Introduction to the Report of the Higher Learning Commission
Of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools
Consultant-Evaluator Team Visit

Although institutional reaccreditation by the Higher Learning Commission of the North

Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA) occurs only once every ten years, the

preparation leading up to the reaccreditation is complex and time-consuming. The self-study

process was formally begun in February 2000, with the appointment of Dr. Roanld Modras,

Professor in Theological Studies, to chair the Self-Study Steering Committee. Hundreds of SLU

ASSURANCE SECTION

SECTION ONE

REPORT OF A VISIT FOR CONTINUED ACCREDITATION OF

SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY

St. Louis, Missouri

April 15-17, 2002

for

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

EVALUATION TEAM

Dr. Shirley J. Barton, Executive Dean for Regional Campuses, Kent State University, Kent, OH 44242

Dr. Guillermina Engelbrecht, Professor, College of Education, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM 87131

Dr. Sandra Marie Flake, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences, University Of Northern Colorado, Greeley, CO 80639

Dr. Jerry Israel, President, University of Indianapolis, Indianapolis, IN

Table of Contents

St. Louis University

**THE ASSURANCE SECTION
FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION VISIT**

I.   CONTEXT AND NATURE OF THE VISIT

A. Institutional Context

- With two campuses and 13 schools and colleges, Saint Louis University (SLU) is a large**,** complex, Catholic-Jesuit urban university. The past ten years have been among the most eventful in its 184 year history. In 1994, the Carnegie Foundation classified Saint Louis University as a Research II university and now**,** through reclassification, as a Research-Extensive University.

- Saint Louis University has gone from a primarily commuter to a residential institution for undergraduates to a institution that, today, has tripled the number of students living on campus. Moreover, it has gone from being viewed as a regional university to one with a national profile.

- The University has employed a wide variety of means to communicate the meaning and import of its Catholic, Jesuit mission. The "Decade of Renaissance," just passed, has proved to be a bridge to a new, modern era, and one that holds a bright promise for all involved with this forward-thinking and progressive university.

B. Unique Aspects of the Visit

- None

C. Off-site or Branch Campuses Visited

- Two team members visited and evaluated the Madrid, Spain campus of Saint

    Louis University on April 4-5, 2002. This visit was made for the purpose of

    evaluating campus facilities, the administration, and the faculty for the

    adequacy of offering degree programs. In addition the request to offer the

    M.A. in English as the first degree offered by the Madrid campus was

    evaluated.

D. Interactions with Institutional Constituencies

- The full range of mid and senior level administrators, faculty, and students

II   COMMITMENT TO PEER REVIEW

    A. Comprehensiveness of the Self-Study Process

- The self-study process extended over a two plus year period and involved wide representation from within the University.

- The self-study addressed all criteria in a comprehensive manner and was easy to read. It included strengths/challenges for all major areas.

- Twelve subcommittees involving close to 100 persons studied numerous specific aspects of the University.

- At the open faculty session, a significant number of faculty members noted that they were familiar with, or had been involved in, the Self Study process.

    B. Integrity of the Self-Study

- The self-study represented an honest and comprehensive portrayal of Saint Louis University. Faculty, staff, administrators, students, and alumni were familiar with the self-study. No one within the Saint Louis University community, with whom the Team spoke**,** challenged the content or the process from which the self-study emerged.

- The Team found no inconsistencies in the self-study.

- The self-study was congruent with the materials reviewed on campus.

- The self-study was congruent with individual interviews held on-site.

    C. Capacity to Address Previously Identified Challenges

- The University is capable of and willing to address challenges. Previously identified challenges included issues of governance,

disappointment that SLU, from that individual's perspective, lacked flexibility

with its doctoral programs

- The Jesuit identity and legacy has been reaffirmed in the past decade.

- There is a strategic planning process underway; planning is now being addressed at the unit level. This planning process is based on the mission and goals.

- Strategic decisions by the Board of Trustees and the President during the past decade have been appropriate to promote the mission of SLU, e.g., Project SLU2000 and the sale of the Saint Louis University Hospital to Tenet Corporation to better support medical education.

