



April 11, 2011

TO: Chancellor Robert Coombe,
University of Denver

FROM: Joyce Gardner, Accreditation Services

SUBJECT: Final Team Report

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

You are asked to acknowledge receipt of the Team Report and the SAS and OP worksheets; and to file on behalf of your institution, a formal written response to the evaluation team's report and recommendation. Your response becomes a part of the official record of the evaluation visit. Your response also serves as an integral part of the evaluation process, and it will be included in the materials sent to the next team that visits your institution. Please send your institutional response to the Commission **two weeks** after you receive this report, send copies to members of the visiting team, and set aside some additional copies for the Commission's review process. (See *Handbook of Accreditation, Third Edition*, Chapter 2.2-2) **Please address your institutional response to your staff liaison and email it to Sharon Ulmer, Process Administrator, Accreditation Services (sulmer@hlcommission.org).**

In your response, you are also asked to let the Commission know which review option you prefer: the Readers Panel or the Review Committee. A description of these processes appears in the *Handbook*, Chapter 2.2-2. Please review these options and advise the Commission as soon as possible, whether you agree essentially with the team's report and recommendation and therefore choose the Readers Panel, or whether you wish to have the team's report and your materials examined by a Review Committee. The next Review Committee meeting is April 27-29, 2011, in Chicago.

If you have any questions concerning the evaluation team's report, the SAS, the OP or the review options, please write or call Eric V. Martin, your staff liaison.

Enclosures

cc: Dr. Susan T. Rydell, Team Chairperson



Higher Learning Commission
A commission of the North Central Association

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To: Susan T. Rydell, Team Chairperson
Evaluation Team Members

From: Joyce Gardner, Accreditation Services

Subject: Report of the evaluation team visit to University of Denver

Date: April 11, 2011

A copy of the report which you prepared on the evaluation of University of Denver is enclosed. As you know, the report and recommendation are to be treated as confidential. The Commission has sent to Chancellor Coombe a copy of the report and has requested a formal written response to it. When a response is made, you will receive a copy directly from the institution.

Two review options are available: the Readers' Panel and the Review Committee. These review processes are described in Chapter 2.2-2 *Handbook of Accreditation, Third Edition*.

Let me take this opportunity to thank you again for your contribution to the work of the Commission.

Enclosure

ASSURANCE SECTION

REPORT OF A COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION VISIT

TO

University of Denver
Denver, CO

November 8-10, 2010

FOR

The Higher Learning Commission

A Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

EVALUATION TEAM

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Cleveland, OH 44115

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Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI 53201

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I. CONTEXT AND NATURE OF VISIT

A. Purpose of Visit

The purpose of this visit was to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the University of Denver (DU).

B. Organizational Context

During the past ten years, the University concentrated much of its efforts on completely transforming the university campus resulting in state-of-the art facilities that were *Built for Learning* and an emphasis on sustainability. In 2002, a \$10 million gift made possible a number of initiatives to enhance undergraduate education in the arts and sciences, and other investments were made to improve the value of graduate and professional program experiences for students. In fall, 2009, there were 615 full-time and 644 part-time faculty, and 4,893 full-time and 483 part-time undergraduate students and 3,446 full-time graduate/first professional students and 2,884 part-time graduate/first professional students. The University follows a general decentralized administrative model, with many academic and administrative functions carried out within the colleges and schools.

Since the previous HLC comprehensive evaluation in 2001, the University had a requested visit for change in 2006 focused on distance delivery of bachelor and master's programs. In 2008, there was an HLC multi-site visit covering graduate programs for the Lockheed Martin Space Systems Co., the Four Corners MSW Program, and the Buell Early Childhood Leadership Program.

C. Unique Aspects of Visit

None.

D. Sites or Branch Campuses Visited

None.

E. Distance Education Reviewed

The University offers online 6 bachelor and 12 master's degree programs. As noted above, the 2006 focused visit reviewed bachelor and master's distance delivery programs that were offered online.

F. Interactions with Constituencies

Chancellor

Provost

HLC Steering Committee:

Director -Academic Assessment; Associate Professor - Psychology

Interim Vice Chancellor - University Communications
 Vice Chancellor - Athletics & Recreation
 Associate Provost - Student Life/Academic Resources
 Associate Dean - Sturm College of Law
 Dean - The Women's College
 Director - Center for Teaching & Learning; Associate Professor - Chemistry
 Vice Provost - Office of Internationalization; Professor - English
 Professor - Education
 Director - Special Programs
 Vice Chancellor - University Advancement
 Controller/Assistant Treasurer
 Executive Director - Writing; Professor - English
 Academic Director - University College
 Associate Provost - Undergraduate Academic Programs
 Assistant Provost - Planning, Budget and Analysis
 Associate Professor - Mechanical and Materials Engineering
 Past President - Faculty Senate; Associate Professor - Library
 Associate Provost - Planning, Budget, and Analysis
 Interim Associate Provost - Multicultural Excellence
 Dean - Daniels College of Business
 Senior Analyst - Institutional Research
 Associate Dean - Josef Korbel School of International Studies
 Chair and Associate Professor - History
 Associate Provost - Graduate Studies; Associate Professor - English
 Dean - Graduate School of Social Work
 Vice Chancellor - Enrollment
 HLC Research Specialist

Orientation to Resource Room:

Director - Academic Assessment; Associate Professor - Psychology
 Associate Provost - Undergraduate Academic Programs
 HLC Research Specialist
 Associate Professor - Library
 Senior Analyst - Institutional Research
 Director of Faculty/Staff Systems Support - University Technology Services
 Senior Software Specialist - University Technology Services
 Support Specialist, Faculty/Staff System Support - University Technology Services

Multicultural Excellence:

Interim Associate Provost - Multicultural Excellence
 Assistant Provost for Multicultural Faculty Recruitment and Retention - Multicultural Excellence
 Assistant Provost for Inclusive Excellence - Multicultural Excellence
 Director - Multicultural Excellence
 Associate Director, Intergroup Relations & LGBTIQQA - Multicultural Excellence
 Administrative Assistant - Multicultural Excellence

Campus Life (Residential Life and Student Life):

Executive Director - Health and Counseling

University Chaplain
Associate Provost - Student Life/Academic Resources
Assistant Provost
Director - Career Center
Associate Provost - Student Life/Campus Life
Director - Campus Activities
Director - Advising and Orientation
Director - Disability Services Program
Director - Citizenship and Community Standards
Director - Housing and Residential Education
Director - Learning Effectiveness Program
Director - Parent Relations

Deans' Council:

Dean - Penrose Library
Dean - Morgridge College of Education
Dean - University College
Dean - The Women's College
Dean - Graduate School of Social Work
Dean - Joseph Korbel School of International Studies
Dean - Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences
Dean - Natural Sciences and Mathematics
Dean - Daniels College of Business
Dean - Engineering and Computer Science

Center for Teaching and Learning:

Associate Director of Instructional Development - Center for Teaching and Learning
Associate Professor - Business Ethics and Legal Studies
Director - Center for Teaching and Learning
Professor - English
Senior Educational Web Developer - Center for Teaching and Learning
Associate Professor - Chemistry and Biochemistry

Faculty Senate Executive Committee:

Associate Professor - Morgridge College of Education
Academic Director - University College
Professor - Accountancy
Lecturer - The Women's College
Associate Professor - Library
Faculty Senate President, Clinical Professor - Information Technology and Electronic Commerce
Senior Instructional Designer - University College
Lecturer and Director - Learning Communities and Civic Engagement
AAUP Rep
Member at large-Modern Languages

Planning, Budget and Analysis:

Assistant Provost - Planning, Budget and Analysis
Associate Provost - Planning, Budget and Analysis

Graduate Student Government

Graduate Student Association Council President
Korbel School of International Studies President
College of Education Student Association President
Graduate Business Student Association President
Graduate Student Association Council, Vice President of Finance

Penrose Library Staff:

Access Services Manager - Penrose Library
Dean and Director - Penrose Library
Technology Services Manager - Penrose Library
Associate Professor/Reference Librarian - Penrose Library
Associate Professor/Curator - Penrose Library
Assistant Professor/Reference Librarian - Penrose Library
Professor/Coordinator of Reference Services - Penrose Library
Associate Professor/Reference Librarian - Penrose Library
Associate Professor/Collections Librarian - Penrose Library
Associate Professor/Metadata & Materials Processing Librarian - Penrose Library
Assistant Professor/Access Services Librarian - Penrose Library
Event Technology Coordinator - Penrose Library

Central Committee (General Education):

Director-Academic Assessment; Associate Professor - Psychology
Associate Dean, Undergraduate Programs - Fritz Knoebel School of Hospitality
Management
Associate Professor and Associate Chair - Electrical and Computer Engineering
Director, Undergraduate - Josef Korbel School of International Studies
Associate Provost - Undergraduate Academic Programs
Associate Dean - Natural Sciences and Mathematics; Associate Professor - Geography
Director - Academic Advising and Student Orientation
Assistant Dean, Curriculum and Advising - Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

Diversity and Equal Opportunity:

Director - Diversity and Equal Opportunity

First-Year Seminar Faculty Committee:

Associate Provost - Student Life/Academic Resources
Professor - Sociology and Criminology
Chair - Political Science
Professor - English; Executive Director of Writing Program
Assistant Professor - Theatre
Assistant Dean, Curriculum and Advising - Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

Academic Advising and Orientation

Director - Academic Advising and Orientation
Assistant Director of Orientation
Advising staff—3 members

Distance Learning Council:

Dean - University College
Associate Professor - Graduate School of Social Work
Academic Director - University College
Associate Dean - Natural Sciences and Mathematics; Associate Professor- Geography

Senior Instructional Design Coordinator - Center for Teaching and Learning
 Lecturer - The Women's College
 Senior Instructional Designer - University College
 Lecturer - Sturm College of Law

Sustainability Council:

