


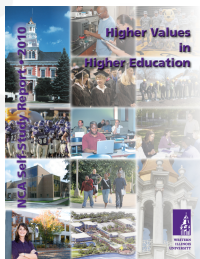

Conducting a Reaccreditation Review: Adding Even More Complexity

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Western Illinois University
Macomb and Quad Cities



WIU and Self-Study Background





Western Illinois University





Link to the HLC Web site


- First Accredited in 1912
- Accreditation has been continuous
- “Mature Organization”
 - Allowed us to apply for special emphasis self-study



Western Illinois University



- Guided by *Higher Values in Higher Education*
 - Vision
 - Mission
 - Values
 - Priorities and Goals



Western Illinois University



Macomb Campus

- Founded in 1899
- Rural location (Macomb, IL)
- Traditional Campus
- Fall 2011
 - 11,024 students
 - 2,414 employees



Western Illinois University



Quad Cities Campus

- Celebrating 100 years
- Urban location (Moline, IL)
- Commuter Campus
- Fall 2011
 - 1,372 students
 - 133 employees



Background to Self-Study

- Associate Provost and Vice President point out that accreditation is 4.5 years out to President's Cabinet
 - Do we want to remain in PEAQ or change to AQIP?
 - Attend Commission workshop to determine institutional fit



Background to Self-Study

- After attending a Commission workshop, we recommended:
 - Remaining in PEAQ
 - Updating *Higher Values in Higher Education* before engaging in the self-self study
 - Applying for special emphasis self-study




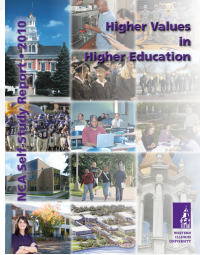
Rationale

- Updating Strategic Plan
- University Self-Study
- On-Site, Peer Review
 - Quality Assurance (Evaluation)
 - Quality Advancement (Consultant)

1. Follow-up from the last team visit
2. Institutional mission
3. Institutional planning
4. Instruction/assessment
5. Scholarship, creative activities, and life-long learning
6. Public service
7. Federal compliance (Campus Crime Statistics, Student Right-to-Know, Loan Default Rates)
8. Benefit from consultation in three more areas




Special Emphasis
Benefits and Process




Special Emphasis Benefits

- We worked with the President's Cabinet and Board of Trustees to identify strategic issues
 - That required critical study
 - To best advance the University
 - And the Special Emphasis gave us that focus



Special Emphasis Benefits

- Growing Two Campuses
- Strengthening Distance Learning
- Measuring and Demonstrating Our Values



Special Emphasis Process

- Requires an agreed plan by the Commission and Institutional Presidents
- The Commission Liaison and VP worked on the agreement before presenting for approval



Special Emphasis Process


- We used a four-step model for each of the three special emphases
- Expected outcomes were identified
- Agreed to prepare annual updates






Strengthening Distance Education

- Context
 - Enrollment and courses offered looked like a “V” on a graph
 - The model was centralized, decentralized, and then re-centralized
 - The question was how could we enhance and sustain distance learning at the University?




Strengthening Distance Education

- The intended outcomes are to develop and implement a comprehensive plan for distance education at Western Illinois University
 - with measurable goals and outcomes consistent with the University’s *Higher Values in Higher Education 2008-2018* Strategic Plan.




Strengthening Distance Education

- What are the Commission’s best practices in distance education?
- Who are peer and national best practice institutions for distance learning, and how do traits at those institutions qualify as best practice(s)?




Strengthening Distance Education

- How will the distance learning plan addresses academic plans for distance learning, assessment of student learning outcomes, faculty development and support, technological support, and other goals?




