

ASSURANCE SECTION

REPORT OF A COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION VISIT

TO

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan

October 18-20, 2010

FOR

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

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I. CONTEXT AND NATURE OF VISIT

A. Purpose of Visit

An eleven-person team conducted a comprehensive evaluation of Western Michigan University for continued accreditation.

B. Organizational Context

Founded in 1903 to train teachers in the western part of the state, Western Michigan University (WMU), the last of Michigan's four normal schools began offering Bachelor of Arts degrees through the University of Michigan in 1913 and independently in 1918. The North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools (NCA) first accredited WMU in 1915 and in 1916 WMU was accredited by what was to become the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education.

WMU awarded its first Bachelor of Science degree in 1924 and in 1927 renamed itself Western State Teachers College. It was renamed Western Michigan College of Education in 1941. Eleven years later the State Board of Education authorized it to award master's degrees independently. In 1955 the institution changed its name to Western Michigan College in recognition of the growing breadth of academic programs. Two years later the State of Michigan recognized Western Michigan College at the State's fourth public university and the institution took the name of Western Michigan University.

By the mid 1960's WMU was offering its first doctoral degrees in educational leadership and sociology, had established regional education centers in Grand Rapids and Benton Harbor, and had initiated women's intercollegiate sports. During the 1970's, the College of Fine Arts and the College of Health and Human Services were established. In 1975 the faculty voted for unionization with the American Association of University Professors as the collective bargaining agent.

In 1994 the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching classified WMU as a Doctoral I institution. In 2000 it was classified as a Doctoral/Research University Extensive, and in 2005 as a research university with high research activity. A Phi Beta Kappa Chapter was established in 1997.

Continued accreditation was granted most recently in 2001 with a mandated focused visit in 2005. Accreditation is limited to degree programs offered in the State of Michigan, St. Louis, MO, the MBA program offered in Singapore, and the Master of Arts in Criminology, Law and Public Policy offered as a dual degree with the University of Malta in Valetta.

According to its Evaluation Summary Sheet, WMU's headcount enrollment includes 17043 full time undergraduate students, 2500 part time undergraduate students, 1024 full time graduate students, and 3978 part time graduate students. The university has

148 baccalaureate programs, 7 certificate programs, 68 master's programs, 1 specialist program, and 29 programs that lead to the doctor's degree. The university has 51 departments in seven degree granting colleges. Its campuses encompass more than 1,200 acres and 151 buildings

(The information in this section is based on the spring, 2010 Self Study Report, the 2010 Executive Summary of the Self Study Report, and the Evaluation Summary Sheet.)

C. Unique Aspects of Visit

None

D. Sites or Branch Campuses Visited

Grand Rapids, Beltline facility ("The Graduate Center—Beltline")

Grand Rapids, Downtown facility ("The Graduate Center—Downtown")

Battle Creek, Downtown facility ("The Kendall Center")

Battle Creek, College of Aviation facility: classroom building, administrative building, hangars, workshops, simulators.

E. Distance Education Reviewed

Western Michigan University has had an off-campus presence for over 100 years, beginning in Battle Creek. In the two years prior to the comprehensive visit, off-campus educational offerings have been organized into Extended University Programs, or EUP. This office has administrative responsibilities for courses and programs offered online, hybrid (some face to face), two-way TV, and at off-campus face-to-face sites (Battle Creek, Grand Rapids, Lansing, Muskegon, Southwest, and Traverse City). Team members visited Grand Rapids, Battle Creek, viewed two online courses, and spoke with EUP staff in Kalamazoo and at the sites.

Administrative responsibilities include needs assessment, student services, facilities management, payment of instructors, and marketing. Academic content and program and course selection are the responsibility of WMU academic departments. EUP and campus faculty development staff assist WMU faculty in developing online versions of coursework.

EUP courses have a unified tuition structure (that is, the same for in-state and out of state students), adjusted for WMU traditional students simultaneously taking online courses. Revenues and fees that flow through EUP pay for staff, facilities, and student technology (computer labs) at each location. Academic departments share in the revenue stream. The revenue sharing system has been arranged between the Associate Provost for Extended University Programs and the Provost; it has been changed in the recent past and may be adjusted in the future, to provide appropriate incentives. Conferencing, or offering WMU off-site facilities and services to outside businesses and organizations, is kept financially separate but is managed in order to reinforce community involvement and the WMU educational mission.

In Fall 2010, most EUP programs are at the graduate level, but the majority of student credit hours (SCH) is at the undergraduate level, due to significant undergraduate enrollment in individual online courses: 1,734 undergraduate headcount online and only 200 at off-campus sites; graduate enrollment is 470 online and 1,435 at off-campus sites. Undergraduates online take an average of 4.4 credits (7,644 online credit hours); graduate students online take an average of 3.3 hours (1,565 online credit hours). Grand Rapids (Beltline and Downtown combined) is the most accessed off-campus physical site for graduate programs, with 3,841 graduate credit hours; i.e., 50% of all graduate credit hours.

F. Interactions with Constituencies

President
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Member, Board of Trustees (2)
President, Western Student Association (WSA)
Vice President, WSA
Political Affairs Chair, WSA
Diversity Chair, WSA
Sustainability Chair, WSA
Speaker of the WSA Senate
Vice Provost, Institutional Effectiveness
President, Faculty Senate
Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion
Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students
Vice President for Academic Operations and Chief Information Officer
Vice President for Research
Registrar
Director, Student Financial Aid
Associate Vice President for Student Affairs
University Ombuds
Director, Internal Audit
Director, Environmental Safety and Emergency Management
Emergency Management Administrator, Department of Public Safety
Chief and Director, Department of Public Safety
Director, Residence Life
Associate Director, Transfer Admissions
Associate Provost for Extended University Programs
Executive Director of Technology, Extended University Programs
Vice Provost for Academic Operations and Chief Information Officer
Associate Provost for Assessment and Undergraduate Studies
Executive Director of University Relations
Associate Vice President for Institutional Equity
Executive Assistant to the President
Deputy General Counsel, HIPPA Coordinator

Director, Human Resources
Immigration Officer, Haenicke Institute for Global Education
Coordinator, Research Compliance, Office of the Vice President for Research
Vice President, Legal Affairs and General Counsel
Open meeting with staff (71 attendees)
Open meeting with faculty (30 attendees)
Open meeting with students (40 attendees)
President, American Association of University Professors and Associate Professor,
Literary Studies
President, Professional Instructors Organization
President, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees
President, Michigan State Employees Association
Officer, Police Officers Association
Member, AFSCME
Vice President, Teaching Assistants Union
Dean, College of Education and Human Development
Director, Academic Collective Bargaining
Director, Staff Labor Relations
Director, Intercollegiate Athletics
Dean, Lee Honors College
Vice Provost for Budget and Personnel
President, Faculty Senate
Vice President, Faculty Senate, and Professor of Aviation
Immediate Past President, Faculty Senate and Professor, Biological Sciences
Faculty Senate Directors (3)
Vice Provost, Institutional Effectiveness
Vice Provost for Strategic Enrollment Management
Associate Provost for University Assessment and Undergraduate Studies
Associate Provost for Extended University Programs
Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion
Secretary to the Board of Trustees
Associate Vice President for Institutional Equity
Member, Michigan House of Representatives
State Senators (2)
Associate Vice President for Research
Members (2), Board of Trustees
Associate Vice President for Budget and Planning
Executive Director, Career and Professional Development, Student Employment
Services
Director, Residence Life
Director, University Recreation
Director, Dining Services
Director, Office of Student Conduct
Director, Parent and Family Programs
Director, Division of Student Affairs Information Services
Director, Business Operations, Division of Student Affairs

Associate Vice President for Student Affairs; Interim Director, Bernhard Center
Director, Student Activities and Leadership
Professor, Biological Sciences
Professor, Theatre
Professor, Paper and Chemical Engineering
Associate Professor, History
Professor, Marketing
Associate Professor, Teaching, Learning and Educational Studies
Professor, Health and Human Services, Director, Interdisciplinary Health Studies
Professor, History
Associate Professor, Anthropology; Director, Lewis Walker Institute
Professor, Business Information Systems, Director, Undergraduate Business Programs
Dean, College of Fine Arts and Chair, College Assessment Committee
International Student Advocate and Admissions Specialist, Haenicke Institute for Global Education
Director, Graduate Center for Research and Retention, Graduate College
Academic Advisor, College of Arts and Sciences
Director of Advising, College of Aviation
Director of Advising, Haworth College of Business
Director of Advising, College of Education and Human Development
Director of Advising, College of Engineering and Applied Sciences
Director of Advising, College of Fine Arts
Director of Advising, College of Health and Human Services
Director of Advising, Lee Honors College
Director of Advising, Intercollegiate Athletics
Director of Exploratory Advising, Center for Academic Success Programs
Director of Advising, General University Studies
Chair, Comparative Religion
Chair, Computer Science
Chair, Dance
Chair, Geography
Chair, Spanish
Chair, Foreign Languages
Chair, Marketing
Chair, Health, Physical Education and Recreation
Director, School of Communication
Chair, Military Science and Leadership
Chair, Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology
Chair, Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering
Chair, Aviation
Chair, Chemistry
Chair, Philosophy
Chair, Statistics
Chair, Political Science
Chair, Physics

Chair, Sociology
Chair, Psychology
Chair, History
Chair, Anthropology
Chair, Biological Sciences
Chair, Blindness and Low Vision Studies
Chair, Speech Pathology and Audiology
Chair, Electrical and Computer Engineering
Chair, Finance and Commercial Law
Chair, Management
Chair, Business Information Systems
Chair, Accounting
Director, School of Social Work
Director, School of Music
Director, Bronson School of Nursing
Director, PhD Program in Interdisciplinary Health Sciences
Director, Walker Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnic Relations
Vice Provost for Academic Operations and Chief Information Officer
Director, Information Technology Policy and Communications
Library: Associate Dean for Public Services and Technology
Library: Associate Dean for Collections and Technical Services
Library: Director, Operational Services
Dean, University Libraries
Executive Director of Technology, Extended University Programs
Manager, Instructional Services, Office of Information Administration
Instructional Designers
Professors (of online courses; both full-time WMU) (2)
Director of Marketing, EUP
Assistant Director WMU Grand Rapids
Director WMU Grand Rapids
Director, WMU Battle Creek
Assistant Director, WMU Battle Creek
Chair, Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (and Associate Professor)
Research Compliance Coordinator, Office of the VP for Research
Dean, College of Aviation
Associate Dean, College of Aviation
Chair, Department of Aviation
Representative, First Year Experience Program
Representative, Financial Aid
Representative, Multicultural Affairs
Representative, Disability Services for Students
Director, Center for Academic Success
Registrar
Representative, Admissions
Assoc. Vice President, Facilities Management
Assoc. VP, Budget and Planning

Assoc. VP for Enrollment Management
Assoc. VP for Research
Assoc. VP for Business and Finance
Director of Grants and Contracts
Representatives, Human Resources (2)
Representative, Business Services
Representative, Public Safety
Representative, Logistical Services
Representative, Investments and Endowment Management
Representative, Accounting Services
Representative, Grants and Contracts
Representative, Auxiliary Enterprises
Representative, Office for Sustainability
Representative, Labor Relations
Dean, College of Health and Human Services
State Representatives and Senators
University Assessment Steering Committee
Project Coordinator, Institutional Effectiveness
Professor, College of Aviation
Faculty Specialist II, Communication
Professor, School of Social Work
Professor/Chair of COGE
Associate Provost for Assessment and Undergraduate Studies
Executive Assistant, Office of Information Technology
Associate Professor, English
Doctoral Associate, Student and Leadership Program, Division of Student Affairs
Curriculum and Coordinating Pre-Health Advisor
Professor, Biological Sciences
Director of Graduate Center for Research and Retention
Master Faculty Specialist, School of Nursing
Associate Professor, Education Librarian
Assistant Director, Residence Life
Professor, Business Information Systems and Director, BBA
Associate Professor, Health, Physical Education and Recreation
Professor, Political Science
Director of Business Operations, EUP
Director of Advising, Lee Honors College
Professor, College of Engineering
Faculty Specialist II, School of Music
Professor University Libraries, Chair International Education Council
Executive Director, Sindecuse Health Center
Chair and Program Director, Department of Physician Assistant
Anatomy Instructor, Faculty Specialist II
Director, Nursing
Clinical Faculty Specialist, Occupational Therapy
Director, Office of Faculty Development

Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations; WMU Foundation Executive Director/Secretary
Associate Vice President for Community Outreach
Vice President for Business and Finance and Chief Financial Officer; Treasurer, Western Michigan University Foundation
Associate Vice President for Business and Finance and Controller; Assistant Treasurer, Western Michigan University Foundation; Assistant Treasurer, Western Michigan University Research Foundation
President, Executive Committee Chair, Western Michigan University Foundation Board of Directors
Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations; Western Michigan University Foundation Executive Director/Secretary
Associate Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Associate Dean, College of Aviation
Associate Dean, Haworth College of Business
Associate Dean, College of Education and Human Development; Director, Teacher Education
Associate Dean, College of Engineering and Applied Sciences
Associate Dean, College of Engineering and Applied Sciences
Associate Dean, College of Health and Human Services
Associate Dean and Director of General Studies Advising, Extended University Programs
Dean, Haworth College of Business
Dean, Haenicke Institute for Global Education
Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Interim Dean, Graduate College
Director, Institutional Research
Vice Provost for Academic Operations and Chief Information Officer
Regional Manager, Soil and Materials Engineers, Inc.
Mayor, City of Portage
Vice President, Southwest Michigan First
Manager, Marketing and Communication, Discover Kalamazoo
President, Metropolitan Branch of the NAACP
President, Welsh & Associates
Chief Executive Officer, YWCA Kalamazoo
Executive Director, Kalamazoo Community Mental Health
Principal, Linden Grove Middle School
Executive Director, Kalamazoo Promise
Executive Director, Kalamazoo Community in Schools Foundation
President, Kellogg Community College
President and Chief Executive Officer, Kalamazoo Community Foundation
Director, Kalamazoo Community Planning and Development
Vice President and Senior Economist, W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research
Executive Director, Alumni Relations
7 parents from Parents Association
6 alumni representing alumni executive board

4 legislators (2 state legislators and 2 state senators)
Associate VP for Student Affairs
Associate VP for Student Affairs

G. Principal Documents, Materials, and Web Pages Reviewed

WMU Self Study
Independent Auditor's reports dated September 24, 2008, September 11, 2009
Third party comments provided by the Higher Learning Commission
WMU HLC web site (<http://www.wmich.edu/poapa/accreditation/hlc.html>)
Unit level summary of progress on 2001 HLC Team Report Concerns
Sindecuse Health Center homepage
Public safety homepage
Annual Security Report, dated October 1, 2010
IPEDS/COOL/College Navigator for Western Michigan University
Campus map
Fact Book 2009-2010, Western Michigan University
Facilities Maintenance Analyses including roofs, elevators and chiller/cooling towers maintenance information-provided by Facilities
Budget documents such as retirement and benefit costs, central services charge backs to campus units, university debt service costs/ratios, faculty/instructional costs as a percentage of the general fund operating budget.
WMU 2010/11 Budget Summary (printed copy distributed at the site visit)
October 18, 2010 issue of the *Western Herald*-printed version of the campus newspaper.
Audited Financial statements of University component units for FY 2008 and FY 2009.
Containing Operating Costs Using Sustainable Practices-internal document provided by CFO
Academic Operating Tertiary Indicators provided by the Provost-printed 2/26/2010
Printed Document: Organizational Chart/Services of the Office of the Vice President for Business and Finance
Student Affairs Auxiliaries-Integrated Planning and Budgeting Process-dated May, 2007 with companion documents dated in 2008, 2009 and 2010.
Enrollment Management Plan
Provost's approved plan for distributing 25 faculty and 5 student advisors effective during FY 2011.
Self Study Executive Summary
All previous HLC-WMU reports/communications
First Year Experience awards recognition materials
College of Arts and Sciences Departmental awards recognition materials
Graduate College awards recognition materials
Annual Report on Assessment and Curriculum Change (2008, 2009, 2010)
http://www.wmich.edu/poapa/assessment/Annual_Report_Curriculum_2010.pdf
http://www.wmich.edu/poapa/assessment/Annual_Report_Curriculum_2009.pdf

http://www.wmich.edu/poapa/assessment/Annual_Report_Curriculum.pdf
Office of Institutional Effectiveness Annual Report 2009
http://www.wmich.edu/poapa/reports/IE_AnnualReport_2008-09.pdf

Programs with accreditation
http://www.wmich.edu/poapa/accreditation/WMU_Program_Accreditation.pdf

WMU-AAUP agreement
<http://www.wmich.edu/acb/Assets/pdf/agreement-2008-11.pdf>

WMU-Instructors agreement
<http://www.wmich.edu/acb/docs/Entire-PIO-Agreement-for-Web-Posting.pdf>

WMU-Teaching Assistant agreement
<http://www.wmich.edu/acb/docs/TAU%20Full%20contract%2009-12%20pdf.pdf>

PAR template
http://www.wmich.edu/acb/docs/PAR_2009-2010_announcement.pdf

Academic Program Planning document (2002)
<http://www.wmich.edu/poapa/strategic/newapp.pdf>

Graduate Program Review Recommendation (2006)
<http://www.wmich.edu/provost/AcademicProgramReviews/GPR%20Program%20Degree%20Summary.pdf>

Fast Facts site
<http://www.wmich.edu/about/facts/>

OVPR site – recent awards
<http://www.wmich.edu/research/awards.html#july2009>

Research faculty handbook
<http://www.wmich.edu/research/tools/forms/facultyhandbook.pdf>

IRB training handbook
<http://www.wmich.edu/research/compliance/hsirb/docs/announcementresearchers.pdf>

Research Ethics training
<http://www.wmich.edu/research/compliance/ethics/index.html>

Space Survey manual
<http://www.obf.wmich.edu/grants-contracts/spacesurveydocs/wmu-space-survey-instructions.pdf>

Space Survey general information

<http://www.obf.wmich.edu/grants-contracts/spacesurveydocs/wmu-space-survey-general-information.pdf>

Time and Effort Policy

<http://www.obf.wmich.edu/grants-contracts/docs/time-and-effort-policy.pdf>

Fact Book

<http://www.wmich.edu/ir/factbook.php>

WMU College Portrait

<http://www.collegeportraits.org/MI/WMU>

Assessment Plans and Timeline

<http://www.wmich.edu/poapa/assessment/assess-plans.html>

<http://www.wmich.edu/poapa/assessment/pdf/physics.pdf>

<http://www.wmich.edu/poapa/assessment/pdf/chemistry.pdf>

<http://www.wmich.edu/poapa/assessment/pdf/history.pdf>

<http://www.wmich.edu/poapa/assessment/pdf/polisci.pdf>

<http://www.wmich.edu/poapa/assessment/pdf/accountancy.pdf>

<http://www.wmich.edu/poapa/assessment/pdf/Textileandapparel.pdf>

<http://www.wmich.edu/poapa/assessment/pdf/mechandaeroengpdf.pdf>

<http://www.wmich.edu/poapa/assessment/pdf/acadskillsctr.pdf>

<http://www.wmich.edu/poapa/assessment/pdf/univlibraries.pdf>

University Assessment Steering Committee Annual Report

<http://www.wmich.edu/poapa/assessment/UASC%20ANNUAL%20REP%202010.pdf>

CD containing data on space utilization

Questions the HLC team might ask:

http://www.wmich.edu/poapa/accreditation/Self-StudyReport2010/General_Questions.pdf

Disciplinary Accreditation Reports and Action Memos:

NCATE 2009

NASD 2008

NASM 2004

CACREP 2007

CORE 2008

National Recreation Park Association 2008

Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education 2010

Accreditation Review Commission – Physician Assistant 2010

ABET, Inc. – Computer Science

AACSB – Accounting 2010

LCME information

Career English Language Center for International Student 2010
 International Association for Counseling Services 2009
 NAEYC 2010
 Integrated Planning and Budgeting Process document of Division of Student Affairs
 Auxiliaries
 List of library subscription databases (on web)
 Hand-out: Library services for distance students
 Powerpoint presentation analyzing WMU LibQUAL+ results
 WMU library data reported to the National Center for Education Statistics
 Program review for Business
 AACSB report for Business
 NCATE report for Education
 APA report for Counseling Psychology
 TracDat assessment reporting database
 All web materials (including assessment reports) for Materials Engineering program
 Undergraduate Catalog (including degrees of faculty)
 Graduate Catalog
 AAUP Union Contract
 Walker Institute for Race and Ethnic Relations: Service Learning website
 wmucl.wordpress.com/
 Table: Undergraduate Transfer Applications, Admittance and Enrollment, Fall 2000-
 2009. www.wmich.edu/ir/factbook.php
 Link to table on EUP enrollments.
 cdm15217.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/p15217coll1&C
 ISOPTR=83

II. COMMITMENT TO PEER REVIEW

A. Comprehensiveness of the Self-Study Process

The process for conducting the self-study officially began on October 6, 2008. A steering committee consisting of 19 individuals led the self-study. Nine subcommittees were appointed to address each of the criteria and core components in addition to providing technical and logistical support. More than 100 people were involved in the self-study process as members of the various subcommittees. A list of self-study steering and subcommittee members is provided in the acknowledgements section of the self-study. An organizational chart of Self Study Committee Structure is provided on page 49 in the introductory section of the self-study.

Approximately 115 people on campus provided data for the self-study. A draft of the self-study was made public on February 12, 2010. Public comment was provided through open meetings (February 25 and March 9, 2010), and electronic mail (172 comments were provided by electronic mail).

Third party comment was sought through a variety of means. Targeted groups included WMU students, alumni, donors, K-12 school superintendents, and members

of college advisory boards, the business community, the religious community, area hospitals, vendors, area legislators, service organizations, foundations, community boards. Others contacted were vendors, Michigan university presidents, community college/articulation partners, parents of students, and international partners.

Announcements were made in the *Western Herald* (the student newspaper) and *WMU News* (a publication of the Office of University Relations) in addition to announcements on web sites and contacts with newspapers, radio, and direct mailings.

The above information was provided in the self-study, introduction, pages 48-52.

B. Integrity of the Self-Study Report

The process used to prepare the self-study was inclusive and sought to reach members of the university community, broadly defined. In order to keep the university community apprised of the self-study, the vice provost for institutional effectiveness periodically updated campus groups. In addition, a spreadsheet for tracking data requests, a log of comments on the self study report, and summary notes from steering committee meetings were available on the institutional effectiveness web page (<http://www.wmich.edu/poapa/accreditation/hlc.html>). A series of meetings was held to prepare constituents for the Team visit from mid-August to early October, 2010.

C. Adequacy of Progress in Addressing Previously Identified Challenges

A number of items were identified in the 2001 comprehensive evaluation that needed institutional attention. Among these was the need to establish an office or individual charged with overseeing assessment of student learning, an office or individual being appointed to oversee strategic planning, a person or office being appointed to oversee general education, and instituting an MBA program in Singapore without prior approval from the HLC.

The University has addressed assessment of student learning in a variety of ways, and progress has been made. Details about the steps taken by WMU and progress made related to assessment are described on pages 25-26 of the Self Study and were confirmed through discussions held on campus. Similarly, progress has been made related to the concerns raised about general education.

A focused visit related to strategic planning occurred in 2005. According to the self study, “A fully developed plan, including initiatives, evaluation procedures, and an annual report to the Board, was to be presented to the Board of Trustees during 2005-06, but was not yet complete when she (the WMU president at the time) left her position in 2006” (p. 27). While strategic plans have been completed in various departments, units and divisions (for example, academic affairs), the institution did not have a strategic plan at the time of the current team’s visit, and the team members unanimously agreed that a plan needs to be in place.

Other suggestions and challenges were identified in the 2001 report and have been

addressed by the institution as described in pages 28-46 of the self-study. The team agreed that progress has been made in many areas after reviewing appropriate documents and interviewing faculty, students and staff during the visit to WMU.

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

The team reviewed third party comments from stakeholders. The team concluded that processes are in place to address the issues raised in the third party comments.

The University widely advertised the opportunity to submit third party comments in advance of the team's visit.

III. COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

See Appendix A

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

1a. The organization's mission documents are clear and articulate clearly the organization's commitments.

Since the last accreditation visit, Western Michigan University has developed a mission statement that has been approved by its governing board. As a "student-centered research university," WMU's mission focuses on advancing intellectual inquiry and discovery among its faculty and students and attaining national and international prominence, and it includes nine institutional goals. The mission is prominently displayed on the institutional website as well as in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs.

Colleges and other major units have generated mission statements aligned with the aims embedded in the institutional mission. Every one of the university's academic colleges has adopted a mission statement that is based upon the university's mission statement. For example, the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences asserts that its mission is, in part, "To educate our learning community for life-long excellence in responsible professional leadership. Our primary mission is education for the entire learning community which includes students, faculty, staff and the other constituencies we embrace" (<http://www.wmich.edu/engineer/vision-and-mission.htm>). Other non degree granting units on campus also have adopted mission statements that are consistent with the university's mission. An example is the mission of the Division of Student Affairs, which is prominently displayed on its homepage:

The mission of [Student Affairs](#) is to engage students in learning and personal development. All of the programs and services within the division are intentionally designed to support the academic mission of the University, create and sustain optimal learning environments both in and outside of the classroom and provide appropriate challenge and support for students. A vital component of WMU, the division helps to guide development of students into responsible citizens and future leaders.
<http://www.wmich.edu/studentaffairs/vpsa/index.html>

WMU assures that all of its units and personnel pursue integrity through an array of relevant programming, publications and other resources offered by various offices on campus (e.g., Office of Institutional Equity, Center for the Study of Ethics in Society, Research Ethics Resource Center, Environmental Safety and Emergency Management Office, Office of Student Conduct, Office for the Vice President for Legal Affairs and General Counsel and an independent ombudsman) and appropriate policies and procedures that regularly evaluate people and practices.

