

Making The Grade: NCA Visit 2001

NCA VISIT SCHEDULE:

Sunday, March 18

- Team arrives at Marriott, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
- Reception-Visiting Team with EMU officials (Marriott), 5:30-7 p.m.
- Team meets in Marriott Team Room, 7:30 p.m.

Monday, March 19

- Team arrives at 205 Welch Hall, 8 a.m.
- Team holds Opening Interview with EMU officials (201 Welch), 8:30-9 a.m.
- Team tours Halle Library, Porter Building, and Marshall Building, 9-10:30 a.m.

11-11:45 A.M.

- President's Cabinet (201 Welch)
- Visit to Records and Registration (303 Pierce)
- Visits to other selected offices
- Luncheons with leaders of Student Government, Graduate Council and AAUP, noon-1:30 p.m.

2-2:45 P.M.

- Dean's Advisory Council (201 Welch)
- Open meeting with EMU faculty (Halle Auditorium)
- Visit to EMU Livonia (EMU Livonia)

3-3:45 P.M.

- Open meeting with EMU staff (Halle Auditorium)
- Meeting with Faculty Council (201 Welch)
- Meeting with Technology Doctoral Committee (206 Sill Hall)
- Visit to EMU Livonia (continued)

4-4:45 P.M.

- Meeting with Academic Department Heads (201 Welch)
- Open meeting with EMU alumni (Halle Auditorium)
- Meeting with Clinical Psychology Doctoral Committee (Psychology Conference Room, 537B)
- Visit to EMU Livonia (continued)
- Team departs for Marriott

5 P.M.

- Team dinner as arranged
- Team meeting (Marriott Team Room) as arranged (Optional- visits to classes)

Tuesday, March 20

- Team arrives at EMU, 8 a.m.
- Breakfast with community leaders, 8-9:30 a.m.
- Team divides and continues schedule

10:15-11 A.M.

- Self-Study Steering Committee (201 Welch)
- Visit to selected offices

SEE SCHEDULE, PAGE 4

INSIDE

- NCA Steering Committee weighs in, page 2
- Visit tips, page 2
- University has to meet five criteria and 24 general institutional requirements of the NCA, page 3
- NCA Visiting Team roster, page 3
- Eastern Michigan University's Self-Study Steering Committee roster, page 3
- Interim provost confident that EMU is ready for NCA visit, page 4

A message from EMU NCA Self-Study Coordinator Don Bennion:

In 1998, former provost Ronald W. Collins asked me to become NCA Self-Study Coordinator. At the time, although I had served as a consultant-evaluator for NCA, and although I know that NCA recommends a two-to-three year, self-study process, March 2001 seemed to be a long way in the future. Today, in the year 2001, as the March 18-21 visit of the NCA evaluation team approaches, the amount of work that the EMU community engaged in over the past three years has clearly shown the wisdom of former provost Collins in getting an early start on the University's reaccreditation efforts.



Bennion

The goals of the self-study were enunciated by former provost Collins in his charge to the Steering Committee at its first meeting on January 15, 1999, when he officially charged the committee to conduct a self-study of the University and produce a report that would:

- engage the entire University community in the self-study process;
- review and evaluate the progress of Eastern Michigan University since its last NCA visit in 1990;
- review and evaluate the University's efforts to address the concerns expressed by the 1990 visiting team;
- review and evaluate institutional strengths and concerns;
- review and evaluate the link between EMU's mission and goals and its practices;
- review and evaluate the University's past performance and future plans in light of its emphasis on student learning;
- review and evaluate EMU's readiness for additional doctoral programs; and
- demonstrate that the University meets or exceeds each of NCA's five criteria and 24 General Institutional requirements.

From the beginning of the self-study process, we have attempted to involve the entire EMU community in the self-study, and we have also attempted to keep that same campus community fully informed of our efforts. To accomplish the former, we had every major unit at the University conduct a self-study. We then took the information gleaned from these self-study documents and assembled a broadly representative, 27-member self-study steering committee to produce the University's Self-Study Report. To accomplish the latter, we made several attempts to keep the campus community informed.

