May 30, 2007

TO:     President John Schlegel,  
        Creighton University

FROM:   Mary B. Breslin, Associate Director

SUBJECT: Final Team Report

Enclosed is the institution’s copy of the final Team Report of a visit to Creighton University. The Commission encourages you to make additional copies of the Team Report to circulate to your constituencies. In addition, I have attached draft copies of the Statement of Affiliation Status (SAS) and the Organizational Profile (OP). These two documents, the SAS and the OP, will be posted on the Commission website after the Board of Trustees validates the accreditation decision of the Institutional Actions Council or the Review Committee. They are enclosed now for your information and for your review. You will receive an official action letter, an SAS and an OP following validation of the action by the Board of Trustees.

You are asked to acknowledge receipt of the Team Report and the SAS and OP worksheets; and to file on behalf of your institution, a formal written response to the evaluation team’s report and recommendation. Your response becomes a part of the official record of the evaluation visit. Your response also serves as an integral part of the evaluation process, and it will be included in the materials sent to the next team that visits your institution. Please send your institutional response to me two weeks after you receive this report, send copies to members of the visiting team, and set aside some additional copies for the Commission’s review process. (See Handbook of Accreditation, Third Edition, Chapter 2.2.2)

In your response, you are also asked to let me know which review option you prefer: the Readers Panel or the Review Committee. A description of these processes appears in the Handbook, Chapter 2.2.2 and 2.2.3. Please review these options and advise me as soon as possible, whether you agree essentially with the team’s report and recommendation and therefore choose the Readers Panel, or whether you wish to have the team’s report and your materials examined by a Review Committee. The next Review Committee meeting is September 24, 2007, in Chicago.

Enclosed please find three evaluation forms. In an effort to strengthen its professional development program for Peer Reviewers, the Commission is initiating this structured method outside of the institution’s formal written response to seek from the institution an evaluation of the team. We recommend that you distribute these to knowledgeable people representative of several constituencies at your institution. You can make additional copies if you wish. Your participation is voluntary but greatly appreciated.

If you have any questions concerning the evaluation team’s report, the SAS, the OP or the review options, please let me know.

Enclosures

cc:     Dr. Phillip E. Jones, Team Chairperson
ASSURANCE SECTION

REPORT OF A COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION VISIT

TO

Creighton University
Omaha, NE

March 12-14, 2007

FOR

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

EVALUATION TEAM
Constance Bauer, Provost, University of St. Francis, Joliet, IL 60435
Dale L. Beatty, Associate Vice President, Roosevelt University, Schaumburg, IL 60173
Mark E. Clasen, Professor and Chair, Department of Family Medicine, Wright State University,
Dayton, OH 45420
Donna Marie Kempf, Assistant Professor, Community Studies, Marquette University,
Milwaukee, WI 53217
Betty Jo Licata, Dean, Williamson College of Business Administration, Youngstown State
University, Youngstown, OH 44555
Richard Liu, Director, Institutional Research and Planning, University of Minnesota-Duluth,
Duluth, MN 55812
J. Patrick Murphy, Director, DePaul University, Chicago, IL 60604
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Rory Dean Smith, Associate Dean, John Marshall Law School, Chicago, IL 60604
Joseph Anthony Walsh, Professor and Dean Emeritus, Loyola University of Chicago,
Chicago, IL 60611
Phillip E. Jones (Team Chair), Vice President for Student Services and Dean of Students, University
of Iowa, Iowa City, IA 52242
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I. CONTEXT AND NATURE OF VISIT

A. Purpose of Visit

The purpose of the visit was to conduct a decennial comprehensive accreditation visit with no requests for any changes in status as directed in 1997 for Creighton University as a Doctor’s level institution limited to those programs currently underway.

B. Organizational Context

Creighton University and the Creighton College of Arts and Sciences was founded in 1878 through the generosity of Mary Lucreta Creighton to be in the city of Omaha, Nebraska. In 1892, John A. Creighton established the John A. Creighton Medical School. Between 1904 and 1928 professional schools of Law, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Nursing, Graduate Studies, and Business Administration were established. Creighton University is a Jesuit Catholic University that enacts the Ignatian objective to train moral, spiritual people to become leaders of their communities.

The University has 97 academic programs preparing students to act upon the world for the benefit of others. Creighton’s Board of Directors is made up of 30 representatives from Omaha and across the United States. The Board is currently conducting a 350 million dollar “Willing to Lead” capital campaign with the centerpiece being a Student Living-Learning Center scheduled for completion in 2008.