- The institution is clearly mission driven, as reflected in a prevailing effort to excel as the "finest" Catholic Jesuit University in the United States. All campus stakeholders understand and communicate this pervasive central purpose.

- Saint Louis University employs a wide variety of approaches and techniques through which to receive feedback from its many constituencies. That information is used to evaluate its purposes and chart new or revised directions.

- Each division of the University has its own publication or publications. The mission of the University is clearly stated in all publications.

Evidence that needs strengthening

- Comprehensive and consistent evaluation of mission and goals has not been achieved completely in spite of several efforts to address assessment broadly.

- **Governance—Internal**

  – The University has a capable

- The University appropriately uses significant tuition discounting to foster its enrollment goals with regard to both the quantity and quality of the students it recruits.

- The University has a well-managed advancement function and has been raising approximately $30 million a year from all sources.

Evidence that needs strengthening

- Fast moving changes have required centralized strategic decision making perceived by some negatively and as too centralized.

- Communication to and from the President's Coordinating Council is a concern. The group's meetings are confidential and while minutes are kept, no effort is

- The Student Services structure appears to work well, with professionals in all associated areas working together to meet the needs of students and assist the institution accomplish its purposes.

- While very traditional in organizational structure and programming, the University Libraries effectively serve the scholarly information needs of

- The Athletic Division contributes effectively to the quality of the overall University experience by offering highly competitive sports in a major conference.

- An exceptional range of spiritual and service opportunities are offered through the Campus Ministry Office. These opportunities clearly help the institution accomplish its purposes.

Evidence that needs strengthening

- The School of Allied Health needs permanent leadership.

- All health programs express desire for more diversity; such diversity is particularly needed in the faculty.

- Satisfaction with shared governance varies among health related programs, ranging from significant satisfaction to significant dissatisfaction.

- A *coherent* program of assessment of the liberal arts core curricula has not been developed completely or

have not been identified comprehensively. Thus, it is not completely clear

what the specific core learning outcomes are, and

an effective planning process that offers the means to

Evidence that requires attention and Commission follow-up

None.

Recommendation of the Team

Pattern of evidence sufficiently demonstrated; no Commission follow-up

recommended by the Team.

5. **CRITERION FIVE**

   The institution demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships.

   Evidence that demonstrates fulfillment of the criterion

   - The Registrar described a standard transcript process with adequate attention to

     details.

   - The integrity of the transcript process is assured through protection of student

     records.

   - The Registrar clearly articulated an understanding of the responsibility for

     integrity of academic records.

   - The University is aware of federal and other rules and regulations and adheres

     to these matters in excellent fashion.

   - The University is successful in addressing gender balance among the faculty.

   - Printed handbooks clearly describe duties and obligations of those responsible

     for providing services. They detail procedures to seek clarification or to

     address grievances.

- Student transcripts follow commonly accepted practices and are reflective of academic experience.

- Saint Louis University has a long and effective history of working collaboratively with other institutions of higher education in the region.

- The institution has a remarkably deep and functional capacity to oversee and monitor the many programs and partnerships it supports.

- An Associate Provost for Research spearheads an active and comprehensive Institutional Review Board made up of 22 faculty members and supported by six full-time staff.

- Effective and ethically-grounded policies and procedures are in place and are adhered to by administrators as well as the student association.

- The University maintains an enviable relationship with its alumni and support for the University from alumni is strong.

Evidence that needs strengthening

- The success shown in attracting female faculty needs to be extended to minority faculty, as the University is aware.

- The University should consider broadening its notion of "minority" beyond African-Americans to include aspects of the newer immigration, such as Latinos and Southeast Asians.

Evidence that requires attention and Commission follow-up:

None

Recommendation of the Team

Pattern of evidence sufficiently demonstrated; no Commission follow-up

recommended by the Team.