These attempts included the production of a monthly newsletter, entitled *NCA Self-Study Matters*. The newsletter, published monthly from September through April, is distributed to all tenure-track faculty, senior administrators, and all major offices on the EMU campus. The first issue was distributed in January 1999, concurrent with the first meeting of the Self-Study Steering Committee. The newsletter will continue to be published until we receive NCA's decision on our requests for: 1) reaccreditation, 2) the addition of two doctoral programs, and 3) modification of our Statement of Affiliation Status with NCA by removing the restriction on our ability to offer future doctoral programs without prior NCA approval. Other attempts to inform the campus community and to seek the community's input were achieved through public forums in the spring

SEE LETTER, PAGE 4

NCA self-study report was a collaborative effort

By Ron Podell

It's often said that too many cooks spoil the broth. But in the case of preparing for the upcoming North Central Association (NCA) visit, the sheer volume of academic ingredients involved in putting a self-study report together called for contributions from a cadre of administrators, academic department and divisional heads, faculty, staff and students.

The 452-page self-study document, essentially a reporting bible for the University, includes 15 chapters, four appendixes, an index and numerous tables, figures and exhibits.

While many people contributed research, time and input to the document, the brunt of actually writing the chapters fell on the shoulders of members of the University's NCA Self-Study Steering Committee. Many committee members acknowledged other team members, department heads, and faculty helped them write their assigned chapters for the self-study report.

Some committee members contributed their thoughts on what went into writing their chapters and the importance of them to the University.

Patrick Melia, associate dean, Graduate School

"(Interim Provost) Dr. (Michael) Harris and (former provost) Dr. (Ron) Collins have reinvigorated the program review process. Through program review, we have strengthened existing programs and added new programs. Many of the programs have gone through an analysis the last 10 years in order to make them better and responsive to student needs. There's no question we offer good academic programs.

Chapter Five (which covers Criterion Three—academic colleges, the graduate school and learning resources and technology) is the center piece. Chapters four, five and six are primarily what the NCA is going to be looking at."

Robert Brackenbury, assistant to vice president, Business and Finance

"The Institutional Resources chapter gives the University the opportunity to show the NCA visiting team that we have in place sufficient human, financial, and physical resources necessary to accomplish our mission.

On the financial side, our goal was to communicate that, despite the continued challenges we face when relying on state appropriation levels relative to tuition rates, the University has continued to maintain a balanced budget throughout the past decade. Further evidence of our sound financial condition is the fact that, without exception, we have received unqualified external financial audits on an annual basis during the past ten years.

When the last NCA team visited campus in 1991, one of their noted concerns was the University's aging infrastructure. In particular, they questioned whether our old library could adequately meet the needs of students. After spending over \$200 million in new and renovated facilities during the past decade, it is safe to say that the new visiting team should not have similar concerns. Our state-of-the-art Halle Library is a model to other institutions in the country."

George Liepa, department head, Department of Human, Environmental and Consumer Resources

TALKING POINTS



COMMITTEE CONVERSATION: Interim Provost Michael Harris (left) makes a point during a recent NCA Self-Study Steering Committee meeting while Barry Fish, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, reviews a portion of the self-study report. The 28-member committee culled information from their departments and divisions in order to compile chapters for the 452-page NCA self-study report.

NCA Visit Tips

- Be on campus and available (March 19-21).
- Be flexible with schedule.
- Be honest. Answer all questions of NCA visiting team.
- Read section of self-study report that applies to your department or division.
- Read the entire executive summary of the self-study report.
- Encourage colleagues and students to attend meetings with the NCA team that are open to them.

"Chapter 13 addresses the issue of integrity. I learned as I worked on this section that: EMU has a good set of rules that insure people are treated in a manner that retains institutional integrity; EMU has aggressively worked at instilling concepts of integrity in the areas of research and student behavior; and that universities, like individuals, must maintain their personal integrity in order to be successful.