Growing Two Campuses

- Context
 - Perception that resources are finite (growth in one campus occurs at the expense of the other)
 - The State of Illinois is supporting the construction of six new buildings for an expanded WIU-QC
 - As WIU-QC continues to grow, there is need for it to have more autonomy



Growing Two Campuses

- The intended outcomes are to develop and implement a comprehensive plan for growing enrollment at WIU-QC from 1,360 students to 3,000 students
 - while maintaining the resource base in Macomb and continuing increase WIU-QC autonomy

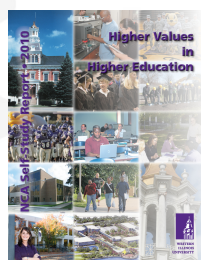


Growing Two Campuses

- What is the current status of administrative structures and academic programs on both campuses?
- How do the organizational structures compare to peer institutions (i.e., identifying opportunities for streamlining and growth as enrollment increases)?
- What are the short- and long-term plans for academic programs on both campuses?



The WIU Self-Study



Academic Year 2007-2008 (Year 1 of the Process)

- Update the University's Strategic Plan
 - Use the University's collaborative model
 - Over 30 member writing team from all areas of campus
 - Engage campus community in iterative drafting
 - Provide additional opportunities for feedback via monthly *Strategic Plan Updates*
 - Receive governance group endorsements on both campus before seeking WIU BOT approval



Academic Year 2007-2008 (Year 1 of the Process)

- Review the last on-site review team report to ensure recommendations are being addressed
- Chronicle Strategic Plan accomplishments related to accreditation
- Review accreditation criteria to see if being addressed



Academic Year 2007-2008 (Year 1 of the Process)

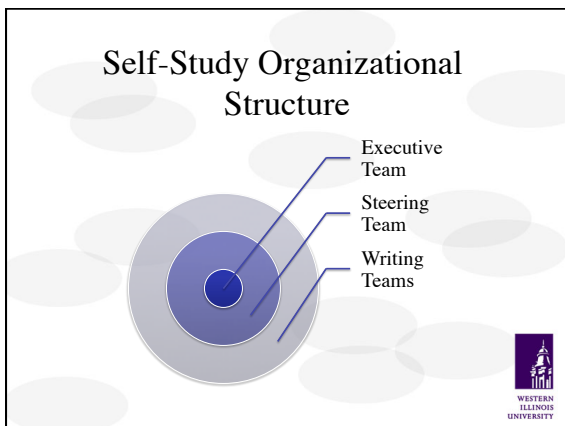
- Determine if we will continue with PEAQ or transition to AQIP





By Summer 2008

- The Board of Trustees unanimously approved *Higher Values in Higher Education 2008-2018* after receiving endorsement from all University governance groups on both campuses.
- Self-Study organizational structure formed





- ### Writing Teams (Meet as defined by the Team)
- Total of 10
 - One each for the introductory chapter, five criteria, federal compliance, and three special emphases
 - Each co-chaired by an administrator with “day job” responsibilities and a faculty member
 - Worked with SGA and Interhall Council to get students on all of the teams
- 

- ### Writing Teams (Meet as defined by the Team)
- Total of 10
 - Both campuses represented on all teams
 - Recruited members
 - “Special” members (faculty award winners)
 - Members for their expertise
 - Volunteers and “Voluntoids”
 - Over 200 campus and community members
 - Reviewed/drafted criteria and core components
- 

Steering Team (Meet Monthly)

- Co-Chairs of the 10 Writing Teams
 - Reviewed accreditation criteria and special emphasis application
 - Worked on bullet point lists
 - Understand what others are working on/avoid duplication
 - Collect data
 - Serve as liaison to the Writing Team
 - Host the On-Site Visit



Executive Team (Meetings as needed)

- One faculty and one staff member from each campus
- Responsible for all aspects of the Visit
 - Inclusive process
 - Reports
 - Resource room
 - Preparing for and hosting the on-site visit
 - Follow up



Academic Year 2008-2009 (Year 2 of the Process)

- Academic Year 2008-2009 focused on initial report drafting
- Each of the 10 accreditation teams prepared a draft report for the Steering Team co-chairs by the end of spring 2009



