

REPORT OF A COMPREHENSIVE VISIT

TO

INDIANA STATE UNIVERSITY

February 28, 2000 – March 1, 2000

for the

Commission on Institutions of Higher Education

of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

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INTRODUCTION

Overview of the Joint NCA-ISU Strategic Planning Experiment

The Indiana State University proposed an experimental process for the preparation of the self-study in support of continuing accreditation by the NCA. Under the leadership of Indiana State University President John Moore, the university developed an extensive strategic planning process to identify appropriate directions for the continued development of the university. In recognition of the status of Indiana State University as a senior institution with the expectation of continued NCA accreditation, NCA agreed to review the use of the strategic planning process of the university as a potential alternative to the traditional self-study.

The Indiana State University strategic planning process began during the period 1992-1994 with the preparation of an initial strategic plan. That plan provided direction for the university community in addressing the needs of the university identified through the 1990 NCA visit and the transition to new leadership of the university. Members of the 2000 NCA visiting team found that the initial strategic planning success provided an important foundation for the joint NCA-ISU experiment in preparation of the 2000 comprehensive accreditation visit.

In preparing for the 2000 comprehensive evaluation review, NCA provided a team of consultant-evaluators who agreed to participate in the joint experiment to review the strategic planning process as an alternative to the traditional NCA self-study process. In preparation for the team visit to Indiana State University, the team chair and the NCA associate director assigned to provide oversight of the NCA-ISU joint experiment visited Indiana State University to complete arrangements in assisting the team to review the Indiana State University strategic planning process.

The NCA team visit to Indiana State University February 28 to March 1, 2000, focused on the use of the strategic planning process to provide adequate information for the team to prepare recommendations to the NCA Commission regarding continuing accreditation of a complex, senior university such as Indiana State University. While the NCA-ISU joint experiment recognized the appropriateness of continuing

accreditation of Indiana State University, the team reviewed many of the traditional components expected of a comprehensive visit to provide a baseline for the evaluation of the strategic planning process as a possible alternative self-study process. Members of the NCA 2000 team visited with a broad representation of the many participants who developed the strategic plan, including students, members of the faculty, administrators and other staff, alumni, trustees and members of the community. During these visits, members of the team provided a dual review of adequacy of the information contained in the strategic plan and the additional information identified by the campus community during the development of the strategic plan as background preparation for a comprehensive evaluation.

The team observed that the emphasis on the strategic planning process in the preparation of the self-study has a special benefit for the university. During the preparation of the comprehensive visit, the university experienced a change in presidential leadership. The president who has provided strong leadership for the development of the strategic planning process announced his intent to return to the faculty of the university shortly after the agreement with NCA for the implementation of the NCA-ISU joint experiment. The team observed that the planning process continued with impressive participation from all segments of the university community. At the time of the NCA visit, the university community had announced the appointment of the new president. The extensive Indiana State University strategic planning process provides the new president with well-developed plans that reflect the commitment of the university community to support the future directions of the university.

This report of the visit to Indiana State University and the review of the NCA-ISU joint experiment is organized in five major sections. The comprehensive evaluative review section documents the information the team acquired in support of the traditional NCA comprehensive review through the Indiana State University strategic planning process and information provided during the visit. The strategic planning process section provides an overview of the Indiana State University strategic planning process as an alternative to the traditional NCA self-study process. The suggestions and advice section contains the observations and comments the team provides to the university. The last section of this report provides the recommendations of the team to the NCA regarding the continuing accreditation of the

university and the NCA-ISU joint experiment to review the strategic planning process as an option for the use in the self-study phase of the evaluation for continuing accreditation.

Overview and Accreditation History of the Institution

The university was established 135 years ago by a special session of the General Assembly of the state of Indiana on December 20, 1865. It is the third oldest public institution of higher education in the state. In 1865 it was called Indiana State Normal School, and its primary mission was "the preparation of teachers in the common schools of Indiana." The Normal School admitted its first students on January 8, 1870, and awarded its first bachelor's degrees in 1908 and its first master's degrees in 1928.

In 1929, the General Assembly changed the name of the Normal School to Indiana State Teacher's College. Again, in 1961, the Indiana State General Assembly made another name change for the institution, this time referring to it as Indiana State College, and the College began offering degree programs in the many fields common to a four-year institution of higher education. It was in 1965 that the General Assembly gave the institution its present name, Indiana State University. The first master's degrees were awarded in 1928. A cooperative program with the School of Education, Indiana University, leading to the Doctor of Education degree was approved in 1948. In 1965, NCA granted approval to offer the Ph.D. degree in selected fields.

With the name change, Indiana State University enacted a change in mission and became a multi-purpose, doctorate degree-granting institution that emphasizes "personalized" undergraduate education. The institution renewed its commitment to excellence in teaching and expressed new commitments to scholarly research, publication, artistic expression, and expanded forms of public service. In that same year, Indiana State University was moved from the jurisdiction of the State Teachers' College Board of Indiana and placed under the governance of the Indiana State University Board of Trustees.

In 1918, Indiana State Normal School established a branch campus in Muncie, which became an autonomous institution in 1929. In 1965, Indiana State University assumed primary responsibility for the development of a four-year, state-assisted college at Evansville. In 1985 the Evansville campus was

separated from the authority of the Indiana State University Board of Trustees and was re-designated as the University of Southern Indiana.

Indiana State University is a mature, comprehensive institution of higher learning, offering degree programs in a broad range of disciplines at the associate, baccalaureate, master's and doctoral levels. The major academic units within the university are the College of Arts and Sciences; the School of Business; the School of Education; the School of Health and Human Performance, Physical Education, and Recreation; the School of Nursing; the School of Technology; and the School of Graduate Studies. Selective admission occurs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. In the fall of 1999-2000, Indiana State University enrolled around 11,000 headcount students of which approximately 1,600 were graduate students.