EMU has a system in place that allows for this to take place. It is up to the members of our community to insure that system is implemented in a fair and just manner."

Mike Erwin, director, Career Services Administration

"Beyond simply describing who we are and what we do in the Division of Student Affairs, we believed that it was important to describe one of our key strengths—our ability to respond quickly and appropriately to changing student needs. Documenting how we had done that in the past was easy enough because so many of our directors have been here since before the last NCA visit.

Describing where we think we need to go was a bit more challenging but, because our division has done a lot of strategic planning for a number of years now, we were able to draw heavily on our strategic plans to highlight the key challenges confronting us and how we plan to respond to them."

Gersham Nelson, professor and department head, Department of History and Philosophy

"Chapter Four of the self-study focuses on Academic Affairs in addressing NCA Criterion Three. This criterion calls for the institution to successfully fulfill its self-assigned "educational and other purposes."

The final product reflects the input of various individuals from different constituencies. It speaks well of a decade in which student services were expanded substantially, faculty development

strengthened, and the overall health of the division remained robust despite formidable challenges."

Stew Work, chemistry professor

"We focused on how assessment (Chapter Eight) developed at EMU, followed by an examination of current assessment practices used by departments to assess majors, including how departments are using assessment for program improvement. We also discussed our use of Tasks in Critical Thinking to assess general education learning and how we might use the data to improve our General Education program.

We reported on a benchmarking study in collaboration with the American Productivity and Quality Center, which identified "best practice" institutions for assessment. Using these institutions, 11 best practices were identified by the study group. The chapter concludes with a demonstration of how EMU follows these 11 best practices.

Ever since the NCA mandated a requirement for assessment in 1990, all institutions must demonstrate that they have an effective assessment program in place."

John A. Novak, associate professor, biology

"NCA recognizes that EMU, like all institutions of higher education, has a variety of purposes to fulfill other than those directly related to on-campus teaching and learning (NCA Criterion Three).

One major EMU goal is to interface with the community by providing a wide variety of outstanding educational endeavors. Chapter 11 focuses on the richness and diversity of community-oriented initiatives, including: WEMU, Campus Life, charter schools, and such departmental activities as chemistry magic shows. New to this Self-Study Report is a discussion of the Division of Extended Programs, which includes seven offices that offer non-traditional learning environments, services, and innovative academic experiences in Michigan, nationally and internationally."

Reaccreditation requires that University meet five criteria, 24 general institution requirements of NCA

In order for a university to be accredited or gain reaccreditation from the North Central Association, it must meet five criteria and 24 general institution requirements. The criteria are:

The criteria are:

Criterion One: The institution has a clear and publicly stated purpose consistent with its mission and appropriate to an institution of higher education.

Criterion Two: The institution has effectively organized the human, financial and physical resources necessary to accomplish its purposes.

Criterion Three: The institution is accomplishing its educational and other purposes.

Criterion Four: The institution can continue to accomplish its purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness.

Criterion Five: The institution demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships.

The general institution requirements are:

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

2.) It is a degree-granting institution.

3.) It has legal authorization to grant its degrees and it meets all legal requirements to operate as an institution of higher learning.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

11.) Its faculty has a significant role in developing all of the institution's education programs.

12.) It confers degrees.

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

14.) Its degree programs are compatible with the institution's mission and are based on recognized fields of

study at the higher education level.

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

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

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

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

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

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

21.) Its financial practices, records and reports demonstrate financial viability.

22.) Its catalog (or other official document) 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 billing and refund policies, and the academic credentials of its faculty and administrators.

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

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

Eastern Michigan University NCA Self-Study Steering Committee

The following is a list of the 28-member NCA Self-Study Steering Committee and the areas that they represent at Eastern Michigan University.