Summer 2009

- The Steering Team:
 - Reviewed reports, made or suggested changes
 - Teams had to narrow reports to no more than 20 pages
 - Worked with the President and Vice Presidents to update team membership lists to replace those who were no longer participating in the process



Academic Year 2009-2010 (Year 3 of the Process)

- Academic Year 2009-2010 was a year of report finalization, endorsement, and approval



Academic Year 2009-2010 (Year 3 of the Process)

- Campus feedback on draft reports was solicited at:
 - Monthly Faculty Senate and Quad Cities Faculty Council meetings
 - WIU Board of Trustees summer 2009 retreat, and March 2010 and June 2010 meetings
 - Monthly posting on the University's Accreditation website



Academic Year 2009-2010 (Year 3 of the Process)

- Campus feedback on draft reports was solicited at:
 - Macomb and Quad Cities campuses' list-servs
 - Hosting 15 campus focus groups, which were open to invited participants and all campus faculty and staff. We had 115 participants



Academic Year 2009-2010 (Year 3 of the Process)

- Endorsement was received from the:
 - Civil Service Employees Council
 - Council of Administrative Personnel
 - Faculty Senate
 - Student Government Association (Macomb and Quad Cities)
 - Quad Cities Faculty Council



Academic Year 2009-2010 (Year 3 of the Process)

- After the endorsement process was completed, the document was sent to the Western Illinois University Board of Trustees for approval to submit the document to the Commission after final grammatical editing by Document and Publication Services



Academic Year 2010-2011 (Year 4 of the Process)

- Academic Year 2010-2011 was the year of submission
- Because the endorsement/approval process was completed in summer, files were kept for each of the accreditation chapters in case there were more recent institutional developments that needed to be shared with the on-site review team

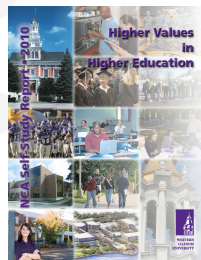


Academic Year 2010-2011 (Year 4 of the Process)

- By the end of the fall semester:
 - Resource room materials were completed
 - Third-party comment was solicited
 - The on-site review was completed in February 2011



Summary, Outcomes, and Lessons Learned



Summary Timeline

- 2007-2008 Review and update *Strategic Plan*
- 2008-2009 Draft self-study
- 2009-2010 Finalize self-study, seek endorsement from all constituencies
- 2010-2011 Submit and host team visit



Outcomes

- WIU received a ten-year re-affirmation of accreditation with no follow up visits, or reports, which is the highest outcome a University can receive
- The special emphasis produced and continued to produce meaningful change



From Strengthening Distance Learning

- A new course development and support structure is in place
- The University added a new distance learning platform, increased bandwidth by 47%, and instituted load balancing
- The University added RN-BSN to its on-line portfolio and is exploring an E-MBA



From Growing Our Two Campuses

- WIU-QC has changed from degree completion to admitting freshmen
- Time and day scheduling is now done at WIU-QC
- An academic administrative structure is being phased in



Lessons Learned

- Our inclusive planning model makes accreditation a way of life, rather than a stressful event
- Writing Teams needed to be encouraged to identify challenges in addition to strengths at the end of each chapter to make it a meaningful self-study



Lessons Learned

- In terms of writing the report:
 - At the end of the day, one person needs to go through the report from cover to cover to:
 - Cross reference rather than duplicate
 - Make the document sound like one rather than multiple authors
 - Help teams understand it is our story rather than what they want to hear.



Lessons Learned

- Have a list of acronyms in the document. Each institution has its own unique jargon.
- Have one person work with the teams and administrative offices to collect the information to be included in the resource room
- Have fun with the process and your teams



Moving Forward

- We will use the same process in pathways
- By doing special emphasized we are acclimated to the new quality initiative
- We will continue to make advancements from our special emphasis self-study



Questions?