VI.   REQUEST FOR CHANGE—MADRID, SPAIN CAMPUS

On April 4-5, 2002, two members of the Comprehensive team conducted an evaluation visit to the Madrid, Spain, campus to review the institution's request for authorization to offer degrees at that location. The site visit was made for the purpose of evaluating facilities, administration, and faculty for the adequacy of offering degree programs. In addition, the visitors reviewed the MA in English, proposed as the first degree to be offered. Finally, the site visit also provided an additional opportunity to evaluate the site's contribution to international education at Saint Louis University.

Over the last several years, under the tenure of the current Vice-President, the mission of the Madrid campus has become increasingly degree oriented. Its initial role was as a study abroad site, and in that role it has long been and continues to be recognized for its quality. In recent years the emphasis increasingly has been on preparing Spanish and other international students for transfer to the St. Louis campus and, therefore, the campus provides two to three years of appropriate curricula that address core requirements and provide introductory courses appropriate for transfer to 16.005

Evidence that supports the Request for Change

- The human resource base of the Madrid campus is well developed. The faculty and support personnel are employed under Spanish labor laws, and because of prior development of the campus as a site for study-abroad and to offer courses of study preparatory to transfer, the full campus infrastructure has been developed and is in place, with the Vice-President reporting to the Provost of the St. Louis campus.

- The faculty, staff, and facilities are adequate to deliver existing and immediately proposed programs. The proposed MA program is a joint effort with both the Saint Louis campus and with the Universidad Autonoma de Madrid (UAM). Students will earn two degrees: An M.A. from Saint Louis University and an MA. from UAM). The dual degree program will enable graduates to have their degree recognized for employment in the public sector (public schools, for example) in Spain. All internal and external approvals have been completed.

- The MA. program in English is well designed, and the resources to support it are in place. The degree offered is the same degree provided on the home campus and the degree requirements are the same. The program is structured for completion in two years, during which students will complete study in six terms (quarters), five of them on the Madrid campus and one at the St. Louis campus (typically summer). Curriculum is approved through the curriculum process of

the St. Louis campus. Students must take three courses from the St. Louis

campus and may take no more than half their coursework from the UAM

- Faculty are approved to teach in the program through meeting the graduate

 faculty standards of the St. Louis campus, and the curriculum offered for the

 program is drawn from the curriculum of the St. Louis campus. The Madrid

 campus will provide three literature faculty

the program will provide opportunities for research projects that are ESL

related. The St. Louis campus English department is very supportive of the

project.

- Primary advising will be done by the Madrid campus faculty, with the

availability of a secondary content advisor from among UAM or St. Louis

campus faculty.

Evidence that needs strengthening:

- Before adding additional degree programs, the Madrid campus should use a

similar development process to the one just employed, analyzing

assessment; and implementation of assessment is generally consistent at the unit

level; however not all of the elements for a comprehensive and university-wide

plan are in place. Quality control of student outcomes measures is not evident

across the entire University; improvement of programs based on feedback is not

consistent; information is not aggregated institution-wide; monitoring and

reporting is not consistent; and assessment of the Core Curriculum has not

developed.

ADVANCEMENT SECTION

SECTION TWO

REPORT OF A VISIT FOR CONTINUED ACCREDITATION OF

SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY

St. Louis, Missouri

April 15-17, 2002

for

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

EVALUATION TEAM

Dr. Shirley J. Barton, Executive Dean for Regional Campuses, Kent State University, Kent, O 44242

Dr. Guillermina Engelbrecht, Professor, College of Education, University of

THE ADVANCEMENT SECTION
FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION VISIT

I. OVERALL OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE INSTITUTION

Saint Louis University has made remarkable progress in the last decade under dynamic, stable leadership. One result is a transformed campus that could be the envy of any urban university seeking to create an identity. But the campus transformation is more than bricks and mortar, green space and sculpture. The campus community has overwhelmingly embraced the mission of the University.