Don Bennion, Self-Study Coordinator
 Michael Harris, Interim Provost
 Marcia Dalbey, Provost's Office
 Gersham Nelson, Academic Dept. Head
 Thomas Cianciolo, Academic Dept. Head
 Regina Williams, Academic Dept. Head
 Alane Starko, Academic Dept. Head
 Stewart Work, Academic Assessment
 Max Kanagy, Academic Associate Dean
 Jack Minzey, Alumni (Emeritus Faculty)
 Robert Brackenbury, Business and Finance
 Barry Fish, College Dean
 Joy Garrett, Enrollment Services
 Sherry Sayles, Extended Programs
 John A. Novak, Faculty Council (past president)
 Elizabeth Broughton, Faculty Member
 Twyla Racz, Faculty Member
 Denver Severt, Faculty Member
 Patrick Melia, Graduate School
 George Liepa, Graduate Council
 Donald Staub, Graduate Student
 Lynette Findley, The Holman Learning Center
 Sandra Yee, Library
 Mike Erwin, Student Affairs
 Sandra Williams, Student Affairs
 Kylie Crawford, Student Government
 Paul Moniodis, University Planning, Budget and Analysis
 Kenneth Rusiniak, Doctoral Programming

NCA Visiting Team

The following 11 educators comprise the North Central Association visiting team that will evaluate Eastern Michigan University March 19-21.

Dr. Georgia E. Lesh-Laurie
 Chancellor
 University of Colorado at Denver

Dr. Shirley J. Barton
 Dean for Academic and Student Services
 Kent State University

Dr. Jeremy Dunning
 Professor of Geology
 Indiana University, Bloomington

Dr. Celestino Fernandez
 Professor of Sociology
 University of Arizona

Dr. Shitala P. Mishra
 Professor of School Psychology
 University of Arizona

Dr. Richard W. Moffitt
 Director, Independent Study

Ohio University

Dr. Richard T. Schaefer
 Chair,
 Department of Sociology
 DePaul University

Dr. Sidney B. Simpson, Jr.
 Former Professor of
 Biological Sciences
 University of Illinois at Chicago

Dr. George Springer
 Professor of Computer Science and Mathematics
 Indiana University

Dr. Leon D. VandeCreek
 Dean,
 School of Professional Psychology
 Wright State University

Dr. Michael V. Wells
 Associate Professor and Director,
 Undergraduate Program
 Levin College of Urban Affairs,
 Cleveland State University

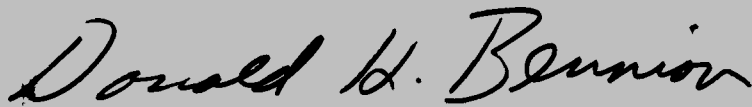
LETTER, from page 1

and fall of 2000 on different draft editions of the self-study report, by placing draft versions of the report and minutes of Steering Committee meetings on the NCA Self-Study Web site, and through articles in the Eastern Echo and Focus EMU.

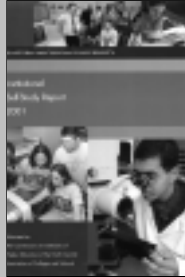
This insert is another such attempt at keeping the university community informed. To prepare for the visit, we have provided a copy of the Self-Study Report to each major office on campus, to leaders of Student Government and the Faculty Council, and have placed copies on reserve in the Halle Library. We have also placed a copy on the NCA Self-Study Web site. In addition, we have produced and distributed 2,500 copies of an Executive Summary of the Self-Study Report. The Executive Summary includes a summary of the content of each chapter and presents the major strengths, concerns, and what EMU is doing to address the concerns expressed in each chapter of the Self-Study Report.

One of the purposes of the visit of the NCA evaluation team is to verify — through discussions with faculty, staff, alumni, and others — the accuracy of information and opinions found in the Self-Study Report. Please take the opportunity to attend the open meetings that are held by the evaluation team and I encourage you to express your opinions to the evaluators. EMU is, in my opinion, a very good university. Through NCA self-study and the advice of the visiting team, we can, and will, become an even better university.

I personally wish to thank all members of the Eastern Michigan University community who contributed to the preparation of the University's Self-Study Report and in advance for fully participating in the March 18-21 visit. I extend a special thank-you to the members of the Self-Study Steering Committee for both their hard work and impressive insights.