The main campus of Indiana State University adjoins the north side of Terre Haute's central business district and covers some 91 acres in the heart of the city. Two family student apartment complexes sit on a fifteen-acre site one mile south of the main campus. A Memorial Stadium and a nine-hole golf course are located two miles east of the campus on 51.6 acres on Wabash Avenue. Northwest of the main campus are 95 acres along the Wabash River designated to be developed as an athletic center.

Indiana State University earned initial accreditation from NCA in 1915 and has continuously had this status of affiliation reaffirmed. Throughout the 1990s, since its last NCA review, Indiana State University has responded well to the state's changing needs and to the rapidly changing environment of higher education.

II. EVALUATION FOR AFFILIATION

In agreeing to the NCA-ISU joint experiment to use a strategic planning process as an alternative to the traditional self-study, the NCA recognized the special status of Indiana State University as a senior institution with appropriate expectations for continuing accreditation. As part of the NCA-ISU experiment, the NCA 2000 team reviewed selected areas of university operations to evaluate the adequacy of the

information provided through the strategic planning process in comparison to that provided by the traditional evaluation processes.

Compliance with General Institutional Requirements

While visiting with members of the university community, members of the NCA team verified the information provided for use as indicators of accomplishment of the General Institutional Requirements and the Criteria for Accreditation. Additionally, the university provided information to the NCA team to assist in the comparison of the strategic planning process and the traditional self-study process to accomplish the preparation expected to support a NCA team for a comprehensive evaluation visit.

The NCA team found the university demonstrated compliance with all General Institutional Requirements as detailed in the following information.

Mission

1. It has a mission statement, formally adopted by the governing board and made public, declaring that it is an institution of higher education.

The institution has formally adopted a clear statement of mission as a publicly-supported institution of higher learning. It "embraces its mission to educate students to be productive citizens and enhance the quality of life of the citizens of Indiana by making the knowledge and expertise of its faculty available and accessible." The mission statement was developed and refined from the 1990 NCA Report. An ad hoc committee that addressed the strategic initiative from the 1994 University's Strategic Plan conducted the revision and the mission explication generated during the 1997 strategic planning process that was further refined and updated during the strategic planning process. The institutional mission statement is sensitive to its regional and statewide commitment, yet integrates its influence at the national and international levels.

2. It is a degree-granting institution.

Indiana State University offers an array of associate and baccalaureate degree programs, master's degree programs, educational specialist, and doctoral degree programs in selected

disciplines and professional fields. Requirements for each of these programs are clearly detailed in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs.

Authorization

3. It has legal authorization to grant its degrees, and it meets all the legal requirements to operate as an institution of higher education wherever it conducts its activities.

Indiana State University operates its educational programs by authority granted from the Indiana State Board of Trustees as delegated by the Indiana General Assembly. This authority conforms to all applicable federal, state, and local laws. The Indiana Commission for Higher Education has the power to approve new degree programs.

4. It has legal documents to confirm its status: not-for-profit, for-profit, or public.

The State of Indiana establishes Indiana State University's status as a public institution.

Governance

5. It has a governing board that possesses and exercises necessary legal power to establish and review basic policies that govern the institution.

The Indiana State University Board of Trustees Bylaws and State of Indiana statute provide the Board of Trustees authorization to exercise control of the University. The Board is autonomous in its exercise of legal power to govern the University.

6. Its governing board includes public members and is sufficiently autonomous from the administration and ownership to assure the integrity of the institution.

Board members are appointed by the Governor of Indiana.

7. It has an executive officer designated by the governing board to provide administrative leadership for the institution.

The President of Indiana State University is the chief executive officer.

8. Its governing board authorizes the institution's affiliation with the Commission.

The Board of Trustees authorizes Indiana State University's affiliation with the Commission.

Faculty

9. It employs a faculty that has earned from accredited institutions the degrees appropriate to the level of instruction offered by the institution.

Indiana State University is a doctoral granting institution where 83.1% of the tenure and tenure-track faculty hold terminal degrees. Among full professors, 91.1% hold the doctorate, while 76% of the associate professors hold the doctorate.

10. A sufficient number of the faculty are full-time employees of the institution.

The fall 1998 data show that 80.4% of the faculty were full-time appointments.

- 11 Its faculty has a significant role in developing and evaluating all of the institution's educational programs.

A University Assessment Advisory Committee was created to establish principles and policies for assessing student outcomes for undergraduate and graduate programs. Undergraduate programs are reviewed on five-year cycles that include departmental self-studies. Review of the graduate programs is conducted by the School of Graduate Studies in collaboration with the Dean of the appropriate college or school. The Curriculum and Academic Affairs Committee reviews program proposals and reports their recommendations to the Faculty Senate.

Educational Program

12. It confers degrees.

Indiana State University confers undergraduate and graduate degrees across a broad range of programs. Indiana State University conferred 1,933 degrees in 1998-99.

13. It has degree programs in operation, with students enrolled in them.

The number of graduates in the 1996-1999 time frame vary considerably by program. There are 155 associate, baccalaureate, and graduate degree programs in operation. Of these, 47 have graduated at least 10 students in each of the three-year periods; 83 have graduated fewer than 10 and 25 programs have not had a graduate in the past three years.

14. Its degree programs are compatible with the institution's mission and are based on recognized fields of study at the higher education level.

The mission statement declares that "the University provides quality, affordable academic programs and educational environments to foster holistic student growth and development."

15. Its degrees are appropriately named, following practices common to institutions of higher education in terms of both length and content of the programs.

Degree programs are consistent with the nomenclature used by the Indiana Commission on Higher Education and similar institutions in the United States. Degree programs conform in length and content with national norms.

16. Its undergraduate degree programs include a coherent general education requirement consistent with the institution's mission and designed to ensure breadth of knowledge and to promote intellectual inquiry.

The *Undergraduate Catalog* 1998-2000 describes the general education requirements. These requirements constitute 47 credit hours of a student's undergraduate work. A technological literacy competence was introduced recently as a response to the demands of the university's emerging pedagogy.

17. It has admissions policies and practices that are consistent with the institution's mission and appropriate to its educational programs.