Clinical Assistant Professor - Morgridge College of Education
 Professor - Sturm College of Law
 Professor - Daniels College of Business
 Assistant Professor - Department of Geography (Council Chair)
 Professor/Kurtz Chair - Natural Sciences and Mathematics
 Assistant Director - Housing and Residential Education
 Digital Instruction Specialist - Graduate School of Social Work
 Assistant Dean, Budget & Operations - Josef Korbel School of International Studies
 (Vice Chair)
 Energy Engineer - Facilities Management
 Director, Admissions & Records - Graduate School of Professional Psychology
 Associate Director, Gifts and Records - University Advancement, Staff Advisory
 Council Representative
 Associate Director - Multicultural Excellence, Center for Multicultural Excellence
 Representative
 Director, Community Relations - Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Webmaster
 Executive Assistant to Dean - The Women's College, The Women's College
 Representative
 Program Assistant - University College, University College Representative
 Students at large-five
 Student Bar Association Representative
 Director - Facilities Management
 Assistant Provost - University Planning, Budget, and Analysis
 University Architect
 Senior Public Affairs Specialist - University Communications
 Director, Strategic Planning and Rankings - Daniels College of Business
 Vice Chancellor of Business and Financial Affairs

Undergraduate Council:

Registrar
 Associate Professor - Languages and Literature
 Associate Dean Daniels College of Business; Associate Professor - Hospitality
 Academic Director - University College
 Associate Provost - Undergraduate Academic Programs
 Director - Learning Communities and Pioneer Leadership Program
 Professor - Psychology
 Professor - Management
 Associate Professor - Geography
 Undergraduate Student Government representative

Office of Graduate Studies:

Director, Budget and Planning - Graduate Studies
 Communications Coordinator - Graduate Studies

Director, Student Services - Graduate Studies
 Student Services Coordinator - Graduate Studies
 Executive Assistant - Graduate Studies
 Assistant Director, Admissions - Graduate Studies
 International Admissions Specialist - Graduate Studies
 Admissions Specialist - Graduate Studies
 Associate Provost - Graduate Studies; Associate Professor - English
Admission and Financial Aid:
 Director of Communication - Enrollment Division
 Director - Financial Aid
 Assistant Vice Chancellor - Enrollment and Undergraduate Director - Admission
 Director of Diversity Enrollment
 Associate Dean and Director - International Admission
 Vice Chancellor - Enrollment
Graduate Council:
 Registrar
 Dean - Graduate School of Social Work
 Dean - Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
 Dean - Natural Sciences and Mathematics
 Associate Provost - Research; Professor – Graduate School of Social Work
 Professor - Philosophy
 Dean - School of Engineering and Computer Science
 Domain Chair - Morgridge College of Education
 Associate Provost - Graduate Studies; Associate Professor - English
University Advancement:
 Director of Annual Giving - University Advancement
 Assistant Vice Chancellor for Development - University Advancement
 Vice Chancellor - University Advancement
 Associate Vice Chancellor, Gift Planning - University Advancement
 Executive Director of Development, Sturm College of Law - University Advancement
 Senior Director of Development, Principal Gifts - University Advancement
 Senior Director of Development, Principal Gifts - University Advancement
 Senior Director of Advancement Services - University Advancement
University Technology Services:
 Director of Computer Operations and Interim Vice Chancellor - Technology Services
 Director of Network Services - Technology Services
 Director of Information Security and CISO - Technology Services
 Director of Faculty and Staff Systems Support - Technology Services
 Manager of Finance and Administration - Technology Services
 Director of Administrative Information Systems - Technology Services
 Director of IT Customer Services - Technology Services
Undergraduate Student Government
Academic Assessment Advisory Committee/Office of Academic Assessment:
 Director - Academic Assessment; Associate Professor - Psychology
 Associate Professor - Graduate School of Social Work
 Professor - Sturm College of Law

Associate Professor, Center Director - Conflict Resolution Institute
Professor - Morgridge College of Education
Academic Director - University College
Assessment Coordinator - Academic Assessment
Director - Psy.D. Program; Associate Professor - Graduate School of Professional Psychology
Assistant Dean, Curriculum/Advising - Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences
Board of Trustees Executive Committee:
Board of Trustees, Chair
Board of Trustees, Secretary
Four Board Committee Chairs
Board Trustee
Criterion 1 and Criterion 2 Committees:
Associate Provost - Undergraduate Academic Programs
Associate Provost - Research; Associate Professor - Graduate School of Social Work
President - Faculty Senate; Associate Professor – Library
Assistant Provost - Planning, Budget, and Analysis
Associate Provost - Planning, Budget, and Analysis
Vice Chancellor – Enrollment
Criterion 4 Committee:
Associate Dean, Natural Sciences & Mathematics; Associate Professor – Geography
Chair and Associate Professor – History
Associate Professor – Theatre
Professor - Sturm College of Law
Criterion 3 Committee:
Associate Provost - Graduate Studies; Associate Professor- English
Director - Academic Assessment; Associate Professor - Psychology
Director - Center for Teaching & Learning; Associate Professor – Chemistry
Assistant Professor - Education
Internationalization Cherrington Faculty Committee, Study Abroad:
Director, Budget and Operations - Internationalization
Associate Director - Study Abroad
Director, International Student and Scholar Services - Internationalization
Vice Provost for Internationalization; Professor - English
Assistant Director - English Language Center
Director - English Language Center
Assistant Director - Study Abroad
Criterion 5 Committee:
Professor – Education
Dean - The Women's College
University Chaplain
Associate Provost - Student Life/Academic Resources
Director - Special Programs
Assistant Provost - Multicultural Excellence
Associate Athletic Director
Associate Professor - Social Work

Open forum with graduate students
Open forum with alumni
Open forum with adjunct faculty—11 faculty from Women’s College, Modern Languages, and University College
Open forum with community stakeholders—5 attendees
Open forum with appointed faculty
Open forum with staff
Open forum with undergraduate students—3 students
Various students, staff, and faculty on campus and during campus tours

G. Principal Documents, Materials, and Web Pages Reviewed

Self-Study Report
Profiles 2009-2020
Annual Report 2009-2010
University of Denver Campus Tour Booklet
Board of Trustees Resolutions
Board of Trustees Minutes
Audited Financial Statements, June 30, 2008 and 2007, and June 30, 2009 and 2008
DU Progress Reports to HLC 2004
Assessment Report Guidelines
Assessment Report Writing Resources
Student Learning Outcomes by Unit
DU Home Page
Vision, Values, Mission and Goals
Pioneer Passage Video
Honor Code
Student Code of Conduct
University College
Center for Multicultural Excellence
Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity
Morgridge College of Education
University College Mission, Values, Vision and Diversity Statements
Center for Teaching and Learning
Graduate Studies
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
Athletics Strategic Plan 2008-2013
Ombuds Office
Employee Handbook of Personnel Guidelines and Procedures
Annual Reports
Chancellor’s Speeches
Erna and Brad Butler Institute for Families
University Writing Program
Cherrington Global Scholars Program
Robert and Judi Newman Center for the Performing Arts
Victoria H. Myhren Gallery

Daniel L. Richie Center for Sports and Wellness
Josef Korbel School of International Studies
Sturm College of Law
Buell Early Childhood Leadership Program
Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning
Daniels College of Business
Markkula Center
Volunteers in Partnership
University Technology Services
New Technology Proposal Process
Sustainability Council
Sustainability Report and Plan
Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education
Discoveries Undergraduate Student Orientation
First-Year Seminars
Institute of International Education's Open Door Report
Department of Languages and Literatures
International Student and Scholar Services
Master of Arts degree in International Security
Master of Arts degree in International Disaster Psychology
MS and PhD in Nanoscale Science and Engineering
Natural Science and Mathematics
School of Engineering and Computer Science
Integrated Facilities Plan
Sightlines
Undergraduate Student Government
Built for Learning Book
Dean's Council
Staff Advisory Council
Administrative Council
Faculty Senate
Office of Intuitional Research
Royall & Company
Noel-Levitz
Department of Human Resources
Gain Share Policy
Chancellor Letter Regarding Economic Environment Oct. 2008
Faculty Salary Study 2004
Performance Evaluation and Development System (PEDS)
Corona Insights
Bar Passage Rate Research
Alchemy
Scannel and Kurz
Campus Bookstore Consulting
Penrose Library
Graduate School of Social Work

Applied Research and Technology Institute
Daniels College of Business Strategic Plan
The Women's College
Profiles University Fact Book
IPEDS Comparative Data
IPEDS Admission Data
Enrollment Data
Tuition and Fees Comparative Data
Dini Partners, Inc.
Bond Rating
University Land Use Plan
Sustainability Statement
Assessment Culture Survey
U.S. News & World Report
Bloomberg Business Week
Bloomberg Business Week by Program
Foreign Policy
Office of Academic Assessment
Common Curriculum
Assessment at DU
Professional Psychology Examination Data
Appointment, Promotion and Tenure Guidelines
Pedagogy of Innovation Conference
Distance Learning Council
Inclusive Excellence at DU
Advising Handbook
Academic Advising
Advising Tools
Undergraduate Research Center
Research, Scholarship, and Creative Work Task Force Report
Faculty Research Fund Grant Recipients
Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
Professional Conference Travel Fund
Bridges to the Future
Department of English
Profiles of Excellence Awards
Child, Family, and School Psychology and Counseling Psychology
Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes
Common Curriculum Governance
Undergraduate Council
University and Program Accreditation
Living and Learning Communities
Tuition and Fees
Graduation Rates, Student-Athletes
Graduate Policies and Procedures Handbook
Undergraduate Bulletin 2010-2012

American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment
Annual Diversity Summit
Computer Science Department
Graduate Council
Policies and Forms, Graduate
Policies and Procedures Handbook, Graduate
Student Learning Outcomes, Graduate-Professional
Advancement
Athletics and Recreation
Community Programs
DU/Illiff Joint Ph.D. Program
Sampling of DU Study Abroad Agreements:

- CIEE (Council on International Education Exchange)
- ISA (International Studies Abroad)
- University of Queensland
- China Studies Institute
- University of Economics – Prague
- American University of Paris (Cooperative Agreement, Mar 2008)

Memorandum of Understanding for the Denver Teacher Residency Program (Feb. 09)
MOU for the Boettcher Teachers Program (March 2008)
Aurora Teacher Residency Program (STEM focus)
Sample of Faculty Files in Provost's Office
Employee Dispute Resolution Policy
Faculty Hiring Guide
Graduation Rates
Provost Reports
Student Transcripts
Organizational Charts

II. COMMITMENT TO PEER REVIEW

A. Comprehensiveness of the Self-Study Process

Regarding the self-study process, the team observed there was good institutional involvement, the process was highly consultative with faculty and staff, and feedback was used in report revisions. While the resultant self-study report was primarily descriptive in nature, information needed by the team was provided in the self-study report and in the other resources assembled for the team. Additional information was made available when requested.

