

Response to Suggestions from the 1995 NCA Site Team Report

October 2005

Introduction

In addition to the six concerns listed in the NCA Site Team report concerning the 1995 Self-Study for Continuing Accreditation, the Site Team provided [thirteen suggestions for institutional improvement](#). Almost all of the suggestions in the Site Team's report arose from the University's own recognition of the related issues, as stated in the 1995 Self-Study Report. During the 10 years since the suggestions first appeared, the University has either implemented or made progress toward implementing all those suggestions that continue to be relevant. Drawing from reports provided by the University's North Central Association Review Committee in 1998 and 2000, and from the HLC Self-Study Steering Committee work of the past two years, the following responses have been prepared to address those thirteen suggestions. The suggestions, as worded in the 1995 Site Team report, are presented in italics, followed by the University's responses, and have been arranged according to the following topics:

- Diversity
 - Faculty & Staff
 - Students & Curriculum
- New Graduate Program funding
- Gender Equity in Athletics
- Assessment
- Catalog and Mission
- Faculty Improvement through Evaluation
- Student Services
 - Catalog
 - Services
 - Facilities
- Office of University Advancement

Diversity

Faculty & Staff

Suggestions:

- a. *Take leadership role in initiating activities with the City of Springfield and other major area employers to create a more welcoming climate for minorities.*
- b. *Office of Affirmative Action should report to President.*
- c. *Faculty, staff, and administrative searches should be stopped and reopened when there is not evidence of representative applicant pools.*

Response:

Each of these suggestions has been implemented. These items are discussed in more detail in the Self-Study report, Building on Excellence, within Chapter 6 "Missouri State as a Distinctive Organization," in the ["Appreciating Diversity" section](#).

- a. Missouri State works closely with the city and with the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce in a variety of ways to improve the quality of life for all current and future residents. Examples include
 - Good Community and other activities sponsored by the University, sometimes in conjunction with other organizations, often foreground issues of diversity (see chart in section b.3. below).
 - Faculty serve on community boards and commissions, including City Council and Chamber of Commerce.

- Since 1995, the Office of Equal Opportunity has been involved with several activities in collaboration with the community that foster a supportive environment for minority employees.
 - 1997, in partnership with the Coalition for Change in Springfield, the Office administered a community climate survey.
 - Annually on Martin Luther King Day, in conjunction with the City of Springfield, the Office sponsors the Multicultural Opportunity Festival. Elementary and Secondary public school teachers participate as a part of their in-service training.
 - Frequently in collaboration with the Mayor's Commission for Human Rights, the Missouri Commission for Human Rights, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and the American Association for Affirmative Action, the Office provides training for institutions on appropriate hiring and employee environment.
 - The University requires "A Matter of Respect" orientation session on diversity for all employees.
- b. Jana Estergard, Equal Opportunity Officer, reports to the President. In addition, the Officer provides annual reports of data to the Administrative Council and the Board of Governors. These reports soon will be available to the public through the Office of Equal Opportunity Web site.
- c. The hiring plans and procedures that have been implemented by the University and monitored through the Office of Equal Opportunity since 1995 assure that searches will not occur without evidence of representative applicant pools.

Students & Curriculum

Suggestions:

- a. *The University should add a multicultural curricular component to the General Education to provide common knowledge and understandings for students.*
- b. *Given that the University produces more teachers in Missouri than any other institution and that the classrooms of the future will be highly diverse, the College of Education should consider adding a component to the professional- education curriculum that specifically addresses multicultural, gender-fair, and disability-sensitive needs in the classroom.*
- c. *University programming should invite more minority cultural performing groups and speakers of note.*

Response:

Each of these suggestions has been implemented and, as stated above, is discussed in [Chapter 6](#) of the Self-Study report, Building on Excellence.

Funding & Staffing New Graduate Programs

Suggestion:

Once there is assurance of funding for graduate programs, a careful staffing and recruiting plan should be developed to facilitate successful hiring in the various new programs and to further affirmative action goals in under-represented areas.

Response:

As stated in Chapter 1 of Building on Excellence, in the ["Responses to the 1995 Self-Study" section](#), the University has made significant progress in staffing its graduate expansion and in developing quality programs. Planning is in place for further strengthening of graduate programs and related infrastructure. Missouri State University is committed to further development of its public service as the graduate-education center of the region

Gender Equity in Athletics

Suggestion:

The Athletic Department should achieve gender equity as outlined in its proposed plan.