1b. In its mission documents, the organization recognizes the diversity of its learners, other constituencies, and the greater society it serves.

Guided by the 2006 Diversity and Multicultural Action Plan, WMU has made strides in advancing diversity including developing housing options for transgendered persons, providing interfaith programming, promoting a senior level administrator to oversee diversity activities, initiating “Everyone Counts” faculty and staff dialogues, providing support for special populations (veterans, low vision and blind students, students who grew up in foster care) and increasing the number of students of color through the Kalamazoo Promise and other incentives. Although these steps are commendable, the institution is reminded to remain vigilant in advancing clear goals related to diversity and establishing rigorous accountability and assessment measures.

The university has made a concerted effort to be more engaged internationally through a variety of initiatives, adding to the diversity and richness of the institutional environment. Perhaps the most prominent activity is the Haenicke Institute for Global Education (HIGE). HIGE, named for WMU’s fifth president Dr. Dieter H. Haenicke, “...promotes and supports efforts towards globalization and internationalization of the academic environment of Western Michigan” (http://international.wmich.edu/component/option.com_frontpage/Itemid,1/). It administers international partnerships, promotes study abroad, provides support for international students, houses an undergraduate major and several minors, supports faculty development, and engages in community outreach (<http://international.wmich.edu/content/view/146/99/>). According to the 2009-2010 Fact Book, WMU had 1,254 international students enrolled representing 90 countries.

Western Michigan University should consider making concerted efforts to advance a diverse and inclusive learning environment by developing mandates and strategies for increasing diversity among students, faculty and staff (including students of the Honors College and the University’s senior leadership); integrating cultural competencies into general education and other learning opportunities across the institution; partnering with community leaders to create an inclusive climate for diverse faculty and staff; tracking the progress and retention of diverse students and faculty; and strengthening pipelines from various regional and urban communities to the campus. Establishing diversity as a key criterion in the hiring and evaluation of faculty, staff and administrators and providing adequate staffing in key diversity

offices are critical next steps to promote a climate of inclusion and diversity as an educational resource.

1c. Understanding of and support for the mission pervade the organization.

Although the mission is clearly visible on the university website and in the graduate and undergraduate catalogs, it was unclear from interviews conducted on campus as to whether widespread understanding of the core values of the institution exists and whether those values guide decision-making and planning processes. We would encourage WMU to make the mission statement a greater topic of conversation, come to a shared agreement on its meaning, review and revise it at regular intervals, and use it to guide the development and implementation of a university-wide strategic plan. The self-study concedes the following: “Actions in support of the mission are evidenced in the WMU budget. Yet---absent an institutional strategic plan with budgeting priorities---these actions exist (sic) largely as a function of cumulative good decisions by numerous constituents” (Self Study introduction, p. 19).

1d. The organization’s governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support processes that enable the organization to fulfill its mission.

Members of the governing board who were interviewed on campus expressed enthusiastic support for the senior leadership of the university. They indicated that they understood the vision that leaders had for the institution, and wholeheartedly supported the development of the university as articulated by senior leaders. Governing board members, however, have not adopted a strategic plan for the university and relied on institutional leaders to map out and interpret future developments for the institution.

A variety of structures and processes enable the institution to work with various constituencies both on and off campus. Among these are faculty, student and staff governance groups. The team learned that senior institutional leaders frequently attend the meetings of the governance groups, such as the faculty senate, to communicate with constituency group leaders as well as to seek their perspectives and input on institutional developments. We also learned from student leaders that institutional leaders were widely accessible and communicated and consulted with them on a regular basis.

1e. The organization upholds and protects its integrity.

Western Michigan University has been diligent in upholding and protecting its integrity. Numerous examples exist to support this conclusion. Among them are the documents and structures in place designed to protect all members of the institutional community including the Student Code, the AAUP Contract, the policies of the Office of Human Resources, and the recertification of the Division of Intercollegiate Athletics by the National Collegiate Athletics Association.

The Research Ethics Center provides support, services and educational experiences for faculty, students and others engaged in research to make sure that appropriate safeguards are in place in the research process. The Center also provides assistance to researchers who have questions or need assistance in ensuring that contemporary standards for research are applied to research projects.

The Center for the Study of Ethics in Society is designed to "...to encourage and support research, teaching, and service to the university and community in areas of applied and professional ethics" (<http://www.wmich.edu/ethics/>). It provides support and assistance to a wide variety of constituents both on and off campus. A notable achievement for Western Michigan University is its student Ethics Bowl team. WMU has been very successful in national Ethics Bowl competitions, placing in the top eight in the 2009 competition.

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

Two matters were identified that need organizational attention. Each of these was identified in the self-study and confirmed by the team's visit to campus.

One, the team believes that the institution's observation on page 13 of the discussion related to Criterion one is correct: "Western Michigan University has created initiatives and polices regarding the protection and support of diversity and/or inclusion. However, data are not readily available which provide information as to how effective or wisely used these opportunities, practices, and polices are." The team recommends that the university undertake appropriate steps to determine the effectiveness of these practices. If it is learned that these practices have not had the desired effect, then the team recommends that steps to be taken to insure greater effectiveness of such practices.

Two, the team agrees that the institution's conclusion on page 19 of the discussion related to Criterion one is accurate: "Actions in support of the mission are evidenced in the WMU budget. Yet---absent an institutional strategic plan with budgeting priorities—these actions exists (sic) largely as a function of cumulative good decisions by numerous constituents." Strategic planning will be addressed in the commentary on Criterion Two, but the team agreed that a wider understanding of institutional priorities is necessary. That can be achieved by a more common understanding of the institution's mission and priorities. We urge the university to take steps to communicate and discuss its mission, goals, and priorities with appropriate constituencies to deal with this self-identified concern.

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.)

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

2a. The organization realistically prepares for a future shaped by multiple societal and economic trends.

For most of the past decade Western Michigan University has been faced with financial challenges due to reduced state of Michigan real dollar appropriations in addition to increased operational and faculty/staff costs as it works to accomplish its mission. The economic downturn for the state of Michigan has resulted in state revenue declines that have in turn meant major budget reductions for the colleges and universities within Michigan.

In 1980, the State provided approximately 72% of the University's general fund support. By 2009, state support within the general fund had fallen to 36%. Western Michigan University has had state budget appropriation reductions since 2002 of approximately \$16 million from a base appropriation base of \$125 million to \$109 million (FY 11) i.e., a reduction of 12%. The institution has backfilled this lost funding with tuition and fee increases. Additionally, they have funded faculty and staff salary increases and other cost increases/new initiatives with tuition increases, enhanced energy efficiencies, cost reductions/savings, and reallocations.

The result of state budget cuts was a budget deficit in FY 2008 of \$8 million that has been fully corrected in FY 2011 by not filling vacant faculty and staff positions and other resource allocation adjustments throughout the institution. Tenured and tenure track faculty positions were reduced from a high of 755 in fall 2004 to 694 in fall 2009 (Source: Provost Office Academic Operational Tertiary Indicators). In addition, a number of temporary faculty have not been reappointed.

From an enrollment high of 29,732 in fall of 2002 to a low of 24,433 in 2007, the campus also found itself having to replace tuition lost from the enrollment drop. As identified in the budget planning process, enrollment increases have become a strategy to maintain financial strength. Fall 2010 enrollment of 25,045 headcount students was reported to the HLC site team. The University is planning on an enrollment growth of around 2% until it reaches 26,500 students—a number that is considered as a “budgeting” number.

The institution plans on restoring 25 faculty positions each year for five years beginning in FY 2011 budget (ending June 30, 2011.) Five academic advisors will also be added and are budgeted in FY 2011. The team's assessment is that this is an achievable budget planning number as demonstrated in several documents distributed by both the Provost and Vice President for Business and Finance/CFO.

However, Western Michigan University remains committed to the goals of being affordable and accessible to the majority of individuals interested in pursuing a higher education degree. Enrollment increases of traditional freshmen students to generate additional resources have been sporadic with fall 2009 and fall 2010 at lower levels than a decade ago. This may be reflective of the fact that the numbers of traditional

age students in the region that the institution traditionally draws from has decreased in the past decade as well. As the University sets tuition and fees and room and board costs, it continues to be mindful of its commitment to access and affordability. This commitment is evidenced in the fact that WMU's resident undergraduate lower division tuition ranks 10th in the state out of 15 public universities.

The budgetary situation has posed significant challenges to the organization as it has goals to maintain educational programs, maintain and expand student support services, maintain and improve an extensive physical plant, and cover fixed institutional costs. There have been several years in which no funds have been provided for faculty and staff salary increases. Thus, faculty contract mandated salary increases of over 3% per year have come from the tuition increases, enhanced energy efficiencies, cost reductions/savings, and reallocations.

2b. The organization's resource base supports its educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

Western Michigan University's budget demonstrates an understanding that the student will bear more cost for education as State support continues to decline. The University's future financial well being will rely on student recruitment and retention with ongoing efforts to enhance student success while keeping the cost of higher education affordable. The Office of Enrollment Management developed a recruitment plan in 2008-09 to address these challenges.

Evidence of campus commitment to student success is found in the Western Edge (fall 2007) student success plan. The Western Edge has five key components that are designed to reward good academic behavior and encourage persistence leading to graduation in four years. The Western Edge combines scholarship support with academic advising, learning opportunities, and course availability to guarantee graduation in a timely manner.

Admissions counselors now have target numbers and the interim vice provost for enrollment management launched a Strategic Enrollment Management committee (SEM) in November 2009. The committee is charged with the continued strategic improvement and refinement of WMU's enrollment management process.

In addition, given the shrinking numbers of potential students graduating from local and state high schools, it has been recognized that any long-range planning at WMU must include plans to attract more out-of-state students. In order to expand WMU's boundaries and recruit more widely, two specific scholarships for out-of-state students have been created. Both the WMU Presidential Scholarship and the WMU Provost Scholarship are merit-based awards available to non-Michigan residents who meet the selection criteria. The Office of Admissions automatically considers each entering freshman for these scholarships, and no additional application is required. Increasingly, out-of-state students have been accepting these scholarship dollars and choosing WMU. In 2007-08, 26.8% of students accepted an award; 34.8% in 2008-09; and 35.9% in 2009-10.

At the same time, WMU is concerned that the current tuition levels do not reflect the quality and breadth of programs offered and that current pricing may detract from the public's perception of institutional quality. WMU is reviewing its current tuition practices as well as its standing within the State in regard to tuition levels to determine future action.

The administrative staff develops the operating budget and becomes the annual operating plan expressed in financial terms. While the process is fundamentally an administrative process, it does seek input from many individuals throughout the University. As stated in the self-study, "...WMU has attempted to broaden participation opportunities without sacrificing the final exercise of judgment by those responsible and accountable for the University's fiscal resources. The budget process described here assumes that the president and the president's senior leadership team, including but not limited to, the provost, the vice presidents, executive director for University Relations, director of University Budgets, in concert with the associate vice president for budgets and financial planning, will function as the University's key budget policy agency, both in terms of requests and final allocations. This long established practice reflects the formal role of this body as the budget agency of the institution."

The budget process is composed of three distinct phases of internal requests for optimal funding of programs, identification of resources for specific programs/units and a budget control/execution phase to ensure that funds are spent for the purposes allocated. This process has been effective in ensuring that the institution manages within its limited financial environment. If necessary, resources are reallocated during the fiscal year. There is evidence in various financial documents and audited financial statements that Western Michigan university aligns its financial resources to protect and promote the educational activities of the institution, even during tight fiscal times.

The self study reveals a systematic approach to dealing with very difficult financial times. The following quote from the self study shows the long term efforts of the institution to deal with the budget situation.

"General Operating Budget: Over the last several years, the constrained State of Michigan economy along with the most recent global recession has presented some significant opportunities when planning and implementing the University budgetary process. In the early 80s, state appropriations revenues were 71.5% of the general fund budget and tuition revenues funded 26.6% of the revenue budget... Within these tight economic times, the University has managed scarce resources well. Starting in FY 2002-03, a number of budget reductions have been implemented to maximize internal resources. Budget reduction targets were assigned to each executive officer (president, provost, or vice presidents). These budget reductions were focused on the non-instructional support units while protecting academic instructional units and academic support programs like institutional student financial aid, faculty research, and library acquisitions.

Administrators responsible for reducing non-instructional support areas developed principles to protect programs and services that support student learning both inside and outside the classroom. Over a five-year period, slightly over \$50 million or 21.5% was reduced from general fund budgets. A total of 578.93 full-time equivalent positions or 19.5% were cut with minimal layoffs. In some areas, the approach to a budget reduction may have been rather ad hoc in that positions were cut based on available position vacancies rather than strategic need. A current strategy is to evaluate personnel needs and vacancies available and to realign positions where they are most valuable. Other plans for future resource management could involve the freezing of faculty lines and the consideration of an approach to filling academic positions within the academic department or across units/colleges.

Interviews conducted by the site visit team found that nearly every university function was impacted by budget reductions. In addition to faculty position reductions, administrative offices reported that as many as one third of the staff positions were eliminated. Examples of reductions in varying degrees were found in departments such as human resources, police and security, facilities services, academic administration and student advising.

