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### University of New Hampshire NEASC self-study report 2003. Part 2: The area reports. Preface

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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 an opportunity.

### **An Alternative Model**

During the academic year 2000-2001, 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 our decennial NEASC self study was due in the fall of 2003. It made sense to 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. Hence, the third area of focus – Institutional Effectiveness.

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 constituents, 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 (until July 2003)

Candace Corvey – Vice President for Financial Affairs

Kevin Charles – Interim Vice President for Student Affairs

Mark Rubenstein – Vice President for Student and Academic Services

Donald Sundberg – Vice President for Research and Public Service (until July 2003)

John Aber - Vice President for Research and Public Service (as of July 2003)

Karol Lacroix – Dean, UNH-Manchester

Bruce Mallory – Dean of the Graduate School; Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs (as of July 2003)

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 (2002-03)

Chris Kean - Undergraduate Body President (2003-04)

### *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

*Preface*

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  
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 President for Student and Academic Services  
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, various university 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 to evaluate effectiveness at an institutional level. Each committee considered the general charges and adapted them in consultation with the Steering Committee. For instance, the "Engagement" committee decided that their time and effort should focus on an analysis of the university's current efforts (i.e., the first bullet listed above). Similarly, the Institutional Effectiveness and Undergraduate Experience committees decided to focus their analysis on particular segments of the university. These choices are explained in the individual reports.

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 undertook 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 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. This report is available at: <http://www.unh.edu/neasc/finalreport.htm>. A small team, consisting of Dr. David Roselle (University of Delaware), Dr. Lesley Flemming (Ohio University), and Mr. Stephen Lenhardt (University of Massachusetts System), visited the Durham and Manchester campuses April 30-May 2, 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, 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 their 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 to occur. 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. We are especially grateful to these individuals for sharing their time and expertise. They have been models of collegial governance and oversight.

### Disclosure and Consultation

The Steering Committee and the Area Chairs have endeavored to make the self-study as open and consultative as possible. This was particularly important if the goal was to advance the strategic plan. The following timetable includes many of those efforts. Others are described in the area reports.

YEAR	MONTH/DAY	ACTIVITY
2001	August 15	President’s Staff meets with CIHE Director and Deputy Director to discuss self-study
	September 24	Provost’s staff presents self-study options and possible area themes to Deans and Chairs
	October 1	Provost’s staff presents possible area themes to President’s Staff and Faculty Senate Agenda Committee (reported to Faculty Senate meeting of October 8)
	November 28	Provost’s staff presents possible area themes to faculty and staff at UNH-Manchester
2002	April 8	Self-Study Chair reports to full Faculty Senate, including a solicitation for committee membership
	May 16-24	First meetings of Area Committees
	August 23	SS Chair meets with Student Body President to provide update and to solicit student representatives
	August 28	Steering Committee meeting
	October 15	Letter from President and Provost to all faculty, staff, and students announcing the launch of web site dedicated to NEASC Self Study.
	December 3	SS Chair provides update to full Faculty Senate
	December 12	Steering Committee Meeting
2003	January 27	Engagement Co-Chairs meet with Faculty Senate
	February 4	Steering Committee meeting
	February 11	Email and hard copy letter to all UNH faculty, staff, students reporting progress on self-study, directing readers to web site, and announcing open forums on 11 Standards report
	February 19, 26,	Open forums on Durham and Manchester campuses for

	27	discussion of 11 Standards draft report
	March 7	Steering Committee meeting
	March 12	Email and hard copy letter to all UNH faculty, staff, and students reporting progress on self-study, directing readers to web site, and announcing forums on “areas of focus” reports.
	March 26	Open forum on Manchester campus for discussion of drafts of area reports.
	April 8, 16, 24	Open forums on Durham campus for discussion of drafts of area reports.
	April 18, 25	Notices in Campus Journal announcing NEASC Team Visit of May 1-2 and directing readers to web site.
	May 2003	Announcement published in UNH Magazine (received by all alumni), outlining NEASC accreditation process, directing readers to web site, and soliciting comments to NEASC.
	July 2003	Email and hard copy letter to all UNH faculty and staff, reporting progress on self-study, directing readers to web site for revised drafts of “areas of focus” reports.
	August 2003	Announcement published in campus journal and state newspapers, outlining NEASC accreditation process and October team visit, directing readers to web site, and soliciting comments to NEASC.

The Steering Committee is pleased to present the area reports that follow. They represent thousands of hours of committed work. While the reports vary slightly in format, each contains an introduction that ties the NEASC effort to the academic strategic plan. We are confident that the documents, especially the appraisals and projections, will help to advance the institution in line with that plan