The mission distinguishes Saint Louis University from other universities in the immediate area. With success come new opportunities and challenges. The bar of expectation has been raised among faculty, staff, students, and administrators has been raised. The University must secure new ways to meet such challenges including the need to expand externally funded research, the need for additional facilities to respond to the research mission, the need for a more diverse faculty to enrich the learning environment, and the need to find a more adequate governance relationship between the Board of Trustees and President and other campus constituencies, particularly faculty. In many places the campus is highly decentralized while, in other areas, a high level functional decentralization is evident. Some middle-level administrators believe that their talents could be better used as part of a team that is given both the opportunity and the responsibility to operate their units with more direct access to data and financial information.

In particular the Team offers the following major observations:

- SLU has made exceptional progress in the past decade, especially in strengthening, developing, and expanding academic programs.

- SLU has matured in the past decade and earned the Carnegie Research Extensive Classification. This will create the demand for substantial, new resources—for laboratories, enhanced library resources, expanded information technologies, and high caliber faculty.

- Project SLU2000 is a bold, far reaching improvement program that allocated significant new monies to various aspects of the University. The initiative was somewhat of a risk, but has paid off well to date.

- The SLU Trustees have as a goal to secure permanent endowment funds to continue the progress of Project SLU2000. Securing this goal will be critical.

- Decisive, strategic decision making by the Trustees and central administration over the past decade has positioned SLU well for the future.

- Significant steps to assure academic, research, and service quality are documented through the self-study process.

- Quality and diversity of the student body have been enhanced since the last visit. Much yet still needs to be done, especially in regard to minority diversity.

- There is a unique understanding and commitment to the SLU mission which produces a strong sense of community among faculty and staff. In a time of

great stress and tension within American higher education, this commitment

to mission should be continued and further strengthened.

- The growth in the intellectual climate of the University is leading toward a

  higher level of institutional maturity and scholarly productivity.

- There is substantial evidence of opportunities for students and faculty to

  engage in social justice aspects of mission both in programs and outreach.

- The institution is in sound fiscal condition and has benefited from a

  significant expansion of the endowment.

- The remarkable transformation of the University under the current

  President's leadership is creating an opportunity and need for new kinds of

  more inclusive constituent dialogue.

- An overall assessment plan has been completed, an officer has been

  designated as accountable for assessment, and implementation of assessment

  is generally consistent at the unit level; however, not all of the elements for a

  comprehensive plan are in place: Quality-control is not evident across the

  University; improvement of programs based on feedback is not consistent;

  information is not aggregated institution wide; monitoring and reporting is

  not consistent; and assessment of the core curriculum has not developed.

- The sustainability of programs and positions funded through SLU2000 is

  uncertain and subject to the success of the future capital campaign and/or

  future growth of the endowment.

II. RECOGNITION OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS, SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS OR EXEMPLARY INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

- The development of the Madrid campus into an international campus that serves as a transfer site for students completing degrees in the U.S. and as a degree-granting campus provides a solid opportunity to enhance the role of the University in global markets.

- The rebuilding of physical facilities and beautification of the campus are worthy of strong commendation, not only at the regional, but also at the national level.

- The University has developed several impressive museums and art galleries that demonstrate an outstanding commitment to cultural enhancement and preservation.

- The Project SLU2000 program shows uncommon Board of Trustees support for faculty and programs. The use of a portion of the endowment to move the university forward in areas of its commitment (inquiry based education and

  research growth, to name only two) demonstrably shows Board and Presidential commitment to development and change.

- The education of faculty, staff, and administration about the mission of the University and the strong commitment to its implementation is a hallmark of Saint Louis University and helps to provide a distinguishing feature in the wider community and in recruiting both students and new faculty

- The sale of the SLU Hospital to Tenet Corporation appears to have been a wise business decision, yielding investment income to cover the costs of the Medical School long term.

III. CONSULTATIONS OF THE TEAM

The consultation presented here is intended to inform the University's ongoing improvement. Implementation of these suggestions is not a requirement of continuing accreditation. Four areas were identified by the institution: (A) Recruitment and Retention of Diverse Faculty; (B) Assessment, especially at the liberal arts core; (C) Faculty Development; and (D) Movement to a Less Centralized Management Process.