Even though there is little expectation by faculty and staff that resource levels will be restored to previous levels, overall, the campus constituency is positive that the mission of the university is being served. Site team interviews with various groups including students, staff, faculty, administrative groups, senior leadership, legislators, trustees and the community reflect very positively that the leadership of the institution has prepared a course of action that will maintain and strengthen WMU.

New programs and initiatives are sought and funded, technology in academic and administrative settings is kept current, facilities are being maintained and constructed, and strategic choices such as campus sustainability activities are examples and continuous reminders to the greater university community that budgets are being linked to the various decision making processes that strengthen the institution's future.

2c. The organization's ongoing evaluation and assessment processes provide reliable evidence of institutional effectiveness that clearly informs strategies for continuous improvement.

As an example of evidence that data are used to prepare plans on the administrative and facilities side of the organization, in order to best deliver its academic programs, the self study reports that the University has long been a recognized industry leader in its measurement and evaluation of its physical plant. The facilities staff assembles details regarding its plant from the smallest mechanical component, to pipes underground, emergency notification systems, alarm systems, to major structural components such as roofs, building envelopes, and heating and ventilating systems. Facilities Management maintains reports on preventive maintenance, age of systems, and operating efficiencies of each operating component that are used to prepare priorities in planning and resourcing maintenance.

In addition, a number of program changes or new programs have been implemented

to better serve students. By realigning several auxiliary operations, the Division of Student Affairs now has central oversight over units that support students. In addition, two disability services offices were merged. The Bernhard Student Center (BSC) has been made more student-friendly and now serves as the location, among other things, of a one-stop shop for students with questions about their bills and/or financial aid.

2d. All levels of planning align with the organizations mission, thereby enhancing its capacity to fulfill that mission.

Following the 2001 Comprehensive Visit which found that “the absence of either a University Strategic Plan or a process for formal approval of unit strategic plans is a critical issue for the institution”, a focused visit took place on November 7-8, 2005 which had as one of two areas of focus, Criterion 2. The focused visit team did find evidence of:

- 1) revision of the mission statement
- 2) strategic planning in certain areas, e.g., Academic Affairs, Diversity, and Multiculturalism, IT, etc.

However, the team noted “only modest progress in moving to a more comprehensive institutional strategic planning process.” It was noted that there had been several leadership changes in the Office of the President that had resulted in a focus on tactical planning more than strategic planning at the university level. Strategic planning was said to be underway with a plan to be presented to the Board in Spring 2006 (see Focused Visit Report p. 13).

This (2010) site visit could not identify improvement in university-wide strategic planning activities and the promised 2006 plan does not appear to have been implemented.

From the self-study materials and the on-site interviews it was found that Western Michigan University has been engaged in planning in several ways designed to improve the institution. This activity includes, for example:

- a plan to expand and strengthen international components of the undergraduate experience.
- embarking on the successful development of the Business Technology and Research Park.
- partnering with local hospitals to potentially establish a medical school.
- a newly formed Strategic Enrollment Management Committee that it is anticipated will facilitate recruitment and retention efforts of the colleges and other academic units.
- the 2004 Presidential Initiative on Diversity and Multiculturalism.
- capital campaign planning, including new leadership in development.
- financial planning, including preparing for other sources of funds, e.g., higher tuition to backfill the lost state support.
- an emphasis on sustainability through facilities planning to offset energy costs and improve efficiency of operations.

- academic program planning in the Provost's Office.
- campus facilities master planning.
- a branding and marketing initiative

and strategic plans at the unit level, e.g., the Academic Affairs Strategic Plan, Office of Finance and Business Strategic Plan, Student Affairs Division Strategic Plan and IT Strategic Plan.

To expand on some of these examples, the division of Student Affairs Auxiliaries that serves students in various capacities such as residence halls, dining and student center functions has prepared multiple budgetary plans to sustain and improve services. The planning reveals the use of five year projections and strategic goals, creation of funding reserves, and operating principles such as staff compensation that takes the budget process through implementation and links it with the budget decision making process. A plan has been developed for enrollment management that is specific to the recruitment of students. Facilities (physical plant function) has developed management information systems that track maintenance operations to the available budget which shows ample evidence that the maintenance and repair functions have not been sacrificed. The Provost's Office has developed a plan based on existing faculty resources compared to the credit hour production of specific academic departments to deploy new faculty positions. There are examples found in units at the institution where there is planning taking place. In many instances the process is used to allocate resources, create a budget plan, prioritize activities and make operational decisions.

Specific plans that cut across the campus are also evident. For example, Western Michigan University has mechanisms to evaluate and plan its physical environment including the use of a Campus Master Plan, which guides the institution's building and infrastructure programs. The plan is reviewed and evaluated for relevance each year. Also each year the institution updates a five-year plan that includes a building project priority list. This approach is used to provide evidence of need to the State of Michigan for the proposed building projects and provides a comprehensive view for all interested parties. The Master Plan provided guidance for major projects such as the College of Health and Human Services, the Richmond Center for Visual Arts, and Sangren Hall with the latter in the beginning phase of construction during the site visit.

The conclusion can be reached that the organization has operational plans at the unit level and the managers are very comfortable in a formal planning process that drives a decision making process. However, the site team found in the interview process that some units were uncertain about how their unit plans fit into the total university picture except to say that they are experiencing very difficult financial times and resources across the institution are and have been limiting their units' activities.

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

The evidence demonstrates that further organizational attention is required to the area of institution-wide strategic planning. For example, as stated in the Self Study on page 101, Criterion 2:

“Ten years ago, WMU recognized that its planning, while often intensive, was not University-wide and so made concerted efforts to develop a process and a support structure for such planning—to produce and use an institutional strategic plan. In so doing, substantial progress was made on more focused strategic planning efforts in Academic Affairs, in units such as the College of Arts and Sciences, and in support areas such as information technology student information systems and the physical plant. Assessment efforts, which provide data elements necessary to strategic planning, are also substantially developed compared to their status 10 years ago. But it is fair to say that WMU still does not have a single systematic planning process that ties together all these pieces.”

The impact of the lack of a single strategic plan is widely known among all levels of university management and staff. The site team heard commentary such as “we don’t know what the university plan is.” Several groups during on campus interviews spoke to the need for an institutional strategic plan that unit plans could align with and that would facilitate priority setting and decision making. While the institution’s many divisions and units regularly engage in planning, there remains an uncertainty of what the overall institutional plan is especially in an environment in which budgetary and academic decisions are very centralized and decided at the highest administrative levels. Meanwhile, the budgeting and funding strategies have been at least partially successful in “making up” by setting institutional priorities while there is an absence of an overall campus wide strategic plan. The institution has stable leadership again and asserts (p. 103, Criterion 2) that it is “in a good position to again address an institution-wide coordination” of strategic planning and assessment. In the collective judgment of this site-visit team this should be implemented immediately.

Institutional leaders need to develop a strategic plan for Western Michigan University. While many units have developed plans, and the Provost has a plan for Academic Affairs, the evidence from the self-study and campus interviews clearly leads to the conclusion that the lack of an institutional strategic plan affects the institution adversely.

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

WMU has not, at the time of the visit, progressed towards the comprehensive institutional strategic planning process expected after the last focused visit in 2005. WMU has a variety of major issues, state budget challenges and an opportunity for a new medical school, for example, which demand transparent institutional planning. Examination of documents provided to the team and meetings with senior administrators affirmed that there has been only episodic institution-wide strategic planning at best since the last site visit in 2001.

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; Commission follow-up is recommended. A focused visit, to be completed not later than the conclusion of the 2011-2012 academic year is recommended. The purpose of this visit will be to verify that the University has a comprehensive institution-wide strategic plan in place that was created after an inclusive process involving faculty, staff, and students and includes assessment and outcome measures.

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

3a. The organization's goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated for each program and make effective assessment possible.

The university has made great strides in the assessment of student learning since its last comprehensive review in 2001 and its focused visit in 2005. Data from *TracDat* and interviews with the University Assessment Steering Committee and college Associate Deans demonstrate that assessment plans are in place, faculty and staff are actively involved in assessing programs, and assessment results are applied toward meaningful improvement. Assessment has become a part of the culture of the university and is now a source of pride by both faculty and staff; they now view assessment as a positive, tactical approach to achieving effective and informed curricular change. While assessment work is not complete and varies somewhat in commitment and quality across the campus and among the seven colleges, WMU is to be highly commended for its progress and overall commitment to assessment of student learning. In the words of the faculty, they are "light years" ahead of where they were in 2001.

The campus has a very active and dedicated assessment community, and a clearly articulated infrastructure and plan for assessing learning. A major element of the infrastructure is a formalized plan for assessing student learning in general education, departments, academic programs, and selected co-curricular and student affairs-related activities. An example of this planning is the *University Assessment Plan and Timetable*, which was first established in 2002 and is still actively used and updated. The campus plan for assessing student learning in general education, departments, and academic programs also includes assessment of selected co-curricular and student affairs-related activities.

All WMU courses must have stated learning outcomes. This is enabled and enforced at the time a course or curriculum is proposed or revised. The campus form *Request to College Curriculum Committee for Curricular Improvements* requires that learning outcomes be provided, and stipulates that these outcomes are used for future assessments of the proposed/revised course or program. The form also asks for a description of how a curriculum change was derived from assessment outcomes. A review of selected course syllabi revealed that most, but not all, contained a list of learning outcomes.

WMU is strongly committed to the expectation that all academic programs have learning assessment plans. While not all programs have reached this milestone, significant progress has been made. As is typical at most universities, the programs having strong, established assessment plans and actions are primarily those driven by professional accreditation requirements, *e.g.*, nursing, teacher education, business and engineering. Efforts are continually made through a number of campus resources, including the University Assessment Steering Committee (UASC) and the Office of Faculty Development, to assist programs in designing and implementing effective programs of assessment.

At WMU, faculty and administrators routinely review the effectiveness and uses of institutional and program practices to assess student learning. In 2009, the Provost provided financial support for the creation of an Associate Provost for Assessment and Undergraduate Studies in response to the need for dedicated leadership devoted to general education and to assessment of student achievement. This individual reports directly to the Provost and has responsibility for monitoring progress made by academic units and programs in developing assessment plans through personal communication with units and use of *TracDat*. In addition, within each academic college, an associate dean is identified as the primary assessment contact. These associate deans meet regularly with the Vice Provost for Institutional Effectiveness and the Associate Provost for Assessment to discuss issues related to assessment and accreditation. Institutional oversight responsibility for effective assessment rests with these two individuals.

Assessment activities and planning are guided by the UASC containing both college and academic support unit representatives. Their charge is to help academic and other units construct assessment plans and to coordinate the use of the *TracDat* database. To their credit and foresight, once the council observed that the academic units' plans were in place, they expanded the group to include 16 non-academic units with the hope that assessment would move from an exclusively academic program focus to one that assessed all units/activities serving the learning mission of the university. The UASC is now comprised of students, faculty, and administrative representatives from the academic colleges, Extended University Programs, the Division of Student Affairs, and other stakeholders. The UASC consults with academic departments, and reviews and approves their assessment plans.

USAC members described a strong sense of satisfaction from direct and indirect observations that students on their campus are learning, and they are learning what is intended within academic programs and activities. The committee members also observed that they are "maturing in their charge" to oversee the development of assessment plans and hence see themselves moving into more of an educational role, e.g., by providing assessment professional development opportunities, and offering and sponsoring assessment seminars.

Examples of campus activities in support of assessment-related activities include daylong Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL) workshops focused on assisting faculty in generating documentable evidence (e.g., publications about assessment) that would contribute toward promotion and tenure. Awards have been created to recognize assessment work – one for an individual who has made significant strides in assessment (UASC Individual Assessment Excellence Award) and one for a unit making noteworthy or significant progress in assessment. There is an impressive Faculty Assessment Grants Program. Annually, five awards (up to \$5000 each) are awarded to faculty to support an assessment project. Priority is given to activities related to the direct measure of student learning or achievement. A cash award is given to an undergraduate in recognition of an excellent iWeb portfolio and travel funding is made available by academic deans for faculty to attend assessment conferences. WMU's first *Assessment in Action Day* program, held in spring 2010, was designed to enhance and spread knowledge about assessment, and featured an outside speaker and informative workshops and presentations for both academic and non-academic programs. Faculty and staff described the event as a noteworthy success, and plans are underway for similar future programs.

The *TracDat* system, purchased in 2004 along with *Banner*, serves as a collection/management vehicle for assessment plans, data, and the reporting of program revisions and improvements as a result of assessment findings. The use of *iWebfolio* is growing; the faculty now utilize it to review graduate student applications for awards, and as an information resource for academic position searches. In addition to greater accessibility to assessment information and findings through *TracDat* and *iWebfolio*, transparency and accountability of assessment-related activities is enhanced through website posting of UASC meeting, NSSE survey, deans' annual assessment, and curriculum change reports.