C. Unique Aspects of Visit

This is a standard comprehensive visit. Creighton University is a participant in the Higher Learning Commission Academy for Assessment of Student Learning.

D. Sites or Branch Campuses Visited

None

E. Distance Education Reviewed

Distance education was reviewed in the context of campus based distance learning

F. Interactions with Constituencies

President
Board of Directors
Vice President, Academic Affairs
Vice President, Administration and Finance
Vice President, Health Sciences
Vice President, Information Technology (DIT)
Vice President, University Ministry
Jesuit Community Director
Vice President, Student Services
Vice President, University Relations
Vice President, Institutional Relations
General Counsel
Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Dean, College of Business Administration
Dean, Graduate School
Dean, School of Dentistry
Dean, School of Law
Law Library Director
Dean, School of Medicine
Health Sciences Library Director
Dean, School of Nursing
Dean, School of Pharmacy and Health Professions
Dean, University College
Director, Human Resources and Affirmative Action
Faculty Governance Committee
Staff Governance Committee
Student Government
Director, Reinert Alumni Library
Open meetings:
   Students
   Faculty
   Staff
   Community
College Assessment Board
University Assessment Committee
Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Senior Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences
Faculty Council (17 people)
College of Arts and Sciences Assessment Board (13 people)
Director, Academic Excellence and Assessment
University Faculty (31)
Director, Student Retention
Director, Academic Success
Director, Student Integrity
Committee on the Status of Women (9)
Director, Institutional Research
Director, Campus Security
Director, Facilities Management
Director, CU Libraries

G. Principal Documents, Materials, and Web Pages Reviewed

Creighton University Bulletins:
School of Pharmacy and Health Professions issue 2005-07
II. COMMITMENT TO PEER REVIEW

A. Comprehensiveness of the Self-Study Process

The Creighton University (CU) Self-Study was written as a self reflective document to be used internally to link short-term planning with a previously designed strategic plan. While the self-
study was not initially clear to outside readers, the rationale was apparent to many in the University. In the unique tradition of the University as an organization, the self-study sought to create and explain balancing top-down and grassroots initiatives of planning. The report has a wide array of data, facts, and analysis that are informative but sometimes vague in terms of the overall statement. On balance, the self-study is comprehensive in terms of the goal to improve the University's process of self-reflection and improvement while earning re-accreditation in the process.

B. Integrity of the Self-Study Report

The process of developing the self-study was iterative and developed by a self-study coordinator and staff assistants. Information in the document was distributed via emails down through the organization and responses formed the basis for further development of the self-study. The data in the report provide sound documentation for the responses to the concerns of the 1996-97 accreditation report.

The organization of the self-study demonstrates the congruence of the report with the mission of the University. Evidence for the components of each criterion is clearly delineated throughout the report, and the responses indicate an emphasis on continuous improvement.

C. Adequacy of Progress in Addressing Previously Identified Challenges

The Accreditation Team verified the evidence and explanation cited in the self-study addressing previously identified challenges. The Team considers the responses of the University to be adequate.

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

Requirements were fulfilled.

III. COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

The Team reviewed the required Title IV compliance areas and the student complaint information.

IV. FULFILLMENT OF THE CRITERIA

CRITERION ONE: MISSION AND INTEGRITY.

1. Evidence that Core Components are met

Based on conversations and observations, the Team perceived that the University is
permeated by the basic tenants of its mission as a Catholic and Jesuit comprehensive University.

The mission is publicly displayed in academic buildings and in the Student Center. The commitments of the University as a Catholic and Jesuit institution are clear and articulate based on program and activity descriptions displayed publicly with the mission statements.

Through action, word, and deed the values of the institution are promoted by the trustees and administration demonstrated through the success of a capital campaign, the involvement of the administration with the community, and the support of the trustees and administration articulated to the Team by students, faculty, and staff.

The University's community and international programs demonstrate that the basic mission of service to others clearly recognizes the diversity of learners, other constituencies, and the global society.

In the judgment of the Team, the documents examined, publications reviewed and programs observed uphold and protect the integrity of the University.

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 TWO: PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE.**

1. **Evidence that Core Components are met**
To realistically prepare for the future, during the past five years, CU has expanded its physical plant by building two residence halls, two parking structures, a soccer stadium, and has acquired real estate for future expansion.

To address its resource base, in December 2005, CU launched a $350 million capital campaign goal. To date, CU has raised $296 million toward the “Willing to Lead” campaign. The University is preparing for future growth, development, and expansion through integrated capital development as evidenced by the current construction of the Harper Center designed as a one-stop center uniting academic and related student support services and a venue for alumni and visitors to interact with the University and community.