B. Integrity of the Self-Study Report

Based on interviews and a review of university documents and materials, the team could validate information in the self-study report during the onsite visit. The report was extensive and comprehensive in the University units included, and many features of the

University were described very well. However, the report was more descriptive than analytical, and it did not capture the many of challenges shared during the onsite visit.

C. Adequacy of Progress in Addressing Previously Identified Challenges

The team considers the response of the University to previously identified challenges to be adequate.

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

Requirements were fulfilled. See also attached Worksheet on Federal Compliance Requirements.

III. COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

The team reviewed the required Title IV compliance areas and the student complaint information. See also attached Worksheet on Federal Compliance Requirements.

IV. FULFILLMENT OF THE CRITERIA

CRITERION ONE: MISSION AND INTEGRITY. The organization operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.

1. Evidence that Core Components are met

- a. The university carefully crafted and revised its vision, values, mission, and goals (VVMG):
 - The DU statements of vision, values, mission and goals commit the University to excellence, innovation, engagement and integrity for the public good. The mission clarifies that active partnerships with local and global communities contribute to serving the common good, and this is reflected in the goal to “create a diverse, ethical and intellectually vibrant campus community to provide a challenging and liberating learning environment.”
 - The VVMG statements were adopted in 2001, following the last self-study, through a process of public discourse and have been regularly revisited and revised. In 2006-07 the statements were reviewed to determine whether they in fact characterized the work of the University. At the end of yearlong conversations involving substantial numbers of faculty, administration, and members of the Board of Trustees, the vision statement was retained, and the values and mission statements revised to articulate current commitments of the

University. One specific change was to more clearly articulate that the University's research mission is to be centered on "the great issues of our time." The new statements were ratified by all governance bodies of the University.

- The VVMG is publicly available and consistently articulated as part of University life. The DU Website landing page provides access to these statements for the public. The VVMG is a prominent part of the matriculation ceremony for new students, orientations for new employees, and at dinners with first year students. It is clearly presented in the University Honor Code, Code of Student Conduct and other internal documents that reinforce the commitment to integrity.

The team concluded that DU's vision, values, mission and goals are clearly stated and publicly articulate the University's commitments.

- b. The team reviewed the vision, value, mission, and goals documents and programs and activities for evidence that DU recognizes the diversity of its constituencies:

- The DU Values Statement commits to inclusiveness: "In all we do, we strive for excellence, innovation, engagement, integrity and inclusiveness." One of the three University goal statements further reinforces this commitment: "We will create a diverse, ethical and intellectually vibrant campus..." Today the phrase "inclusive excellence" is invoked consistently at the University of Denver as a statement of commitment.
- After the 2007 examination and revision of the VVMG, at the annual University Convocation the Chancellor, publicly articulated the commitments of the University in pursuit of the mission. Among the seven commitments were that DU will be a "great international university for Denver and the Rocky Mountain West;" and a "university where diversity, inclusion and excellence mold leaders for a changing America."
- The commitment to "inclusive excellence" is apparent in actions and programs and the University Diversity Statement is prominently displayed on the Website. The University's recruiting philosophy clearly indicates a commitment to maintaining "a diverse group of highly qualified employees," by supporting a "systematic hiring process to eliminate the possibility of discriminatory actions" and ensuring "that all applicable affirmative action and equal opportunity laws and practices are met." The programs of the University indicate a respect for and a fostering of diversity. The organizational structure includes the Center for Multicultural Excellence and the Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity, minority alumni associations, and the Latino/a Center. All speak to an emphasis on diversity. Additionally activities that focus on diversity include the national summer institute for Ph.D. students of color, and the annual diversity summits.
- University College strives to provide educational opportunities for students who might not otherwise have access to a quality education by offering evening and weekend instruction as well as online teaching.

- DU's efforts at inclusiveness and multicultural excellence have resulted in a third rank nationally in 2009 in the percent who study abroad, and, in a 15-20% enrollment of domestic minority students and 15% minority full-time faculty during 2009. University records show a healthy increase in the percent of domestic minorities with increases rising from 10.2% to 19.8 %. In a meeting with the Center for Multicultural Excellence (CME), the HLC visiting team was shown data indicating that these rates were higher than rates at other colleges and universities in Colorado. In addition to the University College, academic structures such as the Women's College and the Josef Korbel School of International Studies support this goal, as does the CME, which promotes a supportive campus climate and inclusive excellence. Unit-level mission documents affirm support for the University's value of inclusiveness.

The team concluded that in the University's documents and programs, the university recognizes and values the diversity of the constituencies it serves.

- c. Based on a review of documents, survey data, and team interviews, the team found evidence that an understanding of and support for the mission pervade the University:

- DU events, orientations (such as Living and Learning Communities and Pioneers Leadership Program), and documents and speeches consistently articulate the essential points of the Vision, Values, Mission and Goals statements. There is clear evidence that this has resulted in DU faculty, staff and students becoming aware of and embracing the VVMG.
- A 2010 faculty/staff mission survey indicates a majority to strong agreement that the VVMG statement reflects DU's priorities; that students' educational experiences are informed by the VVMG; that planning, budgeting, hiring and promotion decisions are informed by the VVMG; and that DU is committed to its core values of excellence, engagement, integrity, innovation and inclusiveness. A 2009 alumni survey also agreed that DU is achieving the components of the VVMG. Students, faculty and staff with whom the team met during the visit demonstrated a familiarity with and understanding of the VVMG, with most able to quote the majority of it.

- d. The team reviewed the University's major governance and administrative structures:

- DU has clearly defined responsibilities of administrative personnel. Prior to the visit, the team requested organizational charts organized by position title to be amended to include individual names. Because these charts are maintained at the departmental level, coordination took a few days to complete. All organizational charts were available prior to the visit. DU administrative leadership has been very stable with succession to Chancellor and Provost roles occurring internally.
- The University of Denver Board of Trustees is highly involved in the life of the University. The Board, organized into 11 committees encompassing a broad-range of University activities, meets frequently and works closely with the University's administrators, faculty and students. Some concern was expressed to team members that the involvement of the Board at times verges on micromanagement. However, the model of Board participation has a long-standing history and seems

to be well accepted.

- Faculty inclusion and effectiveness in shared governance is demonstrated in their role with the Board, their control of curriculum, and their effective involvement in resolving disputes in the University administration. Primary responsibility for governance in the areas of academics and scholarship rests with the faculty. The Faculty Senate President is an ex-officio member of the full Board of Trustees, and faculty members sit on Faculty and Educational Affairs and the Finance and Budget Committees.
- The Faculty Senate is empowered by its Constitution, which has been ratified by the Board of Trustees, as the primary vehicle for faculty participation in shared governance. The Senate, comprised of elected faculty representatives, manages the University's Appointment, Promotion and Tenure guidelines and participates through its committee structure in other central areas of university concern. The Faculty Senate serves as the forum for curriculum discussion and for bringing curricular issues to the faculty for vote. Meetings with representatives from the Faculty Senate Executive Committee confirmed that the Faculty controls the curriculum and is appropriately involved with budgeting and other areas of university decision-making. Graduate and Undergraduate Councils review curricular change, and the Faculty Senate manages general curricular issues and faculty matters, and is also involved in DU's budgeting process. DU has an active chapter of AAUP which was re-established in 2007, as well as a Staff Advisory Council.
- Meetings with the Graduate and Undergraduate Councils confirmed that they review the curriculum. The Councils are chaired, respectively, by the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies and Associate Provost for Undergraduate Academic Programs.
- As noted above, the Faculty Senate President serves ex-officio on the Board and faculty members serve as voting members of the Faculty and Educational Affairs and the Finance and Budget Committees. The Undergraduate Student Government President, the Graduate Student Advisory Council President and the Student Bar Association President are voting members of the Student and Alumni Affairs Committee.
- Meetings with the Deans' Council and other administrators convey a clear sense that they understand and embrace their roles in the University.

The team concluded that the University's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable DU to fulfill its mission.

- e. There is significant evidence that the University of Denver acts with integrity in relation to its students, staff, faculty and other constituents. In most areas of endeavor, the University clearly defines its standards and expectations and acts in accordance with those:
 - The University follows through on the promises that it makes to its students and community constituents. Academic, social and community expectations for

students are clearly stated in the Code of Student Conduct and the Honor Code. Business standards are articulated in the Board of Trustees' approved policies and the University's finances through the Audit Committee of the board and through an internal audit department.

- Appropriate review procedures are established to ensure integrity of research activities. These include the Institutional Review Board (human subjects), Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee, and Biosafety Committee. In the sciences, students receive extensive training in laboratory safety, and appropriate safety equipment is provided. A chemical hygiene plan is in place, which seems to be closely followed. In addition, the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs oversees issues of export controls, possible conflict of interest, and HIPAA regulations.
- Guidelines and procedures are in place for addressing employee grievances. These include an Employee Dispute Resolution Policy. There is also an Ombuds Office that provides informal and confidential assistance. Faculty concerns are addressed through the Appointment, Promotion and Tenure standards. These consistently reflect the VVMG.
- The Board of Trustees has approved policies that guide the business conduct of the University and the Audit Committee of the Board ensures compliance with internal and external financial and business requirements. Positions and offices including the Institutional Compliance and Internal Audit Department, The Office of University Counsel, The Department of Risk Management all have been developed to ensure compliance with internal and external laws and procedures. The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics has maintained rigor in compliance with NCAA regulations and by maintaining the highest graduation rates in their conference.

Based on the above evidence, the team concluded that the University of Denver upholds and protects its integrity.