In 2002, WMU initiated a plan for academic program/department external review, with a published calendar/timetable and set of review guidelines. The Associate Provost for assessment guides a system of program review. Following a review, both the Provost and Associate Provost meet with the department to discuss the review and a summary report is subsequently written by the associate provost. Both program and university administrators expressed their intentions to use these reports for planning for the future and resource distribution.

WMU's general education program has two components: proficiencies and distribution. Proficiencies include writing and mathematics/quantitative reasoning.

Distribution includes selections from eight content areas: fine arts, humanities, cultures (US and other), social and behavioral sciences, natural sciences, technology, and health and well-being. Information regarding these requirements is readily available on the WMU website. Examples of assessment of general education include use of the California Critical Thinking Skills Test and a variety of direct and indirect measures of general education distribution requirements. The campus has more recently (2008-09) adopted the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA), which appears to be primarily driven by participation in the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA). A Faculty Senate Committee to Oversee General Education was formed to review and approve courses for general education. Its 2009-2014 review schedule for assessment of general education proficiencies and areas is posted on the university website.

3b. The organization values and supports effective teaching.

The university's view of itself as a "student-centered research university" is manifested in its support of teaching excellence and the high value it places on the quality of teaching. Teaching is regularly evaluated and teaching excellence is recognized and rewarded. Faculty members are contractually required to have all courses they teach evaluated once each year via ICES (Instructor and Course Evaluation System). ICES was converted from a paper-based to an online system in 2009-10. Numerical scores from ICES are made available to chairs; student comments and numerical scores are provided directly to the faculty member being evaluated. Peer evaluation of teaching is contractually required of faculty once per year for their first three years.

Exemplary teaching is recognized on campus through a number of awards such as the Distinguished Teaching Award, the university's highest honor for teaching. Three recent award winners are asked to serve on the Office of Faculty Development's Advisory Board. Most of the individual colleges and departments also have their own teaching awards/recognitions for faculty. The university is encouraged to explore ways in which these recognitions can be more visible, both on and off-campus, through special events and university communications.

Teaching, referred to as 'professional competence' in the AAUP agreement, is one of three criteria according to which faculty are evaluated for promotion and tenure. Evidence of teaching performance is included in faculty promotion and tenure documents. Faculty members have access to assistance for improving teaching through the Office of Faculty Development, and they indicated that these development opportunities have continued to grow and improve over the last several years. For instance, in just the last two academic years over 100 faculty members and staff have taken the opportunity to complete an *E-Teaching Endorsement* in order to enhance their skills in online teaching. *New Faculty Orientation*, a 2-day program, and *New Faculty Seminar*, a weekly 14-session program, address the needs of new faculty.

The Office of Faculty Development has articulated a strategic plan for enhancing the institution's investment in the professional development of faculty and staff that include initiatives in *Innovation, Professional Growth, Leadership* and the *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*. Accordingly, numerous programs exist that support the development of faculty members as effective, innovative educators, leaders and scholars. The Director of the Office of Faculty Development indicated in an interview that there is good support from the Provost for the many initiatives the Office is currently implementing as well as those in development, such as the emphasis on the growth of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning on WMU's campus on the recommendation of a recently established advisory board for the Office of Faculty Development.

Based upon interviews with EUP faculty and staff, it is evident that the institution intends to manage distance/online course staffing to provide the same quality of education as is found on the main campus. For each department/ program, EUP ascertains the existing main campus mix of tenure-track, term or specialist (full time, non tenure track) and adjunct faculty. Departments, which identify and select faculty to deliver EUP courses, are expected to conform to this mix, as it is presumed that the department has already determined that it is best for their discipline/program. In addition, departments share in revenues in excess of expenses. Therefore, under this model there is a slight incentive for the unit to choose lower paid individuals to teach, but the EUP is aware of this and strives to ensure that the mix does not deviate significantly over time.

3c. The organization creates effective learning environments.

WMU demonstrates its commitment to creating effective learning environments through attention to its building and remodeling efforts, the availability of learning and teaching technologies, learning resources for students, and campus climate. Prominent examples of new buildings and remodeling efforts directly focused on learning include the College of Health and Human Services building and remodeled classrooms and the creation of student spaces in Brown and Sangren Halls. Improvements and changes to the Bernhard Center strive to make this facility more student-centered. We encourage WMU to continue its search for a Center Director who has a sufficient background in student affairs/services to best serve the student population.

WMU strives to create a campus climate supportive of the diversity present among its student body and faculty. For example, the university's 2006 development and adoption of a Diversity and Multicultural Action Plan (DMAP) affirmed its commitment to diversity and multiculturalism. As a direct result of this plan, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion was created in 2008. This office was charged by the President with responsibility for implementing the Diversity and Multicultural Action Plan, management of the university's affiliation with the Kalamazoo Promise, planning of the annual Martin Luther King Jr. convocation, and support for community development activities related to student recruitment. This year, the

Office of Diversity and Inclusion partnered with the Office of Faculty Development to organize a year-long initiative called "Everyone Counts," for the purpose of promoting greater understanding of diversity and to develop strategies to improve support for all learners. WMU also supports a Multicultural Center, a Women's Caucus, the LDSI (a Committee for Developing Leadership in Diversity, Social Justice, and Inclusion), and the Office of Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay and Transgender (LGBT) Student Services.

WMU students are afforded a diverse array of special learning opportunities. Examples include learning communities (five colleges have partnered with residence halls to form learning communities), the Honors College, study abroad, the First Year Experience (FYE), undergraduate research experiences, internships, and service learning. Approximately 11% of the student body participates annually in study abroad. The First Year Experience, a series of events and a 2-credit course designed for new and transfer students, was introduced in 2005 for the purpose of improving retention and graduation rates. The program has grown in size from 1800 students participating in the FYE Fall Welcome to 2800 students in 2009. Through a variety of ongoing assessment practices, the FYE program continues to evolve and improve, and modest increases (~1%) in retention of participating students has been noted. More dramatic increases in retention of underrepresented students were also observed.

EUP manages the delivery of courses through online, IVN, face-to-face at remote sites, and hybrid courses and programs. EUP oversees a robust and thoroughly designed system for assisting faculty (content experts) in finding appropriate technology for learning, focused on the outcomes for each course. They have knowledgeable instructional designers as well as clerical support. This system coordinates closely with the general campus faculty development office, which shows that 'extended' programs are not seen as separate from traditional faculty activities.

EUP personnel are closely involved in IT decision making. They have their own funds for student technology (e.g., site labs and software), and are part of the decision-making process for an institutional course management system, which is a major campus decision to be made in the short term.

From interviews with EUP personnel, both central staff and at sites, the university has well-established policies, procedures, and helpful staff to handle student complaints about, for example, sexual harassment, perceived unjust grades, or life crises interrupting a semester. EUP personnel were complimentary about main campus staff ('experts' who are always available, primarily by phone), in that they were respectful of and helpful about the different concerns and situations of non-traditional students.

Counseling, computer help, and Writing Center staff and processes were described as being available via phone and also technology (e.g., screen-sharing software). The Bronco network is available at all remote sites that were visited by the team. Each

site has adequate student labs, student lounges with vending and/or accessible cafes, and small group break-out areas.

3d. The organization's learning resources support student learning and effective teaching.

WMU is committed to ensuring access to resources that promote and support student learning. There is a wide variety of programs designed to support learning on campus. Examples include the six Center for Academic Success Programs (CASPs): 1) the *Academic Skills Center*, which provides tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, and college success seminars; 2) the *Advocacy Office for Transfer Students and Military Affairs*; 3) the *Intellectual Skills Development Program* for appropriate writing and math placement; 4) the *TRiO* student success program, a federally funded program for first-generation college students; 5) the *University Curriculum* programs, which help undeclared students find compatible majors and career paths; and 6) the *Writing Center*. Through its diverse and active units, CASP serves multitudes of students and significantly contributes to the learning mission at WMU. CASP actively engages in assessment to determine effective unit leadership and improve the provision of student services. CASP recently relocated into the same building as the Student Employment Center, further reducing the level of complexity students encounter in locating available and needed services.

The Division of Student Affairs at WMU has evolved over the past ten years into a unit strongly committed to providing programs, services, and systems of support that enhance student learning. It continually assesses its functions and impact, and as a result has been reorganized at least twice since 2001. The draft report *Student Affairs Strategic Planning and Assessment, 2004-10* and the *Student Affairs 04-10 Assessment Inventory* outline numerous examples of change driven by direct and indirect assessments.

The Office of Information Technology (OIT) is well-staffed and positioned to lead educational innovation at WMU into the future. IT policy is established and influenced by extensive consultation and collaboration across campus constituencies in addition to an external advisory board. Special attention is currently being given to the establishment of a set of technical standards for classrooms as they are updated with new equipment hardware and software. OIT's leadership is also essential with regard to the impending decision regarding the selection of the institution's next e-learning platform. In addition, OIT employs at least 125 students in various capacities that help the unit accomplish its mission as well as provide students an opportunity to develop their own interests and skills.

The library is sufficiently staffed and has adequate resources to support current activities and the diverse mix of programs. The facilities for most students are ample, and the library creatively and extensively uses several assessment methods to determine needs and adjust services. Services including information literacy instruction are provided through on and off-campus programs. While WMU Libraries

claim to currently outperform ARL and non-ARL libraries in standards of service, these standards may be adversely affected in the future by growing fiscal constraints imposed upon the campus, and by the escalating costs of serial subscriptions.

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

Assessment of general education on the campus is ongoing, although the most recent General Education Assessment Committee (GEAC) report posted on the website dates back to 2005, thereby giving the impression that activity has waned since that time. An interview with members of UASC readily identified general education as the "greatest challenge on [WMU's] campus in assessment right now." Implementation of the CLA during the 2008-2009 academic year was driven primarily by the institution's participation in VSA. The institution needs to clarify with specificity how CLA addresses the institution's stated learning outcomes for both proficiencies and distribution areas in addition to continuing to review and report the results of methods (direct and indirect) employed to assure that learning outcomes of general education courses are consistent with the goals of the program. *(3a)*

Conversations with faculty and staff indicated generally that they are actively involved in assessment activities and understand the role of assessment in guiding and improving student learning. A 2008 campus survey showed that 66% of the faculty has a 'high familiarity' with their unit's assessment plan and activities designed to generate direct and indirect evidence of learning. These conversations also made it apparent that the campus's recognition of the value and impact of assessment continues to evolve and grow. However, faculty did express concern over their observation that time spent on assessment activities had a relatively low level of support by their deans, and that this activity was not considered as a contribution toward achievement of promotion and tenure. *(3a, 3b)*

With its focus on the "distinctive student," student discovery and liberal arts, the Lee Honors College serves as a laboratory for best practices in student-centered undergraduate education. This college currently has 1049 students enrolled. WMU should consider embedding its support of the LHC more integrally in a university-wide strategic plan and to utilize it more fully as a means of exploring new models of general education, active pedagogical approaches, assessment of student learning, and recruitment of diverse, talented pools of students which could eventually be applied more broadly to the institution. *(3c)*

WMU's academic advising community is strained by the lack of personnel within its ranks, a situation that merits attention. That said, encouragement was expressed by faculty and administration during the team's visit because the Provost has developed a plan to provide support for five additional academic advisors; indeed, the institution recognizes the critical nature of the dynamic relationship between a student and their advisor in promoting academic success. *(3d)*

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 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

4a. The organization demonstrates, through the actions of its board, administrators, students, faculty, and staff, that it values a life of learning.

Through its stated mission as a “student-centered research university” the university articulates its commitment to a life of learning. WMU provides a sabbatical leave program for faculty, college and university-level funds for research and creative activities, and department, college and university-wide awards to recognize the achievements of undergraduate and graduate students and faculty. These programs provide incentive and recognition for those individuals that exemplify continued learning as a prominent feature of the institution. Tuition remission is available to staff and faculty members and their dependents, which supports and enables life-long learning for the campus community.

For example, the value of learning at WMU is celebrated through awards and public recognition of academic achievement and service through university-level Distinguished Faculty Scholar, Distinguished Teaching, Distinguished Service and Emerging Scholar award programs. The university has also devoted considerable capital to the construction and operation of research facilities, such as the Engineering and Applied Science Building, which is focused on the creation of knowledge. The

Vice President for Research supports the development of research activities and proposals through a variety of programs such as Faculty Research and Creative Activities Awards, Faculty Scholars Awards, and Research Development Awards. Positive feedback is provided for externally funded research through the redistribution of F&A to the originating units, and support is made available for student participation in research, service learning and in co-curricular programs.

Difficult economic times in the State of Michigan forced WMU to respond in various ways to budget shortfalls and deficits, and to better plan for the future. One investment in this regard that is in line with the concept of life-long learning is a move toward sustainability in building construction and operations. In addition, one time innovation funds in the amount of \$1.6M have been distributed to faculty engaged in the implementation of innovative ideas, and new faculty hires in lieu of unfilled vacancies (25/year for five years) are planned in areas of strategic need including both research expansion and student-to-faculty teaching ratio considerations. These examples demonstrate the value that WMU places on knowledge creation, sharing, and implementation through its fiscal allocations.