A. Recruitment and Retention of Diverse Faculty

During the campus visit, it became clear that to some members of the university community, the focus of diversity initiatives is on African-American faculty. St. Louis is an increasingly diverse city, which includes wide ethnic and racial diversity. Further, the diversity of the nation continues to increase. Therefore, it would behoove Saint Louis University to make sure that the concept of diversity is broad and embraces a wide array of diverse populations.

There are a number of approaches to increasing faculty diversity. The College of Arts and Sciences this year has been quite successful in expanding the diversity of its new hires. So, the first place to look for assistance may be internally. Some of the strategies used in Arts and Sciences included working cooperatively with the faculty search committees so that they understand the importance of diversity in their searches, linking the concept of diversity to the mission, and carefully exploring ways to recruit and reach candidates. It is also important not to undersell the urban advantages of St. Louis as a community with much to offer.

Additional approaches might include developing relationships with universities who have been successful in preparing more diverse faculty, both to give their graduate students opportunities to link with SLU—research connections, dissertation assistance, etc. First-hand visits to campuses to meet and chat with graduate students throughout their programs can be valuable. Connecting with the same students at national disciplinary conferences can reinforce the interest.

Some universities have been successful with "grow your own" strategies, developing ongoing relationships with their graduates of both bachelor's and master's degree programs, encouraging them to seek doctorates with the intention of returning to their home campus, and providing them with teaching fellowships (with a reduced assignment) during their dissertations. Another approach is to have a "target of opportunity" hiring process that enables a campus to hire a candidate for a position that has not been advertised, but which will be available in one to two years due to a retirement. If a department identifies a new hire that can add diversity to its programs, or that meets another target (doctorally prepared faculty in a hard-to-hire area, for example), the dean and university determine whether they can support the faculty member until the vacancy occurs. If they agree, the candidate is invited to campus for an interview, and the process occurs just as if a full search were being conducted. The hiring is made only upon the recommendation of the department and the dean.

The University should consider involving as wide a spectrum of its community as possible when recruiting minority faculty. For example, during campus visits, candidates should meet with

community, including campus community is important to younger faculty. Community can be as

important as monetary rewards in the hiring process. Consideration might be given to senior and

mi

The institution should consider giving the assessment director authority over campus-wide assessment with sufficient resources and clout needed to develop a strong culture of assessment. The institution should consider developing a core curricula student learning outcomes and assessment model. It should consider establishing an ongoing oversight body for curriculum or create a body periodically as needed. Assessment should be managed by the assessment committee working with the assessment director or by a core curriculum committee.

To assess the liberal arts core, it is essential that student-learning outcomes for the core be developed. They can be developed across the campus and implemented in the individual core curricula. Some campuses are experimenting with capst

Walvoord is an excellent facilitator for assessment workshops, but she is in high demand and she may be difficult to secure. She frequently does pre and post-conference workshops for the AAHE Assessment Conference in June of each year. Also, AAHE has an assessment project jointly conducted with NCA that could be explored. A small number of campuses participate in collaborative assessment workshops. Information is available at http://www.aahe.org.hlc/.

C. Faculty Development

       The initiatives already undertaken by Saint Louis University, which include research support and research leaves, and some flexible reassignment of time are excellent. Further, developing workshops, symposia and seminars that bring expertise to campus rather than sending faculty individually off-campus can be excellent as well. This can be done both with teaching development and research initiatives.

       Teaming with other institutions in the city on faculty development initiatives can connect faculty with peers with similar areas of interest, and can lead to research collaborations. A shared conference on a topic of common interest, for example, could link faculty to colleagues within their own institutions and to colleagues across the community.

       Faculty Development relative to use of technology is an ongoing need in any university. Maintenance of this effort is critical for the future as technology continues to challenge all of us. Some universities have used a multi-step certification/recognition process to encourage faculty development and to recognize faculty members' investment in technology training.