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

- a. Communications policies and procedures constrain opportunities for collaborations across units, indicating this is an area needing organizational attention (Core Component 1d):
 - Conversations with faculty and staff revealed concern that communications policies and procedures constrain opportunities for collaborations across units. This was reflected in issues such as redundancy in curricular offerings resulting from not being informed about University activities and procedures.
 - A meeting with the tenured faculty uncovered concerns about the degree to which information about promotion and tenure guidelines are communicated to potential candidates for promotion.
 - Perhaps the clearest articulation of this problem arose in conversations with staff members. It should be noted first that the staff feel they are a part of to the DU

community. They indicated that one big luncheon each year is greatly appreciated, but not sufficient to keep everyone informed. Several staff members expressed frustration that they are not informed about what is happening across the University. They expressed a desire for more frequent and in-depth communication about DU activities and initiatives. It should be noted that some individuals, whose positions allow them to participate in meetings with faculty, felt more informed.

- Staff members specifically articulated concerns about policies that lead to inconsistent availability of information about internal job postings and salaries. They indicated that information is not systematically available about grades and related salaries for positions. Decisions about sharing such information are left up to managers which means that some people know and others do not know pay for various grades. Staff members indicated that this limits their potential for advancement within the University. Many expressed a great commitment to DU and appreciation of benefits and the sense of community, but indicated that they feel that lack of communication about open positions and pay levels limits the extent to which they can seek advancement internally.
- b. There is evidence that staff development and compensation need organizational attention (Core Component 1e):
- While the self-study report frequently references staff as the second half of “faculty and staff” or as part of the total community in “faculty, staff and students,” little mention is made of programs, support for, or accomplishments of staff at the University. This suggests little focus on the issue.
 - A significant point of discussion in the staff open forum was the perceived inconsistency and inadequacy of staff development opportunities and support. There was consensus that staff development is handled in a decentralized manner, resulting in great variation in support and opportunity. Staff in some units described significant attention to staff development and satisfaction with the opportunities afforded to them. Staff from other units indicated that they receive little or no support for professional and skill development. Representatives from Human Resources who were present at the forum described some efforts to provide University-wide support, but agreed that they were not highly successful.
 - Discussion of compensation in the self-study report consistently describes compensation increases as applying to both faculty and staff. Criterion 2 discusses the Human Resources goal to “recruit and retain the highest quality employees,” and the fact that they do benchmark salaries and compensation. This section does not convey whether the University is or is not doing well on this issue. The Criterion 2 discussion also focuses significant attention on staff reductions and efforts to control overall expenditure on compensation in order to meet the economic pressures of 2008.
 - Perhaps reflecting these recent efforts, staff at the forum expressed significant concern about compensation. Despite a high level of consensus that the University overall is a good place to work, they articulated significant concern about staff turnover, noting that excellent staff members were leaving the University due to lack of adequate salary levels. Some felt that there is potential inconsistency in salaries paid across the University for similar positions.

- Other discussions of issues such as diversification also reflect a lack of focus on staff needs. For example, the self-study report introduction referenced “planning around diversity in terms of faculty and staff recruiting and retention.” It went on to describe creation of a “position dedicated to multicultural faculty recruitment and retention.” Comparable attention was not provided to efforts to diversify the staff.
- c. A review of the data provided in Profiles 2009-2010 (p. 227) revealed that only ~1/3 of the tenured faculty are women, and of those, only ~36% are at the rank of professor. By contrast, of the tenured men faculty, 58% have achieved the rank of professor. While the data suggest more recent hires are about equally split between men and women, no evidence is provided to indicate DU is aware of and working to address the gender inequities at the associate professor and professor ranks. Some informal evidence acquired during the site visit suggests that women faculty are taking on a disproportionate share of institutional service work that interferes with advancement and/or are not being sufficiently encouraged to take steps to continue their advancement. Attention needs to be focused on this issue to determine if there are any subtle or frank inequities in the professional development of women faculty and the promotion processes. (Core Component 1e)

3. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components require Commission follow-up.

None.

4. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components are not met and require Commission follow-up. (Sanction or adverse action may be warranted.)

None.

Recommendation of the Team

Criterion is met; no Commission follow-up recommended.

CRITERION TWO: PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE. The organization’s allocation of resources and its processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate its capacity to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its education and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

1. Evidence that the core components are met.

- a. Based on a review of documents and interviews with various constituencies, the team noted a number of ways that the University is preparing for a future in light of societal and economic trends:
- Over the past decade, DU has grown in size and scope. In the period before this growth began, the University was focused on developing new and modernized facilities to establish an environment that would sustain the academic excellence that is necessary for it to prosper in the future. The transition from this phase of the University’s history to the current emphasis on program growth and development was successfully made over the last decade, and the institution has energetically begun to

- engage its future in light of changing demographic, social and economic trends that are emerging in the twenty-first century.
- The team found that throughout the community there is eagerness to embrace that future with purposefulness and planning, and especially to do so by establishing priorities and focused goals to assure that the allocation of resources reflects strategic imperatives that have been developed through extensive debate and collaborative action. Planning documents infuse the organization at all levels and are coordinated through a campus-wide document with the telling title of “Vision, Values, Mission and Goals.” The VVMG’s set the parameters for this institution-wide conversation and have broad support and understanding. The Chancellor’s reference to them in his public addresses, especially the annual Convocation, are an important expression and reminder of this realism in planning for the future.
 - DU is a decentralized organization with emphasis on local planning and implementation, informed by the overarching goals of the University as a whole. While in many other academic cultures in other institutions this model might prove to be difficult to manage, at DU the VVMG overcomes much of the centripetal force of decentralization by clear expression of seven future-oriented themes that underpin planning at the unit level. These themes define what DU “will be” in the future and all are focused on what that future might look like.
 - There are many examples in each thematic area. The team tested the examples in the self-study report and all were found to be representative of their broader impact across the institution. Recent (July, 2010) planning documents given to the team during the visit from Penrose Library, which is embarked upon a major strategic re-deployment of resources and facilities, are but the most current examples of this phenomenon.
- b. The University’s resource base has increased significantly over the past decade, with net assets nearly doubling. This was accomplished by a disciplined budget and planning process that the Provost’s Office led and that has been institutionalized to include people at all levels of the organization and to assure both year to year budgeting and development of longer term budget projections. The team was impressed with this forward thinking strategic view of how budgets emerge organically over a period of time, longer than the current fiscal year. Moreover, there is strong encouragement to manage the resources of the institution for the longer term through the Gain Share Program, which permits units to retain unspent budgets for one-time strategic investments in the future, subject to certain rules and policies that assure central review and approval of each expenditure and limit the amount of the total spent in any one year. The University’s level of debt at \$143.43 million is modest thanks to the fact that infrastructure improvements of the past have largely been cash-funded, with exceptions only in those areas (parking garages, residence halls) that have revenue streams attached to them, or where opportunities emerged faster and earlier than anticipated (law school building). The University recognizes the challenges attendant to tuition dependence and a comparatively small endowment. The team concluded that, based on strong balance sheets, cash reserves and a growing endowment, the University’s resource base supports its educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.
- c. The University’s investment in human capital based upon performance is a key component of strengthening academic quality and enhancing reputation. While the data in the self-study report demonstrate that when compared to its peer group, including

aspirational peers, the University lags in faculty compensation, the growth in the size of the faculty has been a key component of significantly enhanced expenditures in this area of the budget. A good first step is the salary increase awarded for promotion, up to \$7,000 for promotion to associate professor and \$12,000 for promotion to full professor. In the future, it is anticipated that general compensation increases will be possible, in part, by constraining growth in faculty FTE coupled with revenue enhancement increases, noticeably in areas other than tuition, with opportunities for growth in contracts and grants.

- d. DU student enrollment has been steadily growing since the last Commission visit. As with most colleges and universities similar to DU, tuition is its greatest source of revenue. Between information provided in the self-study report and meetings on campus, it became clear that growth has been strategically planned and managed to achieve not only more revenue but also a purposeful learning environment. For example, although growth in graduate enrollment has been greatest as DU entered new markets, this growth is planned to slow to ensure that the balance between undergraduates and graduate students does not erode the cohesive experience of the undergraduates. In another planned area of expansion, enrollment of international students, growth has been sought not only to tap the large student market outside the U.S., but also to provide a broader exposure of students on campus to others outside the U.S. But again, this increase is slated to slow to assure a good balance. In the past few years, the institution also noted an increase in the number of international students who enroll and then either struggle or have to leave due to insufficient financial resources. In response, DU enrollment management has instituted a more careful analysis of the realistic ability of a prospective student to meet financial realities to minimize the number of traumatic events for students.
- e. DU's ongoing evaluation and assessment processes provide evidence of institutional effectiveness that informs strategies for continuous improvement. In the past few years, the University has made significant efforts to develop a culture that is infused with evaluation and assessment. The explicit goal, as noted in the self-study report, is to begin at the individual level through merit-based performance evaluation on an annual basis and to continue at the program, college/division and campus levels by utilizing an extensive list of instruments and processes. The general organizing theme of these evaluations is focused on institutional goals. Elsewhere in this team report (see Criteria 3 and 4) it is noted that some results are uneven. This reflects the fact that the cultural shift towards assessment and evaluation has occurred relatively recently and helps explain why the processes and commitment levels are unevenly implemented across the University. While overall the team found that the University has in place processes for evaluation and assessment, the team also observed that it will be necessary to be diligent over the future to assure these processes are enhanced and followed throughout the decentralized organizational structure.
- f. In its self-study report, the University notes (p. 109) that "Academic excellence and fiscal viability are inseparable elements of the ... long-term plan." The team found there is a holistic approach to budgeting and planning as well as program creation, elimination and enhancement. One example is the decision to move to Division I in Intercollegiate Athletics. While at first glance and on the surface this might appear to have been an isolated decision related to sports exclusively, closer evaluation reveals this was a strategic move to position the University to compete athletically with institutions with

which it competes for students and faculty members. This visibility outside the region is one of the major themes for the University as it seeks to be “a great international University” [VVMG Theme #4] in the future. The team determined that all levels of planning align with the University’s mission that enhances its ability to fulfill that mission.

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

None.

3 Evidence that one or more specified Core Components require Commission follow-up.

None.

4. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components are not met and require Commission follow-up. (Sanction or adverse action may be warranted.)

None.

Recommendation of the Team

Criterion is met; no Commission follow-up recommended.