Response:

As stated in Chapter 1 of Building on Excellence, in the ["Responses to the 1995 Self-Study" section](#), the University is in compliance with Title IX. Details of progress in this area are elaborated in Chapter 6 of Building on Excellence, in the section ["Being Accountable."](#) In sum, with the establishment of gender equity goals and a gender equity management plan in 1996, great strides have been made in the areas of participation opportunities, scholarship opportunities, and operational and facility support for female

student-athletes.

Assessment

Suggestions:

Departments could be encouraged in the use of multiple measures in order to provide a wider range of assessment results and to be able to develop measures which relate more specifically to the goals and objectives of their programs.

- a. The annual reports prepared by academic departments should be much more explicit in documenting the improvements made in curricula and instructional programs as a result of analysis of assessment results.
- b. Assessment should be viewed as an integral part of the ongoing processes of program review, planning, and budgeting.
- c. The processes for evaluation and improvement of the assessment program should be clarified.

Responses:

Responses to these suggestions are incorporated within Chapter 4 of the Self-Study report Building on Excellence, within the section "[Assessing Student Learning](#)." In sum, Missouri State has moved beyond planning for assessment and has begun demonstrating that assessment is used to improve student learning. Additionally, the planning and budgeting process reflect the results of these assessments. The Office of Institutional Research and the Center for Assessment and Instructional Support have established an annual program of outcome measures to provide academic review statistics to develop longitudinal descriptions for academic units. The outcome measures link planning, resources, and performance in academic units and the University. A cyclical review of academic units permits continuous improvement and progress monitoring. The Office of Institutional Research and the Center for Assessment and Instructional Support annually collect the data and compile a summary report. This process maintains a continuous set of data for ongoing and future-oriented support requests, decisions, reports, and reviews. Dr. Martha Kirker, Director of the Center for Assessment and Instructional Support, has prepared a chart of "Data Sources for Student Outcome Data" that depicts this link. Assessment is now an integral part of graduate as well as undergraduate programs, and documentation of assessment results is an expected part of program improvement.

Catalog and Mission

Suggestion:

The section for each academic program in the Undergraduate Catalog should begin with a statement of the mission and purpose that not only describes the program, but also relates the department to the University's broader mission thrusts. These need not be exhaustive, but some concept of the purpose of each program should be presented.

Response:

Since the 1995 site visit, the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs, including the Web version, have changed dramatically, increasing in both format and increased number of pages. Detailed information concerning the mission and purpose of each of the approximately 150 programs are found on the extensive and continuously improving web pages, as described in the Self-Study report, Building on Excellence, in Chapter 1 within the section "[Development of a Mission](#)" and in Chapter 6 within the section "[Having an Unambiguous Mission](#)."

Faculty Improvement through Evaluation

Suggestion:

The purposes of faculty evaluation as indicated in the Faculty Handbook address only administrative purposes such as merit pay. Although some departments have established their own faculty evaluation system for improvement purposes, there is a need for University efforts to support such activities as peer observation, mentoring, student observation and feedback, and encouragement of co-publishing by new faculty. Such activity would address the responsibility of the University to assist faculty to be successful in their careers. This is particularly important for the new female faculty and faculty of color on whom the institution has expended resources to attract to the University.

Response:

[The Faculty Handbook](#) was revised after the 1995 site visit. The Faculty Handbook was undergoing revision again during the 2004-05 academic year. Most significantly, the recent revision includes the work of a sub-committee on "Faculty Evaluation." At the time of this writing, the revision had not been completed; the revision draft, however, includes a Mission-based Evaluation Model. The model, linking the University's mission with what faculty actually do, incorporates Ernest Boyer's Scholarship Reconsidered and

subsequent works.