With respect to aligning planning with CU’s mission, there is general concern about continuing the Jesuit heritage across campus. Eleven of 28 Jesuit schools meet every third year to bring together 500+ hand-picked lay people who live the mission at the Heartland Delta Group conference. In addition, 5 representatives from each school meet annually to discuss carrying on the mission.

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

To enhance its ongoing evaluation and assessment processes, CU should strengthen the data on which planning and decisions are based. For example, conversations with retention staff identified those data which should be readily available in Banner to develop an in depth, analytical, and comprehensive picture of retention.

While improvements in retention rates are a goal, the institution needs to build an organized approach to retention based on data on a wide variety of variables which integrates services available from academic and student services areas and possibly from University Ministry. Effective use of data for planning and decision making requires that they be available directly to those who need them.

Wide use of institutional research data is needed in strengthening the University’s strategic planning process. Evidence linking strategic planning and budgeting appear to be sporadic and uneven on campus.

The addition of distance education to the college will place new and different demands on the college library. There is no strategic plan that focuses on preparation for the changing needs of its constituents and no regular process for using assessment data to inform library planning.

Team members reported concerns among staff and faculty about what were considered low salaries and the potential long range effect on retention of faculty and staff which is being addressed through workforce development studies by Human Resources.
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 required.

CRITERION THREE: STUDENT LEARNING AND EFFECTIVE TEACHING.

1. Evidence that Core Components are met

The Creighton University Health Sciences Library/Learning Resources Center has a distinctive mission in integrating the Health Sciences school’s education, research, and health care programs. Its interdisciplinary nature has provided a broad scope to meet the needs for different students and faculty.

Creighton has made an exceptional commitment to the use of technology in the teaching-learning process as evidenced through the number of faculty involved in the eFellows Program, the Pipeline for Innovation grants, the extensive work of the Instructional Design and Development unit, high level of activity of committees and working teams, and the University’s recognition as one of America’s “Most Wired Campuses”.

There exists an increasing number of students engaged in developing global competencies, study abroad, faculty-led programs in study abroad, and Encuentro Dominicano.

The University values and supports effective teaching, as based upon hiring practices and rank and tenure decisions that are based on new guidelines.

To enhance the effectiveness of the learning environment, CU has reintroduced a first year plan of study course (Ratio Studiorum) to examine key elements of the value of a liberal arts education, Jesuit, Catholic history, and career development.

The institution recruitment, enrollment, and orientation efforts are carefully crafted and designed to communicate cogently the spirit of a CU education. Moreover, CU’s academic advising and student life initiatives support students’ progress toward degree completion.

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

Creighton is appealing to many non white students yet the overall graduation rates lag behind those of majority students. There is a need to build an organized approach to retention based on data from a variety of variables that integrate services available from academic and student service areas and possibly University Ministry.

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.

None

Recommendation of the Team
Criterion met; no commission follow-up recommended.

CRITERION FOUR: ACQUISITION, DISCOVERY, AND APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE

1. Evidence that Core Components are met

CU demonstrates its commitment to educating the entire person through the design of the Harper Living Learning Center to unite academics and related services, faculty and staff and to engage the community.

To expand the breadth of knowledge and skill of intellectual inquiry, the faculty have received more than $45 million in grants to support teaching, research, and community service, many times supporting the integration of at least two of these areas.

While it is modest in Graduate Studies, some faculty have successful student-faculty research projects where 17 undergraduate students received summer scholarships to support student-faculty research.

In the early 2000’s an HRSA grant to the College of Medicine created the Center for Excellence (Health Care opportunities program). This has been mainstreamed since the grant funding expired. There have been modest gains in the number of
underrepresented minority faculty hires through the programs of this center.

In support of the mission of service toward others, the ILAC Program has been in existence for over 30 years and sponsors more than a hundred students annually in service learning experiences in the Dominican Republic and elsewhere.

The Law School received a $4 million gift that provided for the creation of the Werner Institute for negotiation and Dispute Resolution that allows faculty and students an opportunity to experience additional learning.

Between 1999 and 2007, over 80 faculty development programs were offered amounting to an average of 11 per year.

Programs to support staff are notable such as:

- CU has an impressive orientation program
- Several employee development programs for advancement of skills
- Leadership development programs for new supervisors, including training in the legalities of staff hiring.
- IT short courses are widely available and well received
- Staff may take two courses each semester with tuition remission
- Off-campus training opportunities are available on a negotiated basis

Staff reported that leadership listens and that they have access to decision makers. It is reported that good ideas advance, staff opinions are respected, and they are able to use creativity daily. Staff said they feel valued as reflected in the new construction of on campus parking.

