on feedback and circulate for comment
Summer 2003	Provost's staff revise and edit reports into a single document for review by Steering Committee
August 2003	Send final Self Study to NEASC Circulate Public Disclosure Statement
Oct 19-22, 2003	Full NEASC Team visit (to focus only on the 3 defined areas of study)