The Undergraduate Catalog describes the general policy, application procedures, and requirements for freshman, transfer, and international students. The admissions standards are

traditional and exceptions are possible. Students may be admitted conditionally through the Academic Opportunity Program. Transfer admissions are guided by clearly stated standards of credit hour transferability. The new partnership with two-year institutions has produced formal transfer agreements that permit students to complete a baccalaureate degree either through on-campus programs or the DegreeLink distance education program.

18. It provides its students access to those learning resources and support services requisite for its degree programs.

Indiana State University provides access to its resources and support services through a variety of means. The Student Academic Services Center provides free tutoring in subject areas. The Writing Center provides diagnostic and tutoring services to more than 2,000 students each semester. The International Affairs Center provides services for international studies and study abroad services. Library Services and Information Technology provides traditional library service and 24-hour computing lab access at the center of campus. The Counseling Center provides prevention and early intervention services along with health and wellness programs.

Finances

19. It has an external financial audit by a certified public accountant or a public audit agency at least every two years.

An external audit occurs annually as required by Indiana Statute. The State Board of Accounts does the audit.

20. Its financial documents demonstrate the appropriate allocation and use of resources to support its educational programs.

The university uses appropriate allocation and budget review processes for the management of fiscal resources.

- 21 Its financial practices, records, and reports demonstrate fiscal viability.

The university provides fiscal reports as required by the state that insures fiscal viability.

Public Information

22. Its catalog or other official documents includes its mission statement along with accurate descriptions of: its educational programs and degree requirements; its learning resources; its admissions policies and practices; its academic and non-academic policies and procedures directly affecting students; its charges and refund policies; and the academic credentials of its faculty and administrators.

The team confirmed that the institution does indeed publish in its catalogs, in its annual and semester course schedules, in the admissions materials, and in other recruitment literature and public relations materials, all of the required information.

23. It accurately discloses its standing with accreditation bodies with which it is affiliated.

Recognition by accrediting agencies of degrees and programs is stated in Indiana State University's *Undergraduate Catalog* 1998-2000 edition.

24. It makes available upon request information that accurately describes its financial condition.

All financial audits are public documents. These documents are available in the Indiana State University library. Paper copies are distributed to financial institutions and Indiana legislators.

Governance, Administration, Organization

As a publicly funded institution, Indiana State University has an obligation to respond to the state's needs. This obligation manifests itself through the Governor's appointment of Trustees to govern the university and through the coordination of the mission and programs by the Indiana Commission for Higher Education, whose members are appointed by the Governor. As the same time, the tradition of higher education in the United States has placed principal authority over academic programs in the hands of the academic community. Faculty governance representatives with whom NCA 2000 team members met indicate that shared governance at Indiana State University works well. The development of the strategic

plan is an example of how progress has been achieved in collaborative efforts of the faculty and the administration.

Student government leaders with whom the NCA 2000 team visited also indicate that they are well informed in decisions that affect their lives at the university and that they have appropriate access to faculty, administration and trustees.

Faculty believe that items which are in the domain of the faculty responsibility, such as curriculum, in fact, are decided by faculty. However, there is recognition by members of the faculty that the delivery of programs through distance education will require an examination and adjustment in the process for faculty control of academic delivered offerings through distance technologies.

General Education

In 1989, Indiana State University implemented a new discipline-based general education program designed to encourage each student's development as a rounded human being, an informed citizen, and an individual capable of functioning effectively in an evolving society. The new general education program is monitored by the General Education Council comprised of faculty elected by the governance units in the schools and colleges.

The program was evaluated five years after initial program implementation by the General Education Assessment Committee, and a comprehensive report was issued on January 18, 1995. Subsequently, a General Education Working Group, an ad hoc committee established by the Provost, recommended several changes intended to enhance the existing general education program rather than create a new program. Two notable changes are the elimination of the partitioning feature of the earlier program and the introduction of a liberal studies capstone requirement.

In 1998, the recommendations of the General Education Working Group were accepted or approved with modifications by the General Education Council, the Curriculum and Academic Affairs Committee, the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate, and the Faculty Senate. The December 1998 issue of a

campus newsletter entitled, *General Education Dialogue*, indicated that the changes—to be implemented in 2000/2001 as the General Education 2000 program— should help students, faculty, and advisors understand that general education is a coherent program rather than a disconnected array of courses; the program is parallel to and interdependent with the major, sharing common goals; and the program prepares students to live, work, and function successfully in contemporary society.

There are two components to the General Education 2000 program: Basic Studies and Liberal Studies. Basic Studies is designed to enhance students' abilities in English composition, communication, quantitative literacy, information technology literacy, and foreign languages and to improve their physical fitness for life. In Liberal Studies, students fulfill course requirements in five core areas (Scientific and Mathematical Studies; Social and Behavioral Studies; Literary, Artistic and Philosophical Studies; Historical Studies; and Multicultural Studies). Some courses are required (foundational) and others are electives.

All courses in each area are designed (1) to develop students' capacities for independent thinking, critical analysis, and reasoned inquiry; (2) to improve students' writing, speaking, reading, and listening abilities; (3) to enhance students' capacities for making informed judgments and responsible choices; and (4) to help prepare students to meet the challenges of their post-collegiate lives. Additional learning outcomes have been established for each of the core areas.

A carefully conceived system for approving courses for General Education 2000 has been developed. Faculty must submit detailed information illustrating how their proposed courses will help students achieve the intended learning outcomes. They must address staffing and evaluation issues, and they must submit a full syllabus. This system will also form the basis for a course-embedded student outcomes assessment program in general education that will replace the previously used portfolio assessment system that did not work well in Indiana State University's context. Approximately \$100,000 will be devoted to faculty development in spring and summer 2000 to help faculty develop courses for the program.

While a great deal of faculty time and expertise have been devoted to the development of a general program at Indiana State University in the past 15 years, continuing leadership will be needed to guide the program through its next implementation phase. There appears to be need for the further development of evaluation and assessment mechanisms that guarantee continuous improvement of both processes and student learning. There is also need for additional dialogue with faculty, students, and advisors about the nature of the program and fundamental issues in the design of the implementation of the program.