WMU maintains many disciplinary accreditations that also require continuous self-improvement of programs and curriculum to maintain relevance in the fields represented. Documents indicate that some of these accrediting agencies required follow up in various forms such as interim reports. WMU responded to these requests for further clarifications or actions by investing the time and resources necessary to maintain accredited status. The university also remains connected to its alumni through campus events and communications, and provides for the educational needs of various communities of learners via distance learning and continuing education programs. These examples further demonstrate the commitment of the institution to the concept of life-long learning for its in-house programs and extended community partners.

4b. The organization demonstrates that acquisition of a breadth of knowledge and skills and the exercise of intellectual inquiry are integral to its educational programs.

Intellectual inquiry at WMU is manifested through various programs for developing international perspectives such as those manifested by the Haenicke Institute for Global Education, home to the Michitoshi Soga Japan Center and the Confucius Institute. Study abroad programs and transnational education as well as international student recruitment bring WMU's students into direct contact with the wider world, its history and culture. The faculty travel abroad to perform their research and teach, and focal points of scholarly activity are the Medieval Institute, the Mallinson Institute for Science Studies, and the W.E. Upjohn Center for the Study of Geographical Change.

The general education curriculum, the first year experience, and capstone courses provide WMU's students with basic skills across the disciplines and set the wider

context in which their disciplinary knowledge exists. Internships, co-ops, practicums, undergraduate research and field experiences enable students to apply this knowledge in the world in which they aspire to succeed. Minors broaden the exposure of students to a wider context of knowledge than is available within their own majors. A new curriculum proposal system is in place and substantive course/programmatic changes resulting from assessment, program review, or other continuous improvement mechanisms are being tracked and published annually.

WMU is emphasizing its research university status. It values measures of growth in research through federal and other funding as well as scholarly productivity witnessed through peer-reviewed publications, invited lectures, and other external presentations of an artistic or creative nature. The institution provides the possibility of differential teaching loads for faculty to enable those with the potential and ability to excel in research/scholarly pursuits to do so, along with financial support mechanisms as noted in section 4a above. Research productivity is currently localized within various small clusters of faculty in different disciplines, but a more strategic planning process for faculty hiring and investments is being implemented with ties to budgeting scenarios. Finally, discussions with many campus constituencies indicated an overall sense of cautious optimism surrounding the establishment of a medical school currently being considered for WMU, and the impact that this might have on the research enterprise at the institution.

4c. The organization assesses the usefulness of its curricula to students who will live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society.

As referred to in section 4b above, WMU has processes in place to review the proficiencies and areas addressed by its general education curriculum, to track the programs that require senior level capstone courses/theses/field experiences, and to assess the attainment of learning outcomes within its courses and programs. Curricular and programmatic changes, although sometimes slow and difficult, are occurring to improve the institution from an academic perspective. The Graduate Program Review had, for example, a positive influence on the College of Fine Arts as it developed a more well-defined sense of focus and a goal of distinctiveness. Similarly, assessment of program outcomes in the student affairs areas are leading to better connectedness, more efficient utilization of time and resources, and improved impact on student learning and sense of belonging. Finally, Extended University Program conducts extensive needs assessment and follow-up evaluation for off campus programs that rigorously analyzes how WMU can meet present and future population needs. Over the years this unit has developed and eliminated programs in response to needs of its constituents.

The emphasis on expanding the world view of, in particular, undergraduate students at WMU is apparent in its academic and non-academic programming and investments. The Business Technology and Research Park, the Richmond Center for Visual Arts, and the W.M. Keck Nanotechnology Laboratory are examples of facilities that enable interdisciplinary research and creative activities that broaden the scope of the academic programs at WMU. NSSE survey data are collected and utilized to assess

the impact of curricular and co-curricular offerings on students' awareness of and exposure to diverse perspectives, and service learning activities engage students and faculty with the local community. As will be emphasized later in Section 5, the connection of WMU to the Western Michigan region is strong, and the experiences of the students are linked in this context to their future successes in society.

4d . The organization provides support to ensure that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.

WMU demonstrates the support necessary to meet this core component in various ways, including but not limited to its published policies on: time and effort certification; social and behavioral researcher training; medical model research training; intellectual property and data retention; financial disclosure; misconduct in research; signature authority; human subjects institutional review board; radiation safety; recombinant DNA biosafety; and export control. Committees and infrastructure, including training mechanisms, are in place to ensure full understanding and compliance with these policies that primarily affect the research enterprise of the institution.

In addition, the WMU center for the Study of Ethics in Society, the Academic Honesty Policy, and the workshops and training provided by the Division of Environmental Safety and Emergency Management all contribute to an overall campus awareness and engagement with the responsible acquisition and application of knowledge. Social responsibility is addressed through the curriculum including service learning projects, and via co-curricular programming and volunteer activities as well. The contextual framework in which WMU employees and students engage with the local community emphasizes the social awareness aspects of these learning opportunities.

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

None

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 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

5a. The organization learns from the constituencies it serves and analyzes its capacity to serve their needs and expectations.

Although no systematic, university-wide environmental scanning takes place to identify community needs, meetings with a wide range of constituents indicate that such scanning is embedded within WMU and its constituent units and occurs continually. Examples include:

- a marketing survey conducted by the Office of Legislative and University Relations in 2006, with a follow up in 2009, to learn about how WMU is perceived by prospective students and parents;
- 4-5 presidential lunches with legislative delegations per year;
- alumni board meetings;
- Parent-Family Program member surveys;
- Deans meeting with advisory boards such as occurs in the Haworth College of Business;
- WMU Career Network's efforts to periodically scan employment trends;
- participation in projects such as the Arcadia West Development Group committees to help determine development of downtown land to best advantage of WMU and the entire community;
- the Lifelong Learning Academy for senior citizens is led by an executive board consisting of emeriti faculty and community members who design and plan programming; and
- WMU representatives are found on almost all city commissions and organization boards. Community leaders noted that President Dunn leads by example and is very involved in the community.

WMU's outreach efforts reach a diversity of constituencies. This is evidenced by various activities such as:

- The Seita Scholars Program, a collaboration between the State of Michigan and WMU to provide a college education and housing for students aging out of the foster care system. Launched in 2008, the Seita Scholars Program admitted 51 students, 29 of whom returned for their second year. In 2009, 47 students were admitted.

- The Confucius Institute's program to teach Chinese in Portage elementary schools. The Confucius Institute plans to extend Chinese to first and second grades in 2011 and to first, second and third in 2012. The goal is to add an additional year of instruction until all years through high school are covered;
- The Center for Disability Services, a multiservice agency, supported by the College of Health and Human Services, the Kalamazoo mental health community and the Greater Kalamazoo United Way, provides a variety of services to area residents;
- The Grand Rapids Downtown site operates a mental health clinic that provides services while enhancing learning experiences for students in counseling and social work. There are plans to develop an occupational therapy clinic in Grand Rapids as well;
- Participation in the Kalamazoo Promise which provides 4 years of tuition and fees for graduates of Kalamazoo Public Schools to encourage all students to obtain a college education;
- The Haenicke Institute for Global Education routinely organizes its international students to provide various cultural events for the university and surrounding community as well as to give informational talks at area churches and business organizations;
- Through its Business Technology and Research Park (BTR) and Biosciences Research and Commercialization Center, WMU serves the business and scientific communities. Thirty businesses currently invest in the BTR, eight have constructed their own facilities and 16 have had lab and office space in the Southwest Michigan Innovation Center.

Documents and interviews indicate that WMU is well-served by the EUP. With a staff of 55, the EUP offers programs through seven regional sites, coordinates online course offerings, professional continuing education, conferences and other lifelong learning opportunities, and is the contact for degree completion programs. It offers single cohort programs at three other sites. Change requests are currently in process with the Higher Learning Commission to add several sites. In 2009, EUP programs generated a total of 15,644 student credit hours through face to face instruction at its various sites and online courses. This represents almost a tenfold increase since 2003.

EUP has recently established the Lifelong Learning Academy modeled on the Osher Institute to provide educational opportunities for senior citizens. Planning for the Lifelong Learning Academy began with WMU emeriti faculty, the WMU Associate Vice President for Community Outreach, and Extended University Programs. The executive committee was established during the summer of 2010, and the committee has focused on garnering support and participation from community representatives from around the Kalamazoo area. EUP also has a conference division that organizes numerous national conferences. Conferencing is managed financially as an auxiliary enterprise. However, it is not managed solely for financial gain, but with a view to overall campus goals and mission. For example, space is provided free for relevant

community organizations for events, as this enhances community contacts (and inevitably helps marketing and subsequent student recruitment).

5b. The organization has the capacity and the commitment to engage with its identified constituencies and communities.

WMU appears to have adequate infrastructure and support mechanisms to support its current high level of community engagement. The Business Technology and Research Park and the Biosciences Research and Commercialization Center are two primary examples of capacity and commitment of WMU to engage with identified constituencies. The Biosciences Research and Commercialization Center (BRCC) is an example of city, industry–university collaboration. When Pfizer withdrew its biomedical drug discovery activities from the Kalamazoo area in 2003, the city, business and universities leaders came together to keep some of the Pfizer scientists in Kalamazoo. With the assistance of the Michigan legislature, BRCC was born as a public-private partnership. It is housed in the Southwest Michigan Innovation Center on WMU’s Parkview Campus. It currently supports 23 companies and is a source of employment and student internships. WMU calculates a \$250 million return on investment since inception. BRCC is considered one of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation’s most successful investments. The Business Technology and Research Park (BTR), located on the Parkview Campus, is a high-tech development that houses 30 companies involved in life sciences, advanced engineering and technology. Because of its location, resident companies regularly interact with faculty and students. BTR has been quite successful. WMU reports that over 1,300 people are employed at BTR and its companies generated \$182 million in revenue in 2008. BTR is an example of WMU commitment to exemplary public and private partnerships.

Students, faculty and staff are involved in community outreach activities. For example,

- The Office of Student Activities and Leadership houses Volunteer Student Services, the university hub of opportunity for students to become connected with volunteer activities. It connects people with community and campus volunteer needs. The residence halls sponsor the Trash to Treasure program in which they collect unwanted items from residents to distribute to those in need. The Fall into the Streets activity was just completed with 150 students volunteering for projects all over Kalamazoo.
- There are many opportunities for students to hold internships. Many alumni, and almost all community agencies and local businesses, sponsor student internships. Team members spoke with alumni from accounting, social work and engineering all of whom sponsored WMU interns. Professional schools have active internship programs. Many of the community members with whom the team visited also sponsor internships, which they find invaluable.

- Service learning is a fairly new activity at WMU and is sponsored through the Walker Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnic Relations. According to its website the mission of WMU Service Learning is “to develop mutually beneficial service learning partnerships between community-based organizations and our campus to 1) foster engaged student citizenship and learning as well as to 2) mobilize our knowledge, talents and energies to benefit the greater community.”

Although WMU is successfully sustaining a large number of community engagements, and is to be commended for its contributions in that regard, one question that did come up in reading the self-study and in meetings on-site is whether, in the current economic downturn, WMU should continue to devote the existing very high level of human, financial, and physical resources they have committed to engagement. This might well be an appropriate topic to address in an overall university strategic planning and prioritization process.

5c. The organization demonstrates its responsiveness to those constituencies that depend on it for service.

Evidence that WMU meets this component includes:

WMU has collaborative ventures with the Kalamazoo Public Schools such as the Kalamazoo Promise that provides tuition and fees to attend college for four years. About 300 students currently attend WMU under this program.

There are collaborative arrangements with Kalamazoo Valley Community College e.g., Project Focus.

A fairly new partnership typical of WMU’s community involvement is Project Scope. This is an educational outreach project for K-9 students who have an incarcerated parent. It is operated in partnership with WMU’s McGinnis Reading Center and Clinic and has received positive assessment and evaluation.

WMU is the location of an Academically Talented Youth Program (ATYP) through the Lee Honors College. The program provides middle school students with a curriculum that matches their talents and helps prepare them for college.

WMU aims to enhance teaching effectiveness in public schools through a collaboration with 50 public schools known as the School/University Partnership Team (SUPT). This program won an award from the Association of Teacher Educators in 2003.

In addition to educational partnerships, WMU has partnerships that demonstrate its role in shared goals for economic growth such as the Business

Technology and Research Park. Another excellent example is WMU's participation in Michigan's No Worker Left Behind Program that has led to 27 undergraduate programs at WMU sites across the state being eligible for state financial support to Michigan residents who desire retraining.

From the Self-Study and the on-site interviews it was clear that an abundance of evidence exists that WMU has built effective collaborations among diverse communities. Community leaders testified to the value of many of those engagements.

Documents and interviews confirm that WMU has transfer policies and practices that facilitate the mobility of students. WMU participates in the Michigan Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers Transfer Agreement with 27 community colleges. This agreement provides for transferability of up to 30 credits to meet general education requirements. It has specific articulation agreements with 28 community colleges. In addition, WMU has entered into a unique agreement with Kellogg Community College to dually accept students into engineering and aviation programs. Students take courses on both campuses. The agreement is expected to increase the number of students going into the two programs since its inception. In addition, WMU established the Advocacy Office for Transfer Students and Military Affairs to ease the transition of transfer and military students. According to the 2009-2010 WMU *Fact Book* (p. 78), in Fall, 2009, WMU enrolled 1,705 new undergraduate transfer students.