CRITERION THREE: STUDENT LEARNING AND EFFECTIVE TEACHING. The organization provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

1. Evidence that Core Components are met

- a. The University’s goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated for each educational program and make effective assessment possible:
 - DU has clearly differentiated learning outcomes for undergraduate and graduate programs. “Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes,” prepared by the Undergraduate Student Learning Group representing faculty from all units and with input from the Faculty Senate, was approved by the Undergraduate Council in May 2007. The “Graduate-Professional Student Learning Outcomes,” prepared by the Graduate-Professional Student Learning Outcomes Committee with representatives appointed by the unit deans with input from the Faculty Senate, was approved by the Graduate Council in May 2009. These university-wide learning outcomes, in effect whether a program is offered on-site or online, now provide a framework for publicly available learning outcomes in all undergraduate programs, including the new core curriculum, and for explicit learning outcomes in graduate programs that

may not have had them before. Indeed, over the past ten years, 18 undergraduate majors and 26 graduate degrees were established, and both Councils reported that the approval process for new programs requires inclusion in the proposal of explicit student learning outcomes and measures of assessment. The university should be commended for requiring student learning outcomes at the proposal stage.

- With this foundation and supportive leadership, DU has brought about significant improvement in program assessment since 2008. In addition to university analysis of NSSE data, each unit now completes an annual assessment report structured by a common template which calls for mapping of program learning outcomes onto the university-level ones, evidence of student learning in relation to those outcomes, and a discussion of how the data would be used. The team commends the Academic Assessment Director and Assessment Advisory Committee for establishing such excellent guidelines and templates for assessment reports, for being liaisons to their respective units or programs, for committing to professional development in the area of assessment, and for promoting a positive tone and message about the academic importance of assessment of student learning.
- While an assessment process has been in place at least since 2003, participation before 2008 dipped as low as 21% in 2004-2006; since 2008, participation has grown dramatically, with 82% participation in 2006-2007, 95% in 2007-2008, and 98% in 2008-2009. Assessment reports are posted on a website open to the DU community. Faculty from across the university reported to the HLC review team that they find the process worthwhile and that a culture of assessment is forming at DU. In addition to academic units, Student Affairs also participates actively in the assessment process.

These developments over the past several years have created the foundation for a burgeoning culture of assessment. Based on the above evidence, the team determined there are clearly stated student learning outcomes for each program, making effective assessment possible.

- b. Acting out its mission to “promote learning,” DU supports effective teaching in multiple ways, from governance structures and evaluation processes to curricular structures and faculty development funds.
 - With a student/faculty ratio of 8.9:1, deriving in part from the addition of close to fifty tenure track faculty members in the past five years, DU clearly places great value on instruction. All programs of instruction, whether offered on-site or online, are approved by either the Undergraduate or Graduate Councils which include faculty representation from the pertinent colleges, and, when needed, by the Distance Learning Council. Course evaluation results are available to the DU community and are password protected from external view. There are multiple teaching awards at the university level – including an annual “Adjunct Faculty Teaching Award”, teacher of

the year, distinguished teaching award, and Master Educator Award – along with several in individual colleges.

- DU provides ample support for faculty to develop their teaching. For example, The Center for Teaching and Learning, started in 2000 and reorganized in 2009, sponsors regular workshops on a variety of topics related to improving teaching; provides a newsletter, website, conferences, discussions, and consultations; funds travel for faculty giving conference presentations on topics related to teaching; provides \$20,000 initiative grants to groups of faculty working on projects to promote significant change; and, most recently, launched an undergraduate on-line learning pilot for faculty interested in creating fully on-line or hybrid courses. Proposals for the \$20K grants and the on-line learning pilot include required plans for assessing student learning; in this way the Center for Teaching and Learning works hand-in-hand with the Office of Academic Assessment. In addition, periodic conferences sponsored by the Center bring experts to campus for in-depth discussions of pedagogical innovations. In some of the academic units, professional development funding is also available for faculty. The Center is supported by the university and since 2000 has grown from 1.5 members to 9.5 members today having two groups: instruction technology and teaching, and web developer group.
- The First Year Seminar provides another important opportunity for faculty support and development. FY Seminar instructors serve as academic advisors for their students, beginning with a three-day orientation, and receive stipends for these added responsibilities. These faculty are required to participate in a day-long training led by the Academic Advising Office.
- Faculty also receive instructional support from the Library, which partners with them not only to ensure that appropriate resources are available, but also to help students develop the skills they need to use these resources and critically evaluate them.

Taken together, these features of faculty life at DU demonstrate a deep commitment to effective teaching, and strong support to make it happen.

- c. Since 1997, DU has opened 19 new campus buildings and renovated four others, all with the express purpose of creating effective learning environments. A tour of the facilities revealed comfortable group study spaces in academic buildings, residence halls and the student union, and various kinds of classroom seating appropriate to each college -- including tiered lectures in the round in the Business school, seminar rooms in Strum Hall, up-to-date laboratories in the science building, and small and large concert halls in the School of Music. The campus is approximately 95% wireless and most of the classrooms are equipped for multimedia presentations. DU's facilities are impressive.
- d. The last remaining facility critical to the learning environment to be renovated is the library. A \$30 million complete renovation will begin after the close of the 2010/2011 academic year. Plans are being finalized to ensure access to all of the physical and digital library resources for the 18 month period of renovation. A major focus of the new

building design is maximization of learning spaces for students, ranging from quiet individual rooms to larger rooms for group work. The number of students observed in the library during the site visit meetings was striking. The library and the staff have become central to the learning communities of students; although students and faculty continue to expand their use of digital on-line materials, the students clearly see and value the complementary learning that takes place through in-person interactions. Library staff reported times when every available chair, table and floor sitting area is essentially full, and library hours had to be extended to 2 a.m. The new library design will respond to this growing need by compressing the space and design of access to print materials. The new design appears to provide an excellent plan to balance the multiple purposes of the library and its staff.

- e. Equally impressive is the way DU welcomes new undergraduate students and provides advising along the way. Entering freshmen begin with a four-day orientation designed to introduce them to academic study in addition to providing advising, both with their trained FY-Seminar faculty advisor and in the departments where they have declared majors. No DU undergraduate can register for classes without an appropriate academic advisor releasing their electronic pin number; this process ensures that every student sees an academic advisor at least once each quarter. A central advising unit assists undergraduate students who may be at risk. An early warning system exists to report students of concern on issues such as lack of attendance, disruptive behavior, sexual assault, poor academic performance or social adjustment issues. In 2009, a pilot student advocate program was implemented for those undergraduate students identified as at risk. Eighty-five percent of those served have remained enrolled. Results of a spring 2009 survey of students' perceptions of faculty advising included in the self-study report show that a large majority of students rated faculty "high" or "very high" on a 5-point scale on issues related to course selection, progress to degree, knowledge of academic policies, and connecting students to other university resources.
- f. Each year, roughly 250 undergraduate students participate in either a Living & Learning Community or the Pioneer Leadership Program, and another 350 students participate in the Honors Program. Students in each of these programs live together on designated floors in the dorms, take program-related courses together -- whether in the first year (LLCs) or throughout their time at DU (PLP and HP) -- and participate in co-curricular activities; conversations with numerous students suggest that these programs help students engage with DU on multiple levels.
- g. The Division of Student Life uses assessment results to improve student services with the Balanced Scorecard assessment model. In 2006 it began to use a simplified Student Life Assessment Plan at the unit level focused on articulated student learning outcomes.
- h. The disability Services Program serves over 800 students by providing accommodations and has an Assistive Technology Specialist. A grant from the Brown Foundation is providing funds to re-examine courses to incorporate universal design practices and to train ten tenure line faculty to mentor peers. Thus the learning environment for students with disabilities is enhanced.

- i. The on-campus learning environment is shaped, in part, by the fact that, with support from the Cherrington Global Scholars Program, more than three quarters of DU undergraduate students study abroad, most often in their junior year. While the absence of most juniors creates some discontinuities for student groups on campus, the benefits of what has become a world-wide learning environment more than compensate. DU partners with institutions across the globe and vets each program to ensure that students have a rigorous academic experience. Every student we spoke to either had been abroad or was planning to go; these trips influenced students' course selections, broadened their perspectives, and in many instances were shaping their career choices.
- j. NSSE data from 2009 suggests that students are benefiting from these resources, with DU out-performing selected peers, Carnegie Class Institutions, and all NSSE 2009 institutions in four out of five clusters of questions: Level of Academic Challenge, Active and Collaborative Learning, Student-Faculty Interaction, and Enriching Educational Experiences. DU continues to explore the reasons for lower marks relative to the other groups in providing a Supportive Campus Environment.
- k. Advising for graduate students is decentralized: each graduate and professional program at DU, whether on-site or online, is responsible for its own advising system. Students are assigned to a research or academic advisor or both. Many programs provide a graduate handbook to assist students. In addition, the Center for Teaching and Learning and the Penrose Library have developed an Electronic Thesis, Capstone, and Dissertation program to share student research with the academic community.
- l. The DU community has access to a full array of on-line resources to support learning, teaching, and advising. Banner enables students to register for classes and track their progress to degree. Academic advisors can view their students' records and can also record comments for other advisors to view. BlackBoard provides a learning management system that gives each course an on-line presence, with increasing numbers of faculty using it each year. Through DU Portfolio, individuals or groups can create e-portfolios and discussion forums and can collect and archive examples of traditional student work such as pre- and posttests, writing samples, and theses. DU CourseMedia enables faculty to organize and deliver high quality images, audio recordings, and video clips. The Center for Teaching and Learning provides training for all course-related tools, and faculty choose the set of resources best suited to their courses.
- m. The library has positioned itself not only as a provider of knowledge resources, but also as an effective partner with faculty to help students develop their skills in using and evaluating those resources effectively. The library has partnered with the Center for Teaching and Learning as well as the Writing Center to create a novel expanded role for the library and its staff. Reference librarians have been become "resource" librarians reflecting the collaborative relationships with students and faculty, both on-site and online. The library staff works directly with students engaged in projects with the Writing Center to guide them into deeper use and critical evaluation of information sources. Library staff members are especially cognizant of the challenges posed by the

overload of knowledge available through the web with the concomitant difficulty of validating sources. They work with students to go beyond just reading and accepting surface information, to critical reading, analysis and validating sources of information. The site visit revealed the library leadership and staff as energetic, committed and organized with a single-minded goal of creating “the library of the future.”