Recruitment and Retention

A plethora of strategies and programs have been implemented following the first strategic plan. They have seemingly stopped the enrollment decline and improved undergraduate student recruitment and retention in several significant areas. The university has sought and attracted well-prepared students through Presidential, Alumni, and Academic Scholars Programs. The university has significantly increased the diversity of the student body through successful targeted minority and international recruitment efforts. As an example, the percentage of the undergraduate student population for students of color has risen from eight percent to almost thirteen percent, a significant increase for which faculty and staff are to be congratulated.

In the 1994 strategic plan, Indiana State University identified diversity as a critical educational, moral and legal goal. Recruitment and retention efforts clearly reflect attention to achieving that goal. While much has been achieved, there is much that remains to be accomplished in order for the institution to be "recognized for its commitment to equal educational opportunity, its ethnic and cultural diversity, and its international perspective." This is confirmed by Indiana State University's re-commitment to the diversity goal in the 2000 Update. Given the diverse and complex world in which Indiana State University graduates, indeed all college graduates, will live and work, the institution is encouraged to continue to vigorously pursue the diversity goal in this as well as other areas. Such recruitment and retention is central to the quality of the education of all Indiana State University students.

Through program development, Indiana State University has sought to attract new students. One of the new programs is an innovative Ph.D. program in Technology Management, introduced in 1998. It is a program offered cooperatively with eight other universities located in seven states and holds promise for enrolling significant numbers of students. Elimination of programs that have few students, little potential for growth, and take valuable resources is necessary if additional new programs are to be added at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Retention programs, including a Lilly grant to develop a first-year experience, and remodeled residence halls and facilities have also helped to increase enrollment. While there has been no significant change in Indiana State University's six-year graduation rate for undergraduates, the conditionally admitted students cohort graduation rate has increased from 14 percent to 20 percent and African Americans from 16 percent to 27 percent.

OR

Indiana State University's recruitment and retention successes stem from the agreement of the faculty and staff on, and their commitment to, the central goal of the university: "to be a benchmark university known and admired for its teaching excellence and a national example for the distinctiveness and quality of the undergraduate educational experience."

Undergraduate and Graduate Student Recruitment and Retention must of necessity continue to be the focus of attention in the next decade. Demographics indicate that the region will not experience an increase in traditional school-age population.

The strategic planning process has provided direction for the continued improvement of programs for the recruitment and retention of students. The proposed implementation initiatives will require the allocation of additional resources, most likely available through the reallocation of program funding. The university is encouraged to continue to give high priority attention to the recruitment and retention of all students.

Distance Education

Indiana State University has offered distance learning programming for more than 35 years. The university's early offerings concentrated on delivering business courses to its campus in Evansville using the Indiana Higher Education Telecommunications System. Two developments in the 1990s have led to an increased emphasis on distance education at the university. First, rapid developments in technology, especially the Internet, made the delivery of pedagogically sound, highly interactive education feasible. Second, the DegreeLink program led to the full articulation of 28 baccalaureate program with Ivy Tech State College and Vincennes University. DegreeLink participants are drawn from throughout the state for students who are not able to move or travel to Indiana State University to complete the final two years of study. Nine of the DegreeLink degrees are currently offered in a distance format, using television, web-based, and correspondence courses. DegreeLink currently enrolls 377 students with 201 students taking at least one distance learning course and one-third of the students enrolled solely in distance delivered courses.

Besides those offered through DegreeLink, the university has an additional seven distance delivered degree programs from the associate to doctoral level and more than 200 individual courses. Indiana State University has a total of 16 degree and 8 certificate programs offered at a distance. These programs include the Indiana Department of Corrections Program that delivers training to IDOC employees at their work sites using the Indiana Higher Education Telecommunications System as well as asynchronous Internet communication tools. Through self-pay and under DOC guidelines, ISU allows prisoners to take over 55 courses offered by 21 departments by correspondence. With 20 percent of the graduate student enrollment through distance education, graduate programs recognize the need to better support existing distance programs and to position themselves to respond to new demands for distance programs.

Indiana State University's distance education offerings use a variety of modes of delivery, primarily print-based correspondence and electronic online Internet-based delivery with some interactive video employing the state's IHETS network. The Division of Lifelong Learning within which Distance Learning is housed has been a locus of rapid expansion, growing from 1200 students in fiscal year 1998 to 2200 in 2000, with Distance Learning seeing the vast majority of this growth. Indiana State University has

positioned itself well to take advantage of the shift toward more adult students interested in lifelong learning and to students who are time and place bound and are looking for distance learning opportunities. The Office of Distance Learning offers a variety of professional development opportunities to faculty as well as the full range of services necessary to assist faculty in preparing their courses for distance delivery. Most notably, 165 faculty, roughly one-third of all full time tenure-track faculty, have attended the Course Transformation Academy. This has resulted not only in the development of numerous pedagogically sound courses for distance delivery, but also has led to the wide use of technology throughout the curriculum.

The Office of Distance Learning was the recipient of a \$1.15 million Learning Anytime Anyplace Partnership Grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education. The grant will be used to develop a virtual instructional design application. This application, which will assist faculty in the designing courses for online delivery, should be of great value not only to Indiana State University faculty but to all faculty interested in developing high quality courses for online delivery.

While some faculty raised concerns about quality, workload, and intellectual property issues often associated with distance education, there seemed to be widespread commitment and even excitement about the university's distance learning efforts among both faculty and administration.

Low Enrollment Programs

The Indiana Commission for Higher Education has identified the need to evaluate the resources allocated to low enrollment programs offered by the state's public institutions.

The team noted that there remains significant numbers of programs at Indiana State University with low enrollment. The NCA visiting team in 1980 and 1990 made a similar observation and in the reports of those visits urged that the university address the continued allocation of resources to programs with few or no graduates.