5d. Internal and external constituencies value the services the organization provides.

Examination of the Self-Study documents and meetings with constituents establish that WMU's engagements with its constituencies are valued. The University's activities include providing programs that meet the continuing education needs of professionals in the community and opening its facilities to the community for a variety of mutually beneficial activities. For example,

- WMU's Third Coast Writing Project (TCWP) is a site of the National Writing Project that provides professional development for teachers.
- WMU venues provide access to cultural and athletic events for the campus and the community. For example, Miller Auditorium is the venue for live performing arts events (*Phantom of the Opera*, etc.) that are a cultural and economic advantage to the University and the region. The same can be said for the many athletic venues and events associated with the University (football, ice hockey, etc.)

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

None

- 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.

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 change

4. Reports required

None

4. Other visits scheduled**Type of Visit:**

Focused Visit

Topic(s) and Timing

To determine that a satisfactory strategic plan has been adopted by Western Michigan University. This visit should occur before the close of the 2011-2012 academic year.

Rationale and Expectations

The institution has had a focused visit since its 2001 comprehensive visit. The University was supposed to develop a strategic plan and it was to have been presented to its governing board in 2005-2006. The plan was not presented to the board and in its self study the University acknowledged that it still did not have an institutional strategic plan. Our recommendation is that a strategic plan be developed and adopted as quickly as is possible. For an institution with aspirations to develop a College of Medicine and continue on a path of continued growth as a research university, a strategic plan is essential.

6. Organization change request

None

D. Commission Sanction or Adverse Action

None

E. Summary of Commission Review

Timing for next comprehensive visit:

Academic year – 2020-2021

Rationale for recommendation:

Western Michigan University is a post secondary educational institution that has

demonstrated that it meets the criteria established by the Higher Learning Commission for reaccreditation. It is an institution that has dedicated faculty, staff, and administrators who act with integrity. It has demonstrated that it has effective teaching and learning, supports the acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge successfully, and is an engaged institution that serves its constituencies well. The self study and other materials reviewed for this visit support this conclusion and our discussions both on and off campus reinforce our conclusion about the university. Accordingly, the team recommends continuing accreditation for a ten year period before the next comprehensive visit.

VI. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND EXPLANATIONS

None

Appendix A

Federal Compliance Requirements

INSTITUTIONAL MATERIALS RELATED TO FEDERAL COMPLIANCE REVIEWED BY THE TEAM:

Self Study; Third Party Comments memorandum from Carrie Caine dated October 11, 2010; IPEDS/College Navigator database; Security annual report dated October 1, 2010; faculty verification memorandum from Nancy E. Cretsinger to Eileen Evans dated October 12, 2009; ads in the Kalamazoo *Gazette* dated August 8, 2010, and August 12, 2010

EVALUATION OF FEDERAL COMPLIANCE PROGRAM COMPONENTS

The team verifies that it has reviewed each component of the Federal Compliance Program by reviewing each item below. Generally, if the team finds substantive issues in these areas and relates such issues to the institution's fulfillment of the Criteria for Accreditation, such discussion should be handled in appropriate sections of the Assurance Section of the Team Report or highlighted as such in the appropriate AQIP Quality Checkup Report.

1. Credits, Program Length, and Tuition: *The institution has documented that it has credit hour assignments and degree program lengths within the range of good practice in higher education and that tuition is consistent across degree programs (or that there is a rational basis for any program-specific tuition).*

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance.

2. Student Complaints: *The institution has documented a process in place for addressing student complaints and appears to be systematically processing such complaints as evidenced by the data on student complaints for the three years prior to the visit.*

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance.

3. Transfer Policies: *The institution has demonstrated it is appropriately disclosing its transfer policies to students and to the public. Policies contain information about the criteria the institution uses to make transfer decisions.*

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance.

4. Verification of Student Identity: *The institution has demonstrated that it verifies the identify of students who participate in courses or programs provided to the student through distance or correspondence education.*

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance.

5. Title IV Program and Related Responsibilities: *The institution has presented evidence on the required components of the Title IV Program. The team has reviewed these materials and has found no cause for concern regarding the institution's administration or oversight of its Title IV responsibilities.*

- **General Program Requirements:** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about the fulfillment of its Title IV program responsibilities, particularly findings from any review activities by the Department of Education. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities in this area.*
- **Financial Responsibility Requirements:** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about the Department's review of composite ratios and financial audits. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities in this area.*
- **Default Rates, Campus Crime Information and Related Disclosure of Consumer Information, Satisfactory Academic Progress and Attendance Policies:** *The institution has demonstrated, and the team has reviewed, the institution's policies and practices for ensuring compliance with these regulations.*
- **Contractual Relationships:** *The institution does not have any relationships as defined by this requirement.*

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance.

6. Institutional Disclosures and Advertising and Recruitment Materials: *The institution has documented that it provides accurate, timely and appropriately detailed information to current and prospective students and the public about its accreditation status with the Commission and other agencies as well as about its programs, locations and policies.*

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance.

7. Relationship with Other Accrediting Agencies and with State Regulatory Boards: *The institution has documented that it discloses its relationship with any other specialized, professional or institutional accreditor and with all governing or coordinating bodies in states in which the institution may have a presence.*

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance.

8. Public Notification of an Evaluation Visit and Third Party Comment: *The institution has made an appropriate and timely effort to solicit third party comments. The team has evaluated any comments received and completed any necessary follow-up on issues raised in these comments.*

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance.

ADVANCEMENT SECTION

REPORT OF A COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION VISIT

TO

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan

October 18-20, 2010

FOR

The Higher Learning Commission

A Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

EVALUATION TEAM

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I. OVERALL OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

Since the most recent accreditation visit, which occurred ten years ago, Western Michigan University has operated in a very difficult economic environment. State funding has been reduced and the institution increasingly has relied on tuition as a central revenue source. Because of economic conditions in Michigan it is unlikely that state support will be any more robust in the future than has been the case in the recent past. Nevertheless, our view is that the university is able to offer a quality educational experience for its students through the tireless efforts of faculty, staff, and administrators who continue to do more with less.

Western Michigan University has experienced significant turnover in senior leadership since the visit from the HLC ten years ago. The text on page 17 of the introduction to the Self Study is telling. The University has had seven people serve either as Provost or Acting Provost since 2001 and that is in addition to five people serving as President or Interim President during the same period of time. Consequently, the current administrative leadership inherited an organization badly in need of stability. Current leaders have done an excellent job of communicating with various constituencies and stakeholders and in our view enjoy the confidence of the Western Michigan community. In addition, they have worked well with external constituents in the City of Kalamazoo and beyond.

Western Michigan University (WMU) has the opportunity for a transformational change by developing a medical school in partnership with two local hospitals. There has been considerable discussion and planning for this opportunity with the Board, the research foundation and campus leadership (e.g., see references). With the existence of a planning gift for \$1.8M, the possibility of a significant additional gift for the medical school, and the existence of apparently committed hospital partners and clinical facilities, a successful outcome of this initiative seems highly likely. WMU currently holds "Applicant School" status with the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) indicating that it has paid the \$25K application fee to the LCME to begin the process of applying for preliminary accreditation and the LCME has determined that WMU meets the basic eligibility requirements to apply for accreditation, which include a current charter in the US and plans to offer the educational program leading to the MD degree in the US.

II. CONSULTATIONS OF THE TEAM

Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives

Despite the 2006 passage of the Michigan Civil Rights Initiative (Michigan 06-2), Western Michigan University can still take active steps to advance diversity and inclusion as educational resources. The Diversity and Multiculturalism Action Plan (DMAP) that was approved in 2006 provides an excellent road map for progress. We recommend that WMU work diligently to review and reaffirm the DMAP goals and establish clear accountability measures to ensure they are met. Some of the key goals include:

- Develop a university-wide understanding of diversity and inclusion;
- Develop competencies among administrators, faculty, staff, and students that enable them to work productively across cultural differences.

- Assess the campus climate regularly for diversity, and share the information widely with the university.
- Include the advancement of diversity as a criterion for the evaluation of administrators, faculty and staff.
- Institute an ongoing diversity program for new students, faculty and staff.
- Offer mentoring for all new faculty members.
- Audit the campus to ensure that the environment is barrier-free and accommodating for people with disabilities.
- Generate new ways of retaining administrators, faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds.

Medical School Development

Among WMU constituents, there is awareness and excitement about the prospect of a new medical school and also some concern about how it might affect the existing schools and colleges in an already constrained resource environment. University leaders are proceeding in their planning in a manner that would give the institution the most reasonable likelihood of complying with accreditation standards. For instance, since the medical school would be operating as a part of a university, the administration has begun to formally delineate the relationship between the medical school and WMU; the medical school would be a private extension of the state institution, developed in partnership with regional hospitals, and would not divert university funding already in place. WMU is beginning to define the governance structure of the medical school, has appointed an Interim Dean, and is moving toward the appointment of a founding Dean and the school's senior leadership team. Because issues of institutional strategic planning already noted in the Assurance Section of this report are pervasive, institutional leaders might be especially sensitive to the need for transparent communication of all planning related to the new school. In addition, leaders might also want to give some thought to how best to avoid any perception that leadership's attention has been substantially diverted from the issues of the rest of the university, especially some pressing issues such as the state budget, strategic planning, enrollment management, *etc.*, in favor of bringing on the new medical school.

As WMU moves through the necessary steps for accreditation with LCME (Step 2 is "Candidate School" status, Step 3 is "Preliminary Accreditation" status, Step 4 is "Provisional Accreditation" status, and Step 5 is "Full Accreditation" status), the institution must also be mindful of necessary compliance with HLC policies and procedures for institutional changes requiring Commission notification or approval.

Planning Issues

In order for WMU to move forward with its planned transition to a research university with a medical school, a strategic plan for its research agenda coupled with budgetary investments will almost certainly be necessary. Such a plan will probably include significant start-up funds, facilities for new labs, return on investment expectations for seed monies, strategic hiring, defined clusters of excellence, targeted development efforts, an expansion of the research support operations of the institution, and a variety of other dimensions. The WMU planning process should attempt to not lose sight of the role of a regional university in providing the arts, humanities, social sciences and cultural advantages to its students and community. Serious consideration should be given to the impact of this research/medical school move on the campus

culture, in order that WMU can continue to enjoy and benefit from the pride and dedication of its constituents that is currently prevalent throughout the institution and region.

Planning for the future may require attention to the efficient utilization of space and facilities, addressing market compression issues within the faculty ranks, a serious consideration of the ability of the institution to continue its very generous benefits package, decisions about capacity planning vs. managing enrollment, integrating the insight and expertise of chairs and directors into the overall vision for WMU, and reallocation of resources away from certain academic and non-academic programs for investment in others that show promise for enhanced impact and sustained success. WMU currently has the opportunity to explore, shape and define its future as an institution, but in order to advance in a direction that will lead to success it would be advisable to plan inclusively and thoughtfully.

Library Development

As WMU continues its development as an institution, its library will need to evolve to be a partner in how WMU meets its teaching, research, and community service goals. As of the visit, the University Libraries (Waldo and two small departmental libraries) were adequately staffed to meet the needs of a primarily masters-level teaching-oriented regional university. Four areas will need attention for the future:

- Defining a research-level library
- Supporting new program development, particularly in new areas (such as new languages) and doctoral (particularly research) level study in existing areas
- Preparing for a medical school
- Caring for institutional archives and local historical holdings

Research-level library. Research universities are often members of the Association of American Universities. This currently has 63 public and private members, including the University of Michigan and Michigan State University.

The counterpart for libraries is the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), founded in 1932 and currently having 125 members---114 universities with the remainder comprised of national or specialized libraries. Members include the University of Michigan, Michigan State University, and Wayne State University.

ARL libraries are all very large entities. Only five of 114 university members currently have a professional-plus-support staff size under 100 (Colorado State, 99, Howard and Kent State at 95 each, and Texas A&M and Auburn at 90). WMU currently has 82 professional and support staff. WMU currently has half the number of librarians as the smallest ARL member.

Reaching the level of library resources represented by the ARL membership would require significant increases in staffing and materials, suitable for supporting a truly comprehensive research institution. However, it is not necessary to be an ARL member to support doctoral level study, especially for an institution that is gradually adding research doctorates (Ph.D.s); this can be addressed on a program-by-program basis.

Doctoral and other program support. Another concern is support for new programs at any level. Some areas are shared by several disciplines, such as health administration information shared by

allied health programs. However, each full bachelor's and master's program also comes with a unique set of needs that should be budgeted for in the program planning process. Adding programs places stresses on the library that are different in proportion to stresses on departments. A few new students in an area may require just a few new faculty (or adjuncts) but full library resources. It is far more difficult for a library to support 50 new students who are in 5 new programs than 50 new students in one program. Librarians can provide estimates of new program needs. Without an adjustment for new programs, the effect necessarily is to shift resources from existing programs, leading to serving neither old nor existing programs well.