All of these factors combine to create a well-supported, opportunity-rich learning environment for DU students. There is more than ample evidence that DU is fulfilling its educational mission.

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

- a. A review of a sampling of assessment reports from multiple units suggests that the quality of reports is uneven in both undergraduate and graduate programs, with much reliance on indirect measures and limited evidence of learning from direct assessment of student work. There were selected examples of changes in practice or curriculum designed to address issues revealed through the assessment process, most notably in Psychology, History, French, and Law, but the process of change needs to spread wider. Further development of many assessment plans for majors is needed to include measures of student learning across time in a program of study (e.g., beginning, middle, and end), rather than a sole focus on the capstone course. (Core Component 3a)

3. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components require Commission follow-up.

- a. While there is now a solid structure of assessment of student learning in degree programs, the only component of the new undergraduate Common Curriculum that is currently assessed in terms of student learning outcomes is the writing program. A draft of an overall assessment plan has been developed, but not approved or implemented. In order to establish the effectiveness of the new Common Curriculum and fully achieve a culture of assessment at DU, a process for assessment of student learning in the Common Curriculum must be in place. A separate assessment plan is necessary for the Common Curriculum because courses with the same set of learning outcomes are offered from multiple units, and the audience for these courses similarly comes from multiple colleges. This process should include collection of direct and indirect evidence of student learning, analysis of that data, a discussion of how the data can inform changes in curriculum and/or pedagogy to improve student learning, and subsequent follow-up to evaluate those changes. Implementing such a plan will require continued efforts to instruct faculty in direct methods of assessing student learning. (Core Component 3a)
- b. University College strives to provide educational opportunities for students who might not otherwise have access to a quality education by offering evening and weekend instruction as well as online teaching. A team meeting with some adjunct faculty members, including those from the University College, uncovered that the courses offered by University College are taught almost exclusively by adjunct faculty, many of whom hold a master’s degree as their highest level of educational preparation. They work under the guidance of Academic Directors who themselves are generally not

tenured faculty, but the majority of whom hold the Ph.D. in their respective disciplines. A subsequent review of data indicated that this is the case for many courses in University College master's programs. Clear definitions of equivalent experience for faculty teaching each course within graduate programs were not available. When University College offers master's level courses, it is not clear that they monitor the educational levels of their adjunct faculty to ensure that the majority of those faculty are at the doctoral level, and in those instances when they are not at that level, that the teaching faculty are well suited for their instructional roles by being evaluated for explicitly defined equivalent experience. (Core Component 3b)

4. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components are not met and require Commission follow-up. (Sanction or adverse action may be warranted.)

None.

Recommendation of the Team

Criterion is met; Commission follow-up is recommended.

CRITERION FOUR: ACQUISITION, DISCOVERY, AND APPLICATION OF

KNOWLEDGE. The organization promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff, and students by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility in ways consistent with its mission.

1. Evidence that Core Components are met

a. The University demonstrated in a number of ways that it values a life of learning:

- DU has visible policies that affirm their commitment to academic freedom and the mission of the university to both education and scholarly pursuits. This commitment also flows from statements and actions of the Faculty Senate. The institutional policies and procedures with respect to promotion and tenure, last revised in 2001, are easily found. They provide overarching criteria for each academic rank, but not a level of detail sufficient to be clear guidance to faculty seeking promotion or tenure. That level of detail is left to the responsibility of individual departments and units since expectations for specific fields may vary. However, written policies and procedures at the department/unit level are highly variable and in some cases absent.
- DU works to provide faculty and staff with a good work environment, as illustrated by the fact that the Diversity and Equal Opportunity Office assists staff and faculty with disabilities and actively investigates and works to resolve any concerns or allegations of harassment or discrimination.

- Diversity is also advanced through several graduate programs that emphasize diversity issues such as the Center for Judaic Studies, and the Graduate School of Social Work. The Latino/a Center for Community Engagement and Scholarship also supports diversity by providing a program to provide research experiences for students with a Latino/a faculty member. In FY 2010, the Center for Multicultural Excellence's budget allocated \$15,000 to support faculty research on multicultural excellence, and \$8,5000 for faculty mentorship. These amounts are budgeted to increase in FY2012 to \$35,000 for research and \$10,000 for mentorship.
- During the 10 years since the previous comprehensive visit, DU has placed a great deal of emphasis on and committed resources to growth and improvement of its buildings and other physical resources. Even during this time, there was support for faculty research and other scholarly activity. In 2004, a major new program, Professional Research Opportunities for Faculty (PROF), was established to provide annually 20-30 competitive awards of \$20-\$30,000 to support pilot projects. A number of smaller awards such as the Faculty Research Fund, and funding for special projects, are also available through different programs with targeted audiences and purposes related to scholarly pursuits. The level and types of support equal or exceed those available at comparable institutions. DU recognizes the importance of sustained support and investment in the ongoing evolution of faculty research and other scholarly work.
- Faculty development is further supported through various other programs. Four to five faculty members are given meritorious sabbaticals each year. The Office of Internationalization provides grants to integrate international and intercultural perspectives into teaching, research, and service at \$1,000 to \$2,000 for individual faculty and \$2,000 to \$4,000 for collaborations. The Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning offers grants for the public good through the public good fund, service learning scholars program, advanced practitioners program, faculty learning pods, community-based learning writing group, and mini-grants. Additional faculty support is specific to divisions or programs. For example, the Divisions of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences provide funding where there are limited opportunities for outside grants.
- Student development is also provided by the University. The Undergraduate Research Center has PinS grants enabling students to work with a faculty partner on a research project paying up to \$1,500 for each student. Also students can receive up to \$1,500 to travel to a conference or to engage in research away from campus. There is also \$3,500 available for collaboration with faculty during the summer.
- Graduate assistantships allow the university to recruit and support the best students. They reduce attrition and time to degree. It was reported in the self-study that the total number of Graduate assistantship positions increased from 300 to 315, and from 234 to 240 in those units with doctoral programs. The average stipend level was \$12,469, with doctoral students receiving an average of \$14,351. These were increases of 32 to 35% respectively. Discussion with the Graduate Council indicated

that in some sciences the assistantships may be as high as \$19,000. For natural science assistantships, in FY2010 the highest were \$18,000, and in FY2011, the highest were \$19,300. In addition, the University provides some tuition waivers and health insurance. While the stipend may be slightly below its peers, the level seems to be competitive for recruitment purposes. However, in discussions with the Office for Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP), it became apparent that current policies requiring faculty to pay a high rate of tuition for graduate students working on research grants is problematic. Efforts are underway to resolve this issue, since the current tuition costs are inhibiting or preventing recruitment of some graduate students.

- In recent years, increasing support has been provided to the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL). It has grown into a highly effective unit that supports faculty to improve their skills as educators and enable them to adopt new learning technologies. During the visit, many examples of the positive impact of the CTL and many examples of faculty growth enabled by the CTL were visible. They are very well positioned from both a technological and staff perspective to selectively adopt new technologies that emerge and lead DU in efforts to decide when and how to adopt which options.
- The ORSP is available to assist faculty who are seeking, writing, and managing external grants. The University has recently changed from a model where the Vice Provost for Graduate Studies was responsible for both graduate studies and research to one where the position has been split into two distinct positions with the research portion being half time. As reported by the faculty, some units such as Law, Social Work, Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, and Business, also have appointed associate deans for research. It remains to be seen if the half-time position overseeing research will be sufficient, especially with the high priority being placed on increased grant funding in the future. ORSP appears to be meeting all of the escalating regulatory requirements with sponsored research, but it has minimal capacity left over to proactively assist faculty or the institution seeking external funding. Institutional infrastructure is supporting the research mission, but may run into limitations with increased effort and expectations for research.
- Through ORSP, an annual allocation of funds is made for investment in new instrumentation to support the faculty and their research. Through these funds and funds from individual faculty research awards, DU has been able to establish the infrastructure to position itself for potential research expansion in the future. Faculty report start-up funding that is individualized for each discipline, ranging from several thousand dollars in the humanities to as high as \$500,000 in the laboratory sciences.
- The University recently initiated a strategic planning process to increase research, scholarship and creative work with one goal of leveraging support for interdisciplinary and multi-university funded research collaboration among junior and mid-career faculty. The faculty report that the plan is not yet complete.

- Faculty teaching loads are typically 1 or 2 courses per quarter, with lower requirements in fields with higher time-intensive research expectations. In addition, in the divisions of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, one-quarter mini-sabbaticals are offered every 3-4 years between University sabbaticals. It was noted by some faculty that these may not be of sufficient length or provide sufficient separation from other responsibilities (such as student advising) to be effective. True sabbaticals are very short – only 1 quarter at full salary – arguably an insufficient duration in many cases to achieve significant scholarship, obtain preliminary research data, or initiate new collaborations. Taken together, however, these policies and practices provide evidence that DU works to consciously balance its teaching and research missions and the needs of faculty with differential department/division/discipline expectations.
 - The achievements of members of the DU community are honored in a variety of ways ranging from a symposium that provides undergraduates the opportunity to present the results of their research, to receptions honoring the creative work of faculty, to awards given by groups such as the Faculty Senate, the Center for Multicultural Excellence and the Student Life Division.
- b. In its undergraduate programs, the University has encouraged the acquisition of a breadth of knowledge and skills and intellectual inquiry:
- DU recently has completely revised its General Education curriculum to align it more with development of higher order skills and issues awareness. The new Common Curriculum was instituted in fall, 2010. The First Year Seminar, implemented in fall, 2006, was incorporated into the Common Curriculum. All students take the Seminar the first quarter, with writing courses following in winter and spring quarters (a few students are exempt from one writing course by AP credit). The number of credits was reduced, allowing flexibility to students especially for study abroad. In addition, the Seminar instructors also advise new students, backed up by advisors in the students' potential majors and by professional advising. The new curriculum was designed by a task force, but passed by faculty vote administered by the Senate. Little controversy seems to remain from the process. The old curriculum was content-based, requiring credits in social sciences, natural sciences, etc. The new curriculum is epistemologically based, with courses (many of them courses from the previous program) designed to approach questions of how we gain knowledge or awareness of issues. Now major courses are also blended into the general education curriculum, allowing exploration of liberal arts majors.
 - DU recognizes the important role of undergraduate research as an educational tool for promoting student learning and development of higher levels skills as well as the ability of students to contribute to creation of new knowledge. Many students are provided support to do research with faculty through small grants during the academic year and larger summer awards. Undergraduate research of this kind

plays a multiplicity of roles, from stimulating the interest of some fraction of students to pursue research training to a broad understanding of how scientific knowledge is always changing, along with its impact on health. In addition to undergraduate research, internship programs and capstone programs in a number of majors also give students the opportunity to integrate and apply what they have learned.