In March 2000, Indiana State University offered 156 degree programs, including all associate, baccalaureate, educational specialist and doctoral degrees. In December 1999, the Commission accepted actions taken by Indiana State University to delete eight programs from the previous total of 164 degrees. Additionally, there are 24 programs of the currently authorized 156 programs that remain part of the Commission's Low Enrollment Program Initiative.

The Commission's criterion for low enrollment is ten or fewer graduates in a five-year period. Seven of nine associate degree programs graduated less than ten students in each of the last three years. Of eighty baccalaureate degree programs, fewer than half graduated at least ten per year in the past three-year period.

In the judgment of the team, the university must give the highest possible priority to the implementation of processes to redirect the use of resources historically allocated to low enrollment programs so that these resources can be reallocated to support the achievement of the high priority goals of the new strategic plan.

Specifically, the current team agrees with the NCA team that visited ten years ago that the institution needs to systematically review and streamline its academic programs. In its self-study, Indiana State University acknowledges that it has several undersubscribed majors that should be merged or eliminated to enhance quality and achieve greater efficiency.

The team recognizes that institutions of higher education generally find it difficult to eliminate academic programs, yet this is necessary in Indiana State University's case. While in almost all other areas Indiana State University has been proactive, in the reduction of low enrollment programs the university community has been passive and reactive at best. The NCA visiting team of twenty years ago identified the need to reduce low enrollment programs as a concern; ten years ago the NCA team expressed concern with the continued number of low enrollment programs and also recommended that the institution address this continuing concern; the State Commission has expressed concern for low enrollment programs; and the

self-study agrees that there may be too many programs for the size of the faculty and student body. It is time to develop the mechanism essential to effectively address this concern.

Addressing this issue will require strong administrative and faculty leadership and is likely to result in resources that can be reinvested/reallocated in the academic area to further move Indiana State University forward in accomplishing its goals. The team strongly recommends that Indiana State University systematically address this issue even if the institution continues to do well in generating external resources.

Information Technology Support

Indiana State University has made great strides establishing and maintaining an information technology base to support its core mission. Indiana State University has responded well to the challenges of the information age by capturing and strategically allocating key resources. Through a combination of university, state, and federal resources, nearly \$18 million in one-time support was spent and more than \$6 million in operating support was added in the decade. The challenge for the university is to develop a financial plan that strengthens the operating fund base for information technology in the event that one-time support from state carry-over funding diminishes.

The core technology infrastructure has undergone considerable transformation in the past ten years. Academic user resources and facilities are excellent. The introduction of a faculty computing resource center and construction of the student-computing complex provide an effective environment for teaching and learning. The Faculty Computing Resource Center provides multimedia services to faculty and assists them with integrating technology in teaching. The Course Transformation Academy is an innovative service that provides faculty development in instructional and distance education technologies. Student access to microcomputers is far above the average for institutions of Indiana State University's size. Because of adequate funding, a four-year replacement cycle for all public labs has been implemented.

The consolidation of services into a coherent administrative unit, the Information Services Division, provides an organizational focus to guide overall strategic master planning in information technology support. Library and other information technology services, policies, and procedures have improved dramatically. Administrative software improvements have been made, although some dissatisfaction in areas other than financial record transactions remains. User satisfaction with basic management reports is solid. Telecommunications and networking services are adequate and planned upgrades are anticipated.

Information technology planning and support are related directly to Indiana State University's mission. Information technology master planning is well underway and appears highly supportive of the university's overall strategic direction. Resource investments have increased network speed and reliability with a campus fibercable network that includes primary access to the Indiana Higher Education Telecommunications Systems. These investments provide strategic support for the university's new initiatives in promoting access through DegreeLink distance learning. The result is improved technological services for teaching and research. The DegreeLink program is an effective strategy for providing baccalaureate degree programs to students statewide.

The university is to be congratulated for its commitment to technology that has resulted in the development of key partnerships to provide state-of-the-art programming. As an example, the doctoral program in technology management developed by the School of Technology is the result of partnerships with eight other universities in the nation. The Information Services Division should be encouraged and support continued to explore partnership opportunities that will provide further infrastructure enhancements.

Human Resources

The self-study identifies significant strides made by the university in addressing human resource needs. During the last ten years, promotion criteria have been developed and approved by the Senate; a merit pay system for faculty has been adopted; faculty recognition programs such as the renamed Theodore Dreiser Research/Creativity Award, the Distinguished Service Award, and the President's Medal have

been established; summer stipends and grants for research and service have been awarded; workshops and colloquiums and special projects and grants such as the Democracy and Diversity Project and the Lilly Grant have supported faculty development in designated areas; and databases of information that faculty can access for planning and assessment purposes have provided the means for informed decision making.

Diversity of staff and administration has improved along with that of the student body. The importance of faculty, staff, and administration reflecting the diversity being encouraged among the students is recognized and emphasized.

The strategic planning process identified concerns of the faculty with salary, even though the overall compensation package is described as competitive. The strategic planning process also identified faculty concerns with workload; even though student credit hours per faculty member are low, the number of sections taught is high. Resolving disparities between perception in the areas of faculty salary and workload are essential for the continued growth of the faculty.

The university has allocated funding to provide staff salaries competitive with those paid by area private industries. While the overall benefits package is viewed favorably, current low beginning salaries in specific areas cause the university to have a high turnover rate and unfilled positions.

Assessment of Student Achievement

In July 1995, the North Central Association approved Indiana State University's assessment plan. The plan has been implemented under the leadership of an 18-member Assessment Advisory Committee appointed by the Provost. Members of the committee represent all schools, including the School of Graduate Studies; the College of Arts and Sciences; the General Education Council; and the Office of Alumni Affairs. There is a graduate student on the committee, as well as an undergraduate student who represents the Student Government Association.

There are several key features of Indiana State University's assessment program. It is founded on 18 guiding principles that reflect generally accepted principles of best practice in assessment. It includes both undergraduate and graduate education, and within undergraduate education, it provides for both assessment in general education and assessment in the major. The plan provides for a decentralized approach to assessment in the major which each academic program develops its own assessment plan.