Medical School. WMU University Libraries are adequately, if lightly, staffed to support health science programs, though there is no health sciences library. More growth in advanced practice nursing, in particular, is likely to generate more needs. A medical school has specific and extensive needs. Inflation and high prices in medical *information* are as endemic as in medical *care*. WMU librarians report that the local hospitals have medical librarians but that those librarians have said they would be unable under current circumstances to provide support for undergraduate or graduate medical education.

The LCME standards for accreditation for medical schools specify the need for adequate library resources and services, and this will need to be developed as part of the proposal for the new medical school.

Archives. Ten years ago, the site visit team noted, "The most striking deficiency of the library system is the setting of the Archives and Regional History Collections Library. The collection was moved to temporary quarters in East Hall during renovation of the Waldo Library." The 2010 Self-Study indicated that ideas for moving the collections to other spaces had been proposed, but neither the self-study nor interviews with librarians identified any progress on this matter; the materials are still in East Hall (which does not house anything else).

In the age of shared scholarship made possible by digitization, institutions have a special responsibility for those materials that are unique to them, particularly archives and local historical materials. If they do not care for them (in their original, analog state), no other copy exists. If they do not provide access to them, they will not influence scholars nor be available to people in the future. They also represent an educational opportunity: engaging WMU students in original historical research in their own communities with primary materials.

There are three potential responses for this situation: providing institutional resources as part of WMU's service to its community, giving up the materials, or seeking grant/donor support for preservation, digitization, and organization. If WMU is unable to provide suitable housing for local historical materials, it should consider donating/moving them to a historical society, state library, or other agency. The federal Institute of Library and Museum Services provides grant funding, either directly (for large/model projects) or through state block grants (Library Services and Technology Act/LSTA) for projects such as this. Projects that involve local communities and also bring together different cultural organizations such as museums, libraries, and historical societies are particularly valued (www.ims.gov). Although the State Library of Michigan appears to have focused its current LSTA attention on basic library access

(www.imls.gov/pdf/5yrplans/MIplan2012.pdf), other donors may be interested in this area and universities may be able to influence the priorities of the next LSTA plan.

Paper materials kept in inadequately maintained facilities will eventually be destroyed through mold and acid deterioration. WMU is urged to take action to salvage its archives before this occurs.

Trustee Training Program

The Trustees we met were enthusiastic supporters of Western Michigan University and were highly knowledgeable about the University and its operations. Each had been very successful in personal endeavors and had been engaged in public service before joining the board. They did concede, however, that the concept of shared governance was new to them when they began their service as trustees. When asked about any training that had been provided for them upon their joining the board they indicated that there was little to none. Consequently, we recommend that WMU develop a training program for new members of its Board. The Association of Governing Boards (AGB) provides training and consulting services for governing boards and would be a very good source of assistance in planning training and orientation experiences for new board members.

Benchmarking

When asked about peer and aspirational institutions, members of the WMU community hesitated, equivocated, and struggled to identify a ready list of universities in several conversations. The *2009-10 University Fact Book* (pages 76, 119, 131) did include a list of peer institutions that was used for comparison of tuition and fees. It is clear that benchmarking can be a difficult task, since no institutions are identical but there can be value in members of an institution having a common agreement of peers for operational as well as aspirational purposes. We recommend that members of the WMU community widely discuss peer and aspirational institutions. We anticipate that this discussion will help WMU as it strives to grow and develop.

III. RECOGNITION OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS, PROGRESS, AND/OR PRACTICES

Improvement in Retention

Through a wide array of initiatives and programs (including first-year seminars, learning communities, special interest housing, parent programming, and a tailored orientation effort led by the Center for Academic Success Programs and other units), Western Michigan University has made laudable progress in improving the first-to-second-year retention rates.

Sustainability Initiatives

Western Michigan University has committed itself to a program of sustainability that permeates the campus. This commitment is far more than just recycling. A sophisticated strategy is in place to renovate buildings and build new buildings that meet the highest standards of energy conservation. For example, buildings are renovated with energy conservation as a driving principle. The funds saved through energy conservation are then applied to future energy

conservation projects. This ongoing plan results in a decline in campus expenditures for energy and renovated buildings that are more environmentally friendly. New buildings are designed and built with the highest LEED standards in mind. An example of this work is the construction of the new classroom building, the new Sangren Hall. Evidence of the institution's commitment to sustainability is that in August 2009, *Princeton Review* named WMU as one of the state's most sustainable universities, placing it third among the state's college and universities overall (*Self Study Executive Summary*, p. 3).

Programs for Military Service Veterans

Western Michigan University has been a national leader in providing support for veterans of military service. We were told that the enrollment of veterans was the largest in Michigan and 16th in the nation. Veterans are automatically provided with instate tuition and support is provided for returning veterans under Western Michigan's Returning Veterans Tuition Assistance Program. Western Michigan University is to be commended for its forward-thinking programs for veterans. We were impressed with the proactive efforts of the University to offer support for returning service members.

Foster Youth Support (John Seita Scholars Program)

Western Michigan University has committed itself to providing support for students who grew up in foster care. No longer eligible for foster care when they reach the age of maturity, these individuals do not have the forms of support that are available to students who have parents and siblings upon which to rely. Accordingly, WMU has put support in place to assist these students. According to the Self Study (Executive Summary, p. 3) WMU's Foster Care Initiative in Higher Education/Seita Scholars Program is the nation's largest and most inclusive higher education outreach to former foster care youth." The program includes renewable scholarships for eligible students and support as they engage in life transitions (<http://www.wmich.edu/fyit/>).

Highly Dedicated Faculty and Staff

While this is true of so many institutions of higher education, we were very impressed with the level of commitment expressed by faculty and staff to Western Michigan University. Our impression is that faculty and staff morale is high, and that members of the institutional community look forward to the future with enthusiasm. Many members of the campus community we interviewed reported that that they were more optimistic about the university's future than at any time during their time at WMU. Credit for the dedication of faculty and staff goes to those institutional members, of course, but the climate in which they work is a reflection of the campus leadership and the efforts made to make institutional members a part of a "campus team."

Development of Campus Plans

To advance its commitment to inquiry and discovery, WMU has established the Business Technology and Research Park and the Richmond Center for Visual Arts. WMU has also demonstrated its ability to align planning with mission through its development of a campus

master plan, business plan, academic affairs strategic plan, Western Edge and IT plan, the creation of several successful research centers, as well as key infrastructural improvements, including constructions and renovations of teaching facilities such as the Chemistry Building and Brown Hall.

Highly Satisfied Students

The students we interviewed expressed great satisfaction with their experiences at WMU. They indicated that they get quick, accurate responses from faculty and administrators when they have questions or have problems that need special attention. Several indicated that they had sent electronic messages to the president and had received responses in less than 24 hours. The students also indicated that they routinely receive syllabi for their courses and that the syllabi are followed rigorously. They also indicated that if they needed a letter of reference from a faculty or staff member, that they had no trouble in securing this form of support.

Successful Efforts at Internationalizing the University

Under the guidance of the Haenicke Institute of Global Education and a Faculty Senate Council, WMU's goal to be an "internationally engaged" university has been advanced through a variety of initiatives, including a new dual degree program with the University of Malta, the establishment of a Confucius Institute, participation in the American Council on Education's Internationalization Laboratory, establishment of five Transnational Education programs, and increased support for study abroad, international students and international faculty research.

Improvement in Governance and Campuswide Communication

In the past four years, Western Michigan University has made strides in creating a more open governance model. Faculty, staff, students and other constituents applauded the administration's willingness to listen to and communicate with them on key university decisions. The members of the Board of Trustees regularly interact with the President, Faculty Senate, and other administrators, staff, faculty and students to establish and guide University policy. The Faculty Senate assumes a wide range of responsibilities, including regular examination of the University mission and key policies. Transparency and accountability are advanced through formal collective bargaining agreements and regular evaluations of the president, provost, deans, chairs, directors and faculty senate. Key events, decisions and policies are published on the president's public website and an electronic newsletter. We encourage WMU to make continued improvement in promoting shared governance and collaborative decision-making on key priorities.

Community Efforts

We encountered and interviewed enthusiastic members of the Kalamazoo community and beyond who expressed gratitude to the University for its outreach and engagement with the larger community. The University has worked tirelessly to develop and sustain positive relationships with the larger community. Collaborative activity pervades WMU and is not merely the effort of one office or unit. Rather than being insulated from it, the University eagerly seeks

to develop partnerships with the community and regionally-based leaders and organizations, and should be commended for these successful efforts.

*Team Recommendations for the
STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS*

INSTITUTION and STATE: Western Michigan University, MI

TYPE OF REVIEW (from ESS): Continued Accreditation

DESCRIPTION OF REVIEW (from ESS):

DATES OF REVIEW: 10/18/10 - 10/20/10

Nature of Organization

LEGAL STATUS: Public

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: No Change

DEGREES AWARDED: B, M, S, D

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: No Change

Conditions of Affiliation

STIPULATIONS ON AFFILIATION STATUS: Accreditation is limited to degree programs offered in the state of Michigan, St. Louis, Missouri; the MBA program offered in Singapore; and the Master of Arts in Criminology, Law and Public Policy offered as a dual degree with the University of Malta in Valetta.

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: No Change

APPROVAL OF NEW ADDITIONAL LOCATIONS: Prior Commission approval required.

TEAM RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVAL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION DEGREES: New Commission policy on institutional change became effective July 1, 2010. Some aspects of the change processes affecting distance delivered courses and programs are still being finalized. This entry will be updated in early 2011 to reflect current policy. In the meantime, see the Commission's Web site for information on seeking approval of distance education courses and programs.

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: No Change

REPORTS REQUIRED: None

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: No Change

OTHER VISITS SCHEDULED: None

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: Focused Visit; a visit on Planning to occur in 2011 – 2012.

Summary of Commission Review

YEAR OF LAST COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION: 2000 - 2001

YEAR FOR NEXT COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION: 2010 - 2011

Team Recommendations for the
STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: 2020 – 2021

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

INSTITUTION and STATE: Western Michigan University, MI

TYPE OF REVIEW (from ESS): Continued Accreditation _x_ No change to Organization Profile

Educational Programs

	Program Distribution	Recommended Change (+ or -)
Programs leading to Undergraduate		
Associate	0	
Bachelors	148	
Programs leading to Graduate		
Masters	68	
Specialist	1	
First Professional		
Doctoral	29	

Off-Campus Activities

<p>In-State:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Campuses: Additional Locations:</p>	<p>Present Activity:</p> <p>None Battle Creek (WMU-Battle (Kendall Center)) ; Benton Harbor (WMU-Southwest) ; Big Rapids (Ferris State University) ; Grand Rapids (WMU-Grand Rapids: The Graduate Center-Beltline) ; Grand Rapids (WMU-Grand Rapids: The Graduate Center-Downtown) ; Holland (JCI) ; Lansing (WMU- Lansing) ; Marquette (Northern Michigan University) ; Muskegon (WMU-Muskegon) ; Royal Oak (WMU-MetroDetroit) ; Saginaw (Saginaw Public School District) ; Southfield (WMU-MetroDetroit) ; Traverse City (Traverse City)</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Course Locations: 5</p>	<p>Recommended Change: (+ or -)</p>
<p>Out-of-State:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Campuses:</p>	<p>Present Wording:</p> <p>None</p>	<p>Recommended Change: (+ or -)</p>

Additional Locations: None
Course Locations: None

Out-of-USA: Present Wording: **Recommended Change:**
(+ or -)
Campuses: None
Additional Locations: Valetta, Malta (University of Malta) ; Singapore, Singapore (Singapore)
Course Locations: None

Distance Education Programs:

Present Offerings:

Bachelor - 14.3601 Manufacturing Engineering offered via Broadband lines;Internet; Bachelor - 19.0704 Family Systems offered via Internet; Bachelor - 19.0706 Child Development offered via Internet; Certificate - 13.0501 Educational/Instructional Media Design (Certificate (grad) in Education Technology) offered via Internet; Master - 13.0501 Educational/Instructional Media Design (Masters degree in Educational Technology) offered via Internet; Master - 13.1009 Education/Teaching of Individuals with Vision Impairments Including Blindness offered via Internet;Videocassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMs; Master - 13.1009 Education/Teaching of Individuals with Vision Impairments Including Blindness offered via Internet;Videocassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMs; Master - 13.1009 Education/Teaching of Individuals with Vision Impairments Including Blindness offered via Internet;Videocassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMs; Master - 13.1009 Education/Teaching of Individuals with Vision Impairments Including Blindness offered via Broadband lines;Videocassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMs; Master - 13.1101 Counselor Education/School Counseling and Guidance Services offered via Broadband lines;Videocassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMs; Master - 13.1316 Science Teacher Education/General Science Teacher Education offered via Internet; Master - 13.9999 Education, Other offered via Broadband lines;Internet

Recommended Change:
(+ or -)

Correspondence Education Programs:

Present Offerings:

None