Donald H. Bennion
NCA Self-Study Coordinator



Self-study report

SCHEDULE, from page 111:15 a.m.-noon

- Student Affairs leadership (111 Welch)
- Assistant to President for Strategic Planning and committee members (200 Boone Hall)
- Business and Finance leadership (103 Welch)
- Visit to selected offices

12:15-1 p.m.

- Visit to Art Department student assessment center (Sherzer)
- Visit to selected administrative offices
- Follow-up visits
- Team departs for Marriott

1-2:30 p.m.

- Lunch with Board of Regents members (204 Welch)

3-3:45 p.m.

- Open meeting with students Halle Auditorium)
- Enrollment Services leadership (111 Welch)
- University Relations leadership (206 Welch)
- Intercollegiate Athletics leadership and tour of athletics facilities (Convocation Center)

4-4:45 p.m.

- University, Planning, Budgeting and Analysis leadership (103 Welch)
- Visits to offices of college deans other administrative offices
- Visits to selected facilities

5 p.m.

- Team dinner as arranged
- Team meeting (Marriott Team Meeting Room) as arranged (Optional- visits to classes)

Wednesday, March 21

- Team members check out of Marriott, 8-8:45 a.m.
- Team arrives on campus, 9 a.m.
- Team members finalize their reports (205 Welch), 9-10 a.m.
- Team holds Exit Interview (201 Welch), 10 a.m.
- Team departs for airport, 10:30-11 a.m.

Interim provost confident that EMU is prepared for visit

By Ron Podell

Eastern Michigan University will be put under the microscope March 19-21 when the North Central Association sends a visiting team to review the institution for reaccreditation.

Interim Provost Michael Harris is quite confident the University will pass the test and obtain its goal of being reaccredited for 10 years, receive approval of its doctoral programs in clinical psychology and technology, and be able to approve future doctoral programs without needing to request NCA approval.

And he credits that confidence to the hard work and effort put into the self-study report by the NCA Steering Committee, deans, department heads, and faculty and staff.

"It was a collaborative effort," Harris said. "It was a campus-wide examination of what we do and who we are. We identified what we do well and we also identified some challenges we face and how to approach them."

Harris's list of pluses included: a very committed faculty and staff, a supportive and encouraging learning environment on campus, an expansion in the types and quality of programs offered, and major improvements in facilities, including the Bruce T. Halle Library and the Everett L. Marshall Health and Human Services Building.

On the "challenges" side, Harris said the University would like to improve its graduation and retention rate, enhance our technological infrastructure and continue to improve and increase the

number of student services available.

"It's important that students graduate and graduate sooner than later," Harris said.

"It's important that students have a meaningful learning experience. We try to turn them into life-long learners."

"What the self study demonstrates, as society changes and as student needs change, we have to work constantly to make sure we meet our student needs, and our faculty strength best reflected in what we teach," Harris said.

The University has already

taken a number of steps in an effort to bump up the graduation rate.

Some of the efforts include:

- the establishment of advising centers for each of the University's five colleges,

- an undergraduate studies coordinator,

- Freshmen Interest Groups (FIGs),

- an orientation course for freshmen

- the introduction last fall of EMU Degree Navigator, an online, degree-auditing software that allows students, faculty and staff to track — from anywhere — a student's academic progress toward graduation.

"We're not waiting for the NCA to address those issues," Harris said. "Many of these challenges are not new. The key challenge for us is to tie

what we've found in the self-study process to the president's strategic planning process."

Harris gave special mention to former provost Ron Collins, who died Feb. 1. Collins, who was to have retired in May, was with the University during the last NCA accreditation visit, in 1990, and stayed one more year, in part, to see the University through the March NCA visit.

"Ron made a major contribution and took us through the 1990 study," Harris said. "He was the key in our preparation (for this upcoming visit) and he was the key in bringing the University and our division to where it is now. The fact that we feel so comfortable and confident about the NCA visit is because of his contributions."



Harris