- c. The usefulness of the University's programs to students who will work in a global, diverse, and technological society are assessed in several ways:
- Program reviews are conducted by programs for which they are required by outside accrediting bodies. Regular reviews are also conducted in Chemistry to sustain optional ACS certification. Requirements for these kinds of program reviews are highly proscribed by accrediting/certifying bodies, so continued accreditation/certification is the criterion of their outcome. By contrast, DU-mandated program reviews are highly variable across units. The self-study report stated "we are now pursuing a more uniform method of ensuring that such reviews take place on a regular basis." It appeared that the first round had just been completed in preparation of the self-study report.
 - An exceptionally strong Study Abroad program provides about 75% of DU undergraduates with a very valuable international experience. Conversations with students during the visit confirmed their enthusiasm for the activities the powerful impact it has on many of them. This is a unique element of the student experience at DU which provides them with perspectives on our global world which are almost impossible to achieve staying in the U.S.
 - The Sustainability Council is a vibrant example of DU's interest in and commitment to social responsibility and an emphasis on conservation and social justice. This focus on a campus, national, and international commitment to preserving the environment and sustainable practices was initiated by students but has been joined by many faculty and staff. The Council is expanding to leadership roles beyond the campus, serving as the site of the Rocky Mountain Sustainability Summit in February of 2011. The College Sustainability Report Card recently gave a grade of A- to DU based on their evaluation scheme. Only one other college or university in Colorado received this high of a rating. Based on review of materials and attendance at the monthly Council meeting, it embodies an example of an opportunity for students to express their socially conscious motivations, learn leadership skills, and work collaboratively with a variety of other DU constituencies.
 - Many students participate in Service Learning and other co-curricular service activities in the Denver communities. Many DU students have a strong desire to give back to their community and these opportunities add to their growth as individuals within their worlds.

- d. The University provides support to ensure that its constituencies acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly:
- The Office of Research and Sponsored Projects (OSRP) assures compliance with Federal, State and other regulatory requirements for research, e.g. biohazards, use of animals in research, accountability for use of research funds, etc. The level of externally funded research has been relatively constant at about \$20 million in the recent past. From data provided and on-site interviews it appears that DU is effectively and responsibly managing its research activities.
 - The DU IRB reviews 550-600 protocols annually to ensure protection of human research subjects. The great majority of these fall within Social and Behavioral Research so there is a single IRB panel that reviews all protocols. The panel includes faculty, staff and an outside member.
 - The University Honor Code includes, among other items, a commitment to “uphold high standards of personal and academic integrity.” In order to ensure that students understand the code and how to implement it, faculty advisors introduce the Honor Code to students during orientation week, and students learn to cite sources through their First Year Writing courses.
 - The OSRP receives, monitors and initiates investigations of allegation of Research Misconduct. No allegations of misconduct have gone to the level of formal review and notification of funding agency during the tenure of the current OSRP leadership. The OSRP is also currently working with the different units and divisions to increase the formal training in Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) in response to recent increased focus and expectation from NSF and NIH.
 - Ethics plays a major role in the graduate and professional school programs and is found in the student learning outcomes. The current program in RCR includes embedded curricula, workshops, online RCR training, and informal mentoring. Together, there is evidence that DU currently has staff and procedures to ensure that faculty, students and staff acquire, discover and apply knowledge responsibly. If their goal of a significant increase in externally funded research is achieved, it is likely the resources committed to this assurance and OSRP will have to be increased.

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

In the sample program reviews reviewed by the HLC team, a few incorporated data from, for example, the annual assessment reports. However, many were mainly descriptive with insufficient data to support conclusions. Examples of how these reviews have led to program changes were not evident. The memo of January 15,

2008, on "Academic Program Reviews" lays out a timetable for unit reviews, provides instructions on how to proceed generally following the five criteria of the Higher Learning Commission, and directs the units to provide data to support their conclusions. However, the directive to provide data to support conclusions was not adequately addressed in the sample, and it was not clear to the team that these reviews lead to program changes.

3. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components require Commission follow-up.

None.

4. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components are not met and require Commission follow-up. (Sanction or adverse action may be warranted.)

None.

Recommendation of the Team

Criterion is met; no Commission follow-up is recommended.

CRITERION FIVE: ENGAGEMENT AND SERVICE. As called for by its mission, the organization identifies its constituencies and serves them in ways both value.

1. Evidence that the core components are met.

- a. DU's extensive engagement with its community springs from its dedication "to the public good" cited in the VVMG, and is championed by the phrase "DU something about it" that is frequently seen and heard around campus. The HLC visiting team confirmed that the University regularly attempts to understand the needs of the constituencies it serves. This is evidenced by DU's financial support through the Public Good Fund, which provides grants to faculty for scholarship and action projects that benefit the community. At DU, scholarship and service very much complement each other. DU also learns from the community when community organizations approach the University with specific needs. One major response to these needs has been the establishment of a strong service learning program that operates both locally and internationally. About 1,900 students are enrolled in 80 service learning courses per year. Service learning experiences are coordinated in close consultation with the organizations that they serve. Many of these agencies have longstanding associations with the University, and the visiting team found that is difficult for DU to add other options for its students in response to demand because of the success of ongoing programs. The Service Learning Faculty Development program provides financial support for these activities. Programs such

as the Women's College and University College that serve continuing education and nontraditional students often scan their environment and seek input from advisory councils and other external groups to assure that the programs they provide are relevant and needed.

- b. The spirit of service pervades many of DU's academic programs. These include, for example, the Graduate School of Social Work whose outreach programs focus on children's welfare, services to the elderly, animal-human connections and efforts to establish a social work program in China; the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences that provide public forums on current issues and programs of enrichment in the arts; the Daniels College of Business that offers marketing and accounting expertise to local businesses, helps low-income residents to prepare their taxes, and engages students in international learning and consulting; the Graduate School of Professional Psychology that offers clinical psychology services to residents of Denver; the Natural Sciences and Mathematics that provide seminars for the local scientific community, mentor underserved pre-college students and assist in monitoring local air and water quality; and the Sturm College of Law that provides legal assistance to under-served residents. Beyond service learning, students are engaged in service through Living and Learning Communities, Pioneer Leadership Communities and informal volunteerism. DU has established a database connecting student volunteers to local organizations. Through this database, faculty, staff and students are able to search for current service opportunities while local organizations are able to recruit volunteers. The University has the capacity and is very committed to serving its various constituencies.
- c. DU regularly partners and serves a variety of external constituencies. One major example is its "Strategic Issues Program," for which the University provides research and support critical to Colorado's attempt to examine and refine its public policy. Other partnerships exist, for instance, with the City of Denver (in a project to assist the homeless), K-12 schools and districts (to prepare school psychologists, school administrators, students for teaching in inner city schools and internationalization of school curricula); and community colleges for the transfer of student credit. In addition, DU has responded to adult learners seeking non-credit life-long learning through structured programs including lectures, short courses, seminars and informal discussion groups, and by allowing senior citizens to audit selected undergraduate courses for a nominal fee. DU also offers a variety of sports, fine arts and lectures to which the community is routinely invited. Its facilities are often made available to local organizations at reduced rates or free of charge. The University demonstrated that it is responsive to those constituencies that depend on it for service.
- d. In 2006, DU was recognized by the Carnegie Foundation as one of 76 higher education institutions for excellence in Curricular Engagement and Outreach and Partnerships. Indeed, DU has done a good job of engaging its internal community as indicated by the substantial interest in community engagement reflected in service learning course enrollments and comments by faculty, staff and students during the

HLC visit. In conversation with six external community stakeholders, the HLC visiting team was told that DU's efforts in the community were greatly valued.

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

None.

3. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components require Commission follow-up.

None.

4. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components are not met and require Commission follow-up. (Sanction or adverse action may be warranted.)

None.

Recommendation of the Team

Criterion is met; no Commission follow-up is recommended.

V. STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS

A. Affiliation Status

Accredited

Team Recommendation: No change.

B. Nature of Organization

1. Legal status

Private NFP

2. Degrees awarded

B, M, S, D, 1st Prof.

C. Conditions of Affiliation

1. Stipulation on affiliation status

The University must seek prior Commission approval before initiating any new degree programs outside of the United States.

Team Recommendation: No change.

2. Approval of degree sites

The Commission's Streamlined Review Process is only available for offering existing degree programs at new sites within the United States.

Team Recommendation: No change.

3. Approval of distance education degree

No prior Commission approval required.

Team Recommendation: No change.

4. Reports required

Progress Report

Topic and Due Date: Student learning assessment and general education curriculum, Fall, 2014

Rationale and Expectations

At the time of the team visit, DU had just initiated its new general education curriculum that is based on a new, epistemologically- based model. The draft plan to assess student learning outcomes in this new general education curriculum needs to be reviewed, approved and implemented. The four-year timeframe should allow sufficient time to finalize the draft plan; collect, analyze, and interpret the data; and indicate any planned changes in the general education curriculum. The report should include:

- Data from assessing student learning using both direct and indirect measures
- An analysis and interpretation of the student learning outcomes data
- A description of how the conclusions were used or will be used to make changes to enhance student learning

Monitoring Report

Topic and Due Date: Faculty credentials in University College, due three months after Commission action.