Support for assessment program implementation has been provided in a variety of ways. First, information sources such as an assessment newsletter and an assessment resource manual have been made available to faculty to provide them with key principles, concepts, models, and procedures.

Second, faculty receive feedback on their assessment programs through the annual reporting cycle. The members of the Assessment Advisory Committee review each report that is submitted and provide analysis and suggestions to the faculty in the program.

Third, each summer a national expert on assessment is invited to interact with faculty at an on-campus assessment conference. At the conference, faculty have the opportunity to develop their understanding of assessment theory and methods and to share with each other their assessment experiences.

Fourth, special funding has been made available to support faculty attendance at local, state, regional, and national assessment conferences. In addition, the Assessment Advisory Committee has solicited proposals and awarded funding for departmental assessment activities.

Since 1995, considerable progress in assessment has been made at Indiana State University. Although progress has been steady, it has also been uneven, with more successful implementation occurring at the undergraduate level than at the graduate level. Although almost all programs have developed learning outcomes and identified assessment measures, many have not collected and interpreted data.

In some cases in which data has been collected, it has not yet been used to guide program improvement. An ambitious portfolio assessment project was undertaken in General Education, but it was found to be

unsuited to Indiana State University's institutional context, and another approach is being developed for the General Education 2000 program to be implemented in the fall.

The members of the university Assessment Advisory Committee conducted an evaluation of Indiana State University's assessment program and submitted their report in May of 1999. The committee concluded that Indiana State University's assessment approach has worked well during the stages of development and initial implementation of the plan. They also emphasized the importance of maintaining a focus on the continuous improvement of student learning as the assessment program moves toward maturity.

The team believes that the immediate challenge for ISU is to design an infrastructure to support its assessment program, based on the 18 fundamental principles in its initial implementation plan. Because the Strategic Plan for the Twenty-First Century places emphasis on developing a learning-centered culture on campus, the team urges the institution to implement strategies to help faculty and staff shift from a teaching paradigm to a learning paradigm.

Resource Allocation

The university has demonstrated that it has the ability to provide the resources necessary to provide quality education for the students enrolled in its programs. However, the strategic planning process has identified goals and initiatives that will require the university to develop and provide mechanisms for the reallocation of resources. Further, the team observes that there is concern in the campus community for the potential of a shift in the state funding for higher education with the ultimate result leading to a lessening of funding for the university.

The team urges the continuation of the activity of the strategic planning process to develop mechanisms for adjusting the resources available to accomplish the strategic plan. Such mechanisms must include the reallocation of funding presently consumed through the continued maintenance of low enrollment programs. While it is difficult to place a monetary value on the total of resources that could become available to accomplish the priorities of the strategic planning process, it is relatively easy to appreciate

that each section taught with a small number of students consumes at least as much preparation time and faculty salary as would be required if directed to a large enrollment course.

The team recognizes the traditional culture of the university community, particularly the faculty, to continue to sustain programs of interest to the faculty. However, unless the university commits to the development of acceptable methods for the reallocation of resources consumed by the low enrollment programs, there will be little opportunity to achieve the implementation phase of the strategic plan. Without the commitment to resource allocation changes, the extensive university effort to prepare a comprehensive strategic plan will fall short of the results the university deserves.

The team notes with concern that the subject of resources allocated to maintain the operation of low enrollment programs and courses has been addressed by the past two NCA visiting teams and is, for the third visit, a concern for this visiting team. However, throughout the ensuing period of 20 years, the university community remains unwilling or unable to reallocate resources from low enrollment activities to areas that the university itself has identified as high priority. While the team observed that there is great accord for the cooperation and collaboration exhibited throughout the strategic planning process, the ultimate test of the effectiveness of such planning is the ability of the university to implement the plan by addressing difficult issues such as the reallocation of resources. It shall remain the opportunity for the NCA team that visits in ten years to determine the real effectiveness of the strategic planning process as measured by the resolution of the allocation of resources to low enrollment activities.

The team observes that the university is waiting with great expectations that the arrival of the new president will bring about the process necessary to achieve the resource allocation essential to accomplishing the strategic plan. In many aspects the university has prepared a great gift for the new president – a well-developed strategic plan. It will be the challenge of the new president to provide leadership for the university community to successfully address the changes in the university culture necessary to reallocate resources to implement the strategic plan.

III. CRITERIA FOR ACCREDITATION AND GENERAL INSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS (GIRs)

In the judgment of the team, Indiana State University satisfies all Criteria for Accreditation and the General Institutional Requirements. Further, the team observed that the information provided through the strategic planning experimental self-study process prepared both the institution and the team to appropriately access material relevant to evaluating compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation and the General Institutional Requirements.

IV. THE INDIANA STATE UNIVERSITY STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The 1994 strategic plan was the culmination of two years of university-wide consultation on the future direction of Indiana State University. Under the leadership of President John Moore, a President's Planning and Resource Council (PPARC) was created to serve as an advisory body on the development of a strategic plan and on the operational implementation of the plan. The plan focused on eight strategic goals: (1) enhancement of undergraduate education, (2) extension of advanced knowledge, (3) service to new clientele, ~~(4) expansion of knowledge, (5) transfer of knowledge and expertise to society, (6)~~ enhancement and advocacy of multicultural and international values, (7) promotion of an interdisciplinary culture, (8) enhancement of intellectual and creative expression in West Central Indiana.

These eight broad goal areas evolved through the analysis of the trends in higher education's external environment; several planning assumptions about enrollment, program mix and resources; and the articulation of the core university values of access, service, success, innovation, and excellence. Each goal area was refined into a series of strategies that served as the compass and blueprint for action in the remainder of the decade. The resulting plan became the Strategic Plan for the 21st Century: 1994 Report.