Missouri State University Mission-Based Evaluation Model - April 2005 Draft 8

TENURE		PROMOTION			
Mission-Based Goals in Teaching:	Developing Educated Persons	Developing Educated Persons	Citizenship and Service Learning (public affairs)	Accessibility	Diversity
Teaching Evaluation Criteria	Basic effectiveness in cultivation of student knowledge and skills. Understanding of relationship to general education Continued professional development	Basic effectiveness in cultivation of student knowledge and skills. Understanding of relationship to general education Continued professional development	Successful integration of course material within social context	Special efforts in making learning opportunities accessible to multiple audiences	Special efforts to use diversity in broadening perspectives
Mission-Based Goals in Research:	Contribute knowledge and/or expertise to field. The five modes of research are considered as equal in value	Contribute knowledge and/or expertise to field. The five modes of research are considered as equal in value	Application of research to University constituents (public affairs)	Transmission (public affairs)	Student involvement in research
Research Evaluation Criteria	Peer-reviewed activities in research	Peer-reviewed activities in research	Documented application of research to social, cultural or public contexts	Special efforts in transmission of research to broad audience	Special efforts to involve students in faculty research
Mission-Based Goals in Service:	University citizenship	University citizenship	Public service (public affairs)	Professional service	Professional consultation
Service Evaluation Criteria	Participation in self-governance activities at the department level or higher	Participation in self-governance activities of University. Includes departmental, college, and university level service activities	Using professional skills and expertise to serve community, state or national public constituents	Serving in professional associations in one's field	Using expertise in field to provide professional consultation services

Faculty evaluation for improvement has been implemented in several additional ways since 1995:

- The Academic Development Center sponsors numerous activities designed to improve teaching and learning.
- Academic Affairs sponsors the semi-annual Showcase on Teaching, begun in 1999.
- The Educational Technology Center (ETC) has been established.
- Mentoring of new faculty has been implemented in all departments.
- Academic Affairs sponsors additional programs, such as New Faculty Orientation.
- Four colleges have college-wide student evaluation of instruction. All departments in the other two colleges conduct student evaluation of instruction.
- Peer evaluation and peer mentoring are used in many departments and is being considered by Academic Affairs for University wide adoption.
- Collaborative research is accepted and encouraged.
- Promotion and tenure guidelines have been revised and made more consistent across campus. These encourage mentoring by providing clearer expectations of success and improvement.
- [HLC Report of the Faculty Concerns Committee](#), a standing University committee, lists ten ways "to assure that competent faculty are hired, reappointed, promoted, and granted tenure":
 - have vision for its future development. This means discussing how future vacancies will be filled (what area of study should be continued / added) before they arise.
 - begin the hiring process quickly when a vacancy arises.
 - have a clear (and transparent) idea of what kinds of persons will and will not be asked to serve on hiring committees.

- o treat courteously and equitably candidates who are invited to campus.
- o be able to honestly say to new faculty, "Here are our expectations. If you fulfill them to our satisfaction, then we expect to tenure you."
- o establish clear, detailed requirements for promotion, reappointment, and granting of tenure and give a printed copy of the requirements to each faculty member. Non-tenured faculty should be told exactly what is expected of them in terms of how much and what type of research that is expected. They should be told how their teaching will be evaluated -- either through faculty evaluations or peer review. They should be given guidelines on the type and amount of service expected. And they should be told how much weight will be given to research, teaching and service for tenure and promotion.
- o give new faculty specific instructions about what a personnel committee wants in a dossier and the order in which material should be presented. An evaluation form may be created to evaluate faculty based on specific criteria so as to lessen the political aspect of the assessment process. Requiring each member of the personnel committee to be responsible for filling out an evaluation form on the faculty member under review perhaps may help to ensure that a dossier is carefully examined.
- o have an open and collegial atmosphere which is likely to contribute to candidate retention.
- o become actively involved in mentoring new faculty members (providing them with specific direction in terms of teaching, research, service, etc., demands of their department). A mentor should be appointed for new faculty to answer their questions and be a sounding board for ideas and frustrations. The mentor should be a senior faculty member who is sincerely interested in helping new faculty succeed. The mentor could be the first evaluator of the material (dossier) the faculty member will present to the personnel committee.
- o in addition to the mentoring process, have the department head take an active role in monitoring the progress of the young/new faculty member and make opportunities available in which he/she can become involved - be it teaching, research, or service. Sometimes a new faculty member needs additional help in the very beginning of their career. Both the mentor and the department head are crucial at this stage of a junior faculty member's career.

Student Services

Catalog

Suggestion:

Student services should be included as a separate category in the student handbook rather than by alphabetical order.