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.

None
Recommendation of the Team
Criteria met; no commission follow-up required.

CRITERION FIVE: ENGAGEMENT AND SERVICE.

1. Evidence that Core Components are met

The institution provides non-credit training and educational opportunities to individuals in the community through programs such as those offered through the University College and Bryant Technology Center.

There are almost universal service learning and volunteer opportunities in the community for students and faculty in the professional schools. Likewise, this has been noted in the undergraduate schools.

The level of participation and impact in the community was confirmed by 31 community leaders who attended the open meeting for the community and gave passionate thanks and testimony as to the positive impact of CU in the community (service and comfort provided for the homeless, medically underserved, hungry and disenfranchised).

CU was recognized by the Nebraska Board of Higher Education for exemplary service in “community revitalization and cultural renewal, as economic drivers of the local economy, advocates of community service and urban developers, both commercially as well as in housing.

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

Funding for service and community outreach should be secured in the strategic planning process.

Data on service and engagement should be integrated to the strategic planning process-planning, budgeting, evaluation and reallocation.

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 required.

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
   None

5. Other visits scheduled
   None
6. **Organization change request**

None

**D. Commission Sanction or Adverse Action**

None

**E. Summary of Commission Review**

The recommendation is for the next comprehensive visit to take place in 2016-2017

Rationale for recommendation:

The team concurs that all five criteria for accreditation for Creighton University have been met with no recommendations for follow-up reports or visits from the Higher Learning Commission in intervening years.
ADVANCEMENT SECTION

REPORT OF A COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION VISIT

TO

Creighton University
Omaha, NE

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FOR

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of Iowa, Iowa City, IA
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I. OVERALL OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

Creighton University is a mission-driven and mission-centric institution with strong, trusted leadership. The culture is decidedly Jesuit in its focus on scholarship and service. It is informed by the great generosity of service from all units in the institution for a multitude of civic and nonprofit organizations in Omaha and beyond.

The institutional leadership is described as colleagues who listened, did what they said they would do and were committed to and engaged in the mission. Creighton is a people place where the institution is held together more by people engaged in the mission and Jesuit values and culture than by a strategic plan, budgeting process or other structure.

There is concern about the loss of the Jesuits over time. Some good efforts are being made to prepare lay people to continue the charisma and values of the Jesuit heritage through meetings, value-sharing and training. Some lay men and women are already committed to Ignatian values and capable of collaborating with Jesuits to extend the mission, values and charisma to the next generation. So far this is an uneasy collaboration and deserves more attention. CU has been intentional about many of its service ministry and mission outreach programs. It has the ability to be intentional in conserving and extending the Jesuit heritage if allowed and encouraged as collaborators.

As with most of the institutions of higher education in Nebraska, many students come from rural areas where interactions with different races are limited. College is probably the last place where students will get some exposure to different races before entering the global economy. If diversity embraces different strengths, recruitment of minority students is essential not only for affirmative action but also for the well-rounded education for all students white and non-white.

II. CONSULTATIONS OF THE TEAM

According to minutes of the University Assessment Committee, the institution’s planning for assessment of student learning became considerably more active in the last two years, leading to the institution’s enrollment in the Higher Learning Commission Assessment Academy. However, much is yet to be done before the institution has achieved its desired level of assessment across the institution (defined learning goals in all academic programs, measurable objectives, measurement tools, data collection and curriculum changes clearly linked to assessment).

According to interviews with the University Assessment Committee and the College of Arts and Sciences Assessment Committee, several challenges are being addressed to allow the implementation of the assessment plans. First, with regard to the use of data in developing retention plans, data does not flow easily from those who have it to those who need it. Second, some uncertainty may exist among some faculty and administrators because of unfamiliarity with the process.
The Team agreed that significant progress has been made in linking strategic planning, institutional research, and budgeting since 1997, yet improvement is still necessary. While institutional research in general plays a pivotal role in linking educational, policy and information functions in an institution of higher education, there is only a limited role of institutional research with the function of information dissemination at Creighton. Reports at the website are illustrative and insightful, but they are too few to be exclusive for evaluation of policy interests. The Team suggests the addition of 1) Clerical support for institutional research so the Director can better organize resources. 2) Addition of statistical and research expertise is needed in the office of institutional research to provide research data on student learning to help formulate strategic decisions. 3) Inclusion of institutional research in the function of enrollment management will be of great value because of the expertise of institutional research in research design and statistical analysis; 4) The function of evaluation played by institutional research will serve as the quality assurance mechanism for the integrated budgeting and planning process.