Implementation of the plan through operational initiatives required a methodology to establish priorities. The plan identified nine key criteria for priority setting. The criteria ranged from centrality to the mission of the university and financial feasibility to the likelihood that actionable outcomes would have a substantial effect on the campus and external constituencies. The criteria are appropriate means to guide priority setting and to inform the institutional biennial budget development process.

The 1994 plan identified fourteen initiatives to begin the plan's implementation. These initiatives ranged from traditional planning efforts, such as revisiting the mission and vision of the university, to developing specialized plans, such as an academic master plan, school and college plans, and plans for marketing, residential life, and facilities. The initiatives were written broadly to allow for flexible responses from the participating planning units.

As a planning document, the 1994 plan provided general overall guidance and direction. This initial planning process provided a framework for the subsequent development of assigned responsibilities, definitive timeframes, and identified resources. *The Self-Study Report and the Strategic Plan for the Twenty-First Century: A Year 2000 Update* contains specific illustrations of how these initiatives have been addressed in the past five years. The record of accomplishments in each of the strategic goal areas since 1994 is evidence that the plan was an effective means to focus university decision-making. More important, the 1994 plan did provide the fundamental process for sustaining strategic planning and action in 2000. Thus, the investment of the university community in the preparation of the 1994 plan served the institution well in forging a vision for the 90s.

Strategic Planning; Participation and University Acceptance

Planning at Indiana State University from the initial work before 1994 through the recent update has been marked by university-wide consultation. This broad-based approach to planning produced considerable acceptance within and outside the university community. The President set a tone for planning that was inclusive vertically and horizontally within the organization. The structures for planning, such as the President's Planning and Resources Council (PPARC), provided a framework for widespread and open communication.

An atmosphere of open communication and consultation has continued throughout the implementation and monitoring phases of the 1994 plan and during the conceptual and assessment phases of the plan update. The degree of success in integrating a traditional re-accreditation self-study with the components of strategic planning is due in large part to the quality of communication and consultation. A report entitled, *The Indiana State University Strategic Planning Process: 1992-2000*, chronicles the series of

activities in each of the planning phases that illustrate numerous occasions of institutional dialogue. Access to planning information by faculty, students, and staff was greatly facilitated by the use of the Indiana State University NCA Self-Study 2000 Website that provided key data and reports.

University acceptance of the strategic plan was evidenced in conversations of the visitation team with members of the Board of Trustees, the academic leadership and external stakeholders. Faculty were described as deeply involved along with the external stakeholders of the schools and colleges. The result of this involvement was a sense of community in the shared vision of the university. External stakeholders, who have built effective partnerships with the university, praised the ongoing planning process and the plan itself. Thus, there exists widespread acceptance of the plan and a pattern of evidence that such acceptance will continue during the next implementation phase.

An Overview of the Final Plan and the Opportunity for Implementation with Presidential Change

ISU's Strategic Plan for the Twenty-First Century: A Year 2000 Update, Balancing Change and Continuity was designed to optimize the position of the university within Indiana's competitive and minimally regulated higher education environment. The plan is intended to provide overall strategic direction for the integration of implementation activities in the future. Specific operational plans with greater specificity will provide more detailed direction for the administration of the university.

Chapter 1 of the plan summarizes the environmental trends that affect Indiana State University as it carries out its mission in a changing world. Some trends are universal—increasing global interdependence, the explosion of technology, and changing demographics—whereas others are particular to higher education—competition for enrollments, continuing fiscal constraints, and shifting public perceptions of higher education.

Chapter 2 reviews the mission, vision, and core values of Indiana State University in light of its emerging self-awareness as a progressive public university. The chapter highlights the institution's most distinctive feature—holistic student growth and development—and details ways in which it will be pursued through programs and initiatives.

Chapter 3 presents Indiana State University's eight strategic goals: the enhancement of undergraduate education, the extension of advanced knowledge, service to new clienteles, the expansion of knowledge, the transfer of knowledge and expertise to society, the enhancement of and advocacy for multicultural and international values, the promotion of an interdisciplinary culture, and the enhancement of intellectual and creative expression in West Central Indiana.

Finally, Chapter 4 presents an implementation plan comprised of four strategies and 16 initiatives to establish the strategic goals.

Strategic Planning as an Accreditation Option – The NCA-ISU Joint Experiment

The NCA team commends Indiana State University for its initiative in engaging in an experimental self-study process. The team recognizes the university community for the dedication to accomplish the challenge and work this joint NCA-ISU experiment. The experimental model also challenged the visiting team in several ways, principally to “think outside the box” of the traditional accreditation visit model.

Upon completion of the review visit, and based on much discussion throughout the visit, the team concluded that the experiment was successful. Clearly, everyone learned much from it. Most importantly, Indiana State University engaged itself in the self-study and strategic planning accreditation option in a deeper and broader way than is generally the case in the traditional self-study. This involvement and participation resulted in greater institutional acceptance and ownership. Consequently, Indiana State University is better poised to pursue its mission and to deal with the impending transition in presidential leadership.

The success of the experimental strategic planning approach to accreditation was facilitated by several factors, including the president's knowledge of and prior experience with strategic planning, Indiana State University's level of development and maturity, and the experience gained with preparing and implementing the 1994 Strategic Plan. The review process was facilitated by the team member's

openness and flexibility to the experimental nature of the self-study/strategic planning accreditation process.

Further, the selection by NCA of a visiting team with broad experience in the accreditation process provides opportunity to compare the results of the preparation of the strategic planning process with the preparation of an institution normally expected through the traditional self-study process.

In summary, although Indiana State University's strategic planning approach did not provide a completely parallel approach when compared with NCA's traditional self-study model, the strategic planning approach was highly successful for Indiana State University and provided the NCA team with the information to complete appropriate recommendations regarding continuing accreditation.

The team thanks the university community for their willingness to prepare the NCA-ISU joint experiment for the use of the strategic planning process in the preparation of the self-study to support the comprehensive accreditation visit. The team concludes the experiment is a success.

V. STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

STRENGTHS

The team compliments the Indiana State University for the achievements it has made since the last comprehensive visit. Indiana State University is an outstanding example of excellence in higher education. The team observed many strengths of this university and provides the following as a sample of some of the unique attributes that characterizes the excellence of this university.

1. The willingness of the Indiana State University community to engage in an experimental self-study model and to make public the results of their surveys and their budget process.
2. The depth and breadth of the campus participation in the development of the self-study and the resulting updated strategic plan to prepare the university for the transition of leadership to the new president.

3. Faculty who are student-centered and committed to the goal of educating the whole student, as recognized through the Center for Teaching and Learning, the Lilly Grant and the participation of faculty in developmental programs so they may better serve each student.
4. The faculty and administration who are committed to serving an extended clientele in both the local community and other constituencies in the western region of Indiana.
5. The commitment to provide Information Technology that is well integrated into the administrative, teaching and learning functions of the university and supported by informed technology leadership, a superb infrastructure, appropriate faculty development, and funding for continued maintenance and development.
6. Students and faculty are provided an attractive and well-maintained campus guided by a well-conceived master plan with good attention to deferred maintenance.
7. The success of the university in securing significant foundation and federal research grant funds and for the progress in the development of the Indiana State University Foundation as a source of scholarships and other support.
8. The visionary leadership of the university who has earned the support of the faculty and the entire Indiana State University community.

Challenge:

The team encourages the university community to give high priority to addressing the following challenge which has also been included in the reports of the past two comprehensive visits:

The implementation of processes to redirect the use of resources historically allocated to low enrollment programs so that these resources are made available to support the achievement of the high priority goals of the new strategic plan.

VI. TEAM'S ADVICE AND SUGGESTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

The team visited extensively with students, faculty and other members of the Indiana State University community. During these visits the members of the team observed opportunities that may assist the Indiana State University community in the successful implementation of the strategic plan. The following observations are provided as a service from the team in their role as educational consultants to the Indiana State University community.

The team observed the Indiana State University seeks to expand its role in the area of research and scholarship, having already developed pockets of research excellence and productivity. At the same time, the institution has an abiding commitment to teaching and to nurturing the growth of those who are presently underserved by higher education.

A potential for expanding the research mission, while placing an even greater emphasis on teaching, would be to pursue research agendas that fall under the umbrella of the Scholarship of Teaching, a relatively new construct, that is currently receiving a great deal of attention in higher education. This emphasis would fit well with Indiana State University's desire to create a learning-centered institutional culture and to shift faculty paradigms from teaching to learning. It would be in harmony with initiatives of the student outcomes assessment, general education program development, the First-Year Experience, the use of innovative technologies, the pursuit of holistic student growth and development, the introduction of individualized Educational Development Plans, an emphasis on multiculturalism and internationalization, and the development of an interdisciplinary culture. Indiana State University could become well known as a center for excellent action-oriented research focused on teaching and learning in higher education.

2. As the institution pursues a learning-centered culture, the university may wish to consider an expanded role for the Center for Teaching and Learning. Currently considered a site for improving teaching, the Center could provide support for all faculty as they address the many issues associated with embracing a new, learning-centered paradigm.

3. During visits with students, the team learned of the progress made in addressing the challenges in creating a diverse campus environment. Because of the remarkable success made in addressing many issues in the formation of an environment to promote the acceptance of diversity among students, faculty, and staff, the team encourages the university community to address the challenges for creating a truly multi-cultural campus community.

VII. THE TEAM RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE

The team's recommendation to continue the accreditation of Indiana State University and schedule the next comprehensive visit for 2009-2010 is shown on the attached Worksheet for the Statement of Affiliation Status. In completing the comprehensive evaluation of the university, the team reviewed the use of a strategic planning process for the preparation of the self-study report and found that the university demonstrated exemplary compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation and the General Institutional Requirements.

In preparation for the comprehensive visit, the Indiana State University proposed that NCA and the university enter into a joint experiment to examine the use of a strategic planning process as a possible option for the traditional NCA self-study process. The NCA and Indiana State University entered into an agreement to include the review of the adequacy of the strategic planning process as an option for the preparation for the comprehensive evaluation visit.

A team of experienced NCA consultant-evaluators, who agreed to participate in the NCA-ISU joint experiment, visited Indiana State University and examined the preparation of the university for the evaluation visit that resulted from the strategic planning process. The team reviewed the strategic planning process to determine if the process provided adequate information for the team to conclude that the university had prepared itself to demonstrate compliance with the criteria for continuing accreditation. The team observed that the university community is committed to an impressive planning processes that began in 1992 and will continue through the period of transition to new presidential leadership in July 2000.

The team found that the strategic planning process of Indiana State University prepared the university to adequately demonstrate compliance with the requirements and criteria of NCA for continuing accreditation. The team observed that Indiana State University engaged itself in the self-study and strategic planning accreditation option in a deeper and broader way than is generally the case in the traditional self-study process.

The team concluded that the NCA-ISU joint experiment was successful in demonstrating that the university meets all criteria for continued accreditation. The team recommends that NCA continue to pursue experimental models to prepare for comprehensive evaluation processes. The team encourages NCA to expand such experimentation with mature institutions with extensive experience in the strategic planning and implementation process. The team endorses the NCA process with selection of experienced consultant-evaluators who are open to the dual review of both the institution for continued accreditation and the adequacy of the experimental model to prepare the institution for the accreditation evaluation.

The team found the Indiana State University community of students, faculty, staff, and administration committed to providing an environment to nurture the growth of each student. The university is an exceptional example of quality higher education that results through the integration of governance processes, services for students, support for the local and regional community, and the provision of human and financial resources. While complimenting the university for the achievements made since the 1990 comprehensive visit, the team challenged the university to address the reallocation of resources from low enrollment programs to provide additional support for the accomplishment of the many priority goals identified through this strategic planning process of the self-study. The team recommends that the next comprehensive visit be scheduled in 2009-2010 with no further changes in the Statement of Affiliation for Indiana State University.