Response:

Missouri State no longer publishes the student handbook, Bear Facts, reviewed by the site team in 1995. This information may be found in the Undergraduate Catalog (pp. 36-52) and [online](#). Additionally, much of the student services information is published each term in the class schedule.

Services

Suggestion:

Consideration should be made of moving two student- support services out of the College of Education and into the University College where similar services are provided. The two services include 1) the function of the Learning Diagnostic Clinic that addresses services to learning disabled (leaving the testing function in the Psychology Department) and 2) Reading 107 which could be offered as a developmental reading course. Reading 107 is delivered by the Coordinator of the Reading and Stud- Skills Lab located within the Department of Curriculum and Instruction I the College of Education. Students sometimes need Reading 107 in addition to IDS 110.

Response:

- The University reorganization of 1994 relocated the Department of Psychology from the College of Education to the College of Health and Human Services. In 1996, after review of the function of the Learning Diagnostic Clinic, policies and procedures were implemented that provided for initial screening of any disability, physical or learning, to be conducted by Disability Services. Any student with a potential learning disability is referred to the LDC. This collaborative effort has proven to be beneficial to students as well as staff.
- The former Reading 107, revised and numbered as IDS 117, is, along with IDS 118, part of the Collegiate Reading and

Learning Program, housed within University College. Even with the increasing admission requirements of the University, there are students who benefit from IDS 117 and 118.

Suggestion:

The Learning Diagnostic Clinic support services should be provided in the summer sessions.

Response:

The staff and services of the LDC have been expanded since 1995. The LDC is open year round.

Suggestion:

The student support-service areas should develop and administer quality control instruments as well as a comprehensive survey in concert with the educational- outcomes assessment initiatives.

Response:

Student Affairs assesses activity, as do other units on campus, in a number of ways. These include participation in the Performance Measure and goal setting processes. In 2003-04, staff began discussing collecting data to evaluate productivity and meeting goals. They have been asked as they set goals and objectives for 2004-05 to assess all programs they offer, based upon this data. A listing of assessment activities by office can be provided upon request.

Facilities

Suggestion:

The University should address concerns, consistently expressed, relative to space needs in the student support- service areas.

Response:

An extensive renovation of the Campus Union, now renamed the Plaster Student Union, was completed in 1999. While facilities may be tight, these are greatly improved over the past decade.

Office of University Advancement

Suggestions:

A plan should be developed for fund- raising priorities, in reference to the Themes in the Long Range Plan, which would not allow the Foundation debt problem to diminish the extensive fund- raising potential for the University.

The Development Office should add support staff. Addition of staff would ensure both the debt pay-off and successful new fundraising projects, i.e., Public- Affairs building, library additions, etc.

Response:

The suggestion of gearing fundraising to the University's mission should not have been present in 1995, since the mission had only just been adopted and the University had not yet had time to incorporate it into existing structures. Nonetheless, it is now apparent to anyone reviewing the materials for The Campaign for SMS and [Chapter 1](#) of the Self-Study report Building on Excellence that all of our fundraising efforts are mission driven. Since the "debt" situation was mentioned in 1995, much progress has been made by the Office of University Advancement in both planning and realizing debt pay-off.

In May of 2006, the Kenneth E. Meyer Alumni Center will be owned free and clear by the Missouri State University Foundation. We have been paying down the debt at \$20,000 a month or \$240,000 a year. When those additional monies become available, it will allow the Foundation to process some maintenance and programming issues that have been deferred.

Staffing in University Advancement has suffered along with the rest of the University. In 1996, this office lost an Assistant Director of Development and a secretarial position because of budget cuts. Those responsibilities were absorbed by existing staff.

Two years ago when the office was on the verge of filling the Director of Major and Planned Gifts position, budget cuts again forced the unit to leave the position vacant. Most of those responsibilities were absorbed by existing staff.

University Advancement has netted staff gains, however. With the initiation of The Campaign for SMS: Imagine the Possibilities, the Office was able to hire a Director of Prospect Research and a Development Specialist, and (with a commitment from the President's office) five Directors of Development and two graduate assistants. Through 100% private funding, athletics development has been

able to add an additional Assistant Director, a secretary, and two graduate students.

Conclusions

The University has considered all the suggestions listed in the 1995 NCA Site Team Report and has addressed most of them. Evidence of continuing improvement or total implementation exists for most of the suggestions.

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