Rationale and Expectations:

Based on available evidence, the team determined that many adjunct faculty do not meet the HLC Minimum Expectation that when faculty members are employed based on equivalent experience, the institution defines a minimum threshold of experience and an evaluation process. The minimum threshold of experience has not been explicitly defined for each course in each program, and the evaluation process is not clear. The report submitted should include:

- For each course within each University College degree program:
 - a. a description or listing of the degrees for teaching faculty that will be accepted that are at least one degree higher than that being offered; and
 - b. an explicit definition of the minimum threshold of experience or degrees and experience that will be accepted when a faculty member does not have the required degree.
- A clear process that will be followed to evaluate faculty credentials for each teaching faculty member.

5. Other visits scheduled

None.

6. Organization change request

None.

E. Summary of Commission Review

Timing for next comprehensive visit (academic year – 2020-2021)

Rationale for recommendation:

The University of Denver is an institution with innovative academic programs, a strong faculty and administration, and a vision for the future. The team reviewed the University's many strengths and considered the following in making its recommendation:

- There is an understanding of the university mission, and the university uses the mission statement in planning at the campus and unit levels and in public expressions of the role of the university in the community.
- The university supports student learning in multiple ways.
- There is support for faculty teaching and research within the context of faculty development.
- The physical campus environment supports teaching and learning, student life, and community outreach programs.
- The university's fiscal situation is very good with strong balance sheets, cash reserves, and a growing endowment.
- There are effective, agreed upon enrollment management goals to control the mix of undergraduate and graduate students with appropriately capped enrollments.
- There is an innovative curricular focus on international experiences which enhances student success and learning.
- The integration of library resources and technology effectively supports the teaching mission of the university, including student learning and scholarly work.

This report cites strong evidence supporting each criterion, and the team concluded that the five criteria for accreditation continued to be met.

WORKSHEET ON Federal Compliance Requirements

INSTITUTIONAL MATERIALS RELATED TO FEDERAL COMPLIANCE REVIEWED BY THE TEAM:

Self-study Report chapter on Federal Compliance

Student Complaint Log

Definitions and Procedures related to Credit Hours, Program Length, Tuition Policy, Transfer Credit, Satisfactory Academic Progress, Attendance, data with relevant Peer Group Comparisons

University print materials and Web site

Meeting held with HLC Team Chair, Registrar, and Associate Provost - Undergraduate Programs/Self-study Co-coordinator to review all information required by this Worksheet

EVALUATION OF FEDERAL COMPLIANCE PROGRAM COMPONENTS

1. Credits, Program Length, and Tuition: *The institution has documented that it has credit hour assignments and degree program lengths within the range of good practice in higher education and that tuition is consistent across degree programs (or that there is a rational basis for any program-specific tuition).*

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance.

Comments: None.

2. Student Complaints: *The institution has documented a process in place for addressing student complaints and appears to be systematically processing such complaints as evidenced by the data on student complaints for the three years prior to the visit.*

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance.

Comments: None.

3. Transfer Policies: *The institution has demonstrated it is appropriately disclosing its transfer policies to students and to the public. Policies contain information about the criteria the institution uses to make transfer decisions.*

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance.

Comments: None.

4. Verification of Student Identity: *The institution has demonstrated that it verifies the identity of students who participate in courses or programs provided to the student through distance or correspondence education.*

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance.
Comments: None.

5. Title IV Program and Related Responsibilities: *The institution has presented evidence on the required components of the Title IV Program. The team has reviewed these materials and has found no cause for concern regarding the institution's administration or oversight of its Title IV responsibilities.*

- **General Program Requirements:** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about the fulfillment of its Title IV program responsibilities, particularly findings from any review activities by the Department of Education. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities in this area.*
- **Financial Responsibility Requirements:** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about the Department's review of composite ratios and financial audits. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities in this area.*
- **Default Rates, Campus Crime Information and Related Disclosure of Consumer Information, Satisfactory Academic Progress and Attendance Policies:** *The institution has demonstrated, and the team has reviewed, the institution's policies and practices for ensuring compliance with these regulations.*
- **Contractual Relationships:** *The institution has presented evidence of its contracts with non-accredited third party providers of 25-50% of the academic content of any degree or certificate programs.*

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and recommends the ongoing approval of such contracts.
Comments: None.

6. Institutional Disclosures and Advertising and Recruitment Materials: *The institution has documented that it provides accurate, timely and appropriately detailed information to current and prospective students and the public about its accreditation status with the Commission and other agencies as well as about its programs, locations and policies.*

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance.
Comments: None.

7. Relationship with Other Accrediting Agencies and with State Regulatory Boards: *The institution has documented that it discloses its relationship with any other specialized, professional or institutional accreditor and with all governing or coordinating bodies in states in which the institution may have a presence*

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance.

Comments: None.

8. Public Notification of an Evaluation Visit and Third Party Comment: *The institution has made an appropriate and timely effort to solicit third party comments. The team has evaluated any comments received and completed any necessary follow-up on issues raised in these comments*

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance.

Comments: No third party comments were received.

ADVANCEMENT SECTION

REPORT OF A COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION VISIT

TO

University of Denver
Denver, CO

November 8-10, 2010

FOR

The Higher Learning Commission

A Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

EVALUATION TEAM

- Dr. Susan T. Rydell, Professor, Psychology, and Chair, Center for Teaching and Learning,
Metropolitan State University, St. Paul, MN 55108 (Chair)
- Dr. Dale Thomas Benediktson, Dean, Henry Kendall College of Arts and Sciences,
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- Dr. Caryn Chaden, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, DePaul University,
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- Dr. Brenda S. Fyfe, Dean, School of Education, Webster University, St. Louis, MO 63119
- Dr. Richard McGee, Associate Dean, Faculty Affairs, Northwestern University,
Chicago, IL 60611
- Dr. Mace Mentch, Director, eLearning Technology, Cuyahoga Community College,
Cleveland, OH 44115
- Dr. Charles R. Middleton, President, Roosevelt University, Chicago, IL 60605
- Dr. Arthur Serianz, Professor, Chemistry, St. Ambrose University, Davenport, IA 52803
- Dr. William R. Wiener, Vice Provost for Research and Dean, Graduate School,
Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI 53201
- Dr. Susan E. Wright, Deputy Provost, Drake University, Des Moines, IA 50311

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I. OVERALL OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

The HLC team was impressed by many aspects of the University of Denver. For example, the team noted in particular the University's attention to student learning, the excellent campus physical environment, and the prominence of study abroad in the undergraduate curriculum. The DU vision, values, mission, and goals receive strong support from faculty, staff, and students and are central to the University's planning and programming. These commitments have guided the efforts of the University to develop state-of-the-art physical facilities and to grow and diversify its enrollment and are reflected in its commitment to a life of learning. The DU commitment to "inclusive excellence" guides it to develop programs that meet the needs of all students, particularly those of the local Denver community. The University benefits from the commitment of a highly involved and dedicated Board of Trustees.

II. CONSULTATIONS OF THE TEAM

The team is making suggestions in this section of the team report in its role as consultants.

A. Grants and Contracts Support

As noted in the self-study report on page 59, while the overall growth of the University's revenue budget over the past decade was considerable, in the area of Grants and Contracts growth was modest, with income adjusted for inflation essentially flat. While the University leadership quite rightly does not want to embark upon a research-extensive model, the team is suggesting the need for more active engagement in this area if DU is to be a research institution as noted in the VVMG Theme #2.

Two issues particularly are compelling. First, the large numbers of new faculty members in disciplines that have opportunities for securing extramural support are looking for ways to enhance their scholarship, teaching, and service by securing these resources. These faculty members will define the reputation of the University in the future and they may be recruited by other institutions if they are unable to get that support at DU. To retain them, it would be helpful to have a systematic and extensive program of actively seeking grants and contracts in place. Focusing on securing grants to support work in VVMG Theme #1, which commits the University to "research and scholarship...focused on the improvement of individual lives and the collective good of the public," seems to provide many opportunities for success.

Second, to be optimally successful in seeking grant funding as quickly as possible, the University could consider increasing the position of Vice Provost for Research to a full-time line to provide continuous and encompassing year-long support for grant seeking activity by the expanded numbers of faculty members. DU may have fewer positions dedicated to science and engineering disciplines than its peer institutions, and to the extent that it does, a premium is placed upon the success of each individual in these units. The Research Office has the potential to help assure that the University makes significant inroads in this area through: workshops on grant writing and related matters; modest honoraria for experts outside DU to provide critical feedback on NIH, NSF, and other major proposals prior to submission; and the active, focused

identification of grant and contract opportunities in the strategic areas that will define the University's excellence this century.

B. Finances

In the process of establishing overall financial strength, the University has become more dependent upon tuition revenue than it would like. While the levels are not high by industry standards, they are considered to be so at DU given its ambitions and peer group. As a result, it will be important in the future for other sources of revenue to be strengthened, especially endowment for student and program support to allow for growth in expenditures to be covered increasingly by these funds rather than by tuition increases. The emerging campaign will be focused on this issue, and there was ample evidence in meetings with Deans and the Advancement Office that this is their next strategic imperative as they identify and cultivate donors. The team is very supportive of these initiatives.

The team was impressed by the discussions the Trustees and the Chancellor are leading on how to attain an optimal mix of revenues from endowment, tuition and other sources, with a goal to assure that the University does not become dependent on any one of them. Indeed, it is clear from the team's conversations with these and other leaders that the University learned from the experience of other institutions in the recent economic downturn that too great a reliance on endowment is as perilous as too great a reliance on tuition, and they are determined to strike a balance for the future long-term sustainability of the institution.

The team suggests, however, that the current focus on academic enhancement has a danger embedded in it if it does not also include more discussion than we heard, even if only of a conceptual nature, for ongoing monitoring the campus facilities as needed to keep pace with the academic requirements of the expanded programs that will receive the bulk of new investments in the coming years.

C. Centralized Orientation for Graduate Faculty and Program Chairs

The Office of Graduate Studies reported that orientation of faculty is currently decentralized. The Graduate Studies staff and members of the Graduate Council believe a centralized orientation for graduate faculty and new program chairs is needed to ensure shared understanding of graduate policies and procedures. The team agrees with this suggestion. Centralized practices regarding the processing of all graduation petitions and exceptions could better ensure fairness and consistency across the university. In addition, they could support consistent practices in faculty advising as well as accurate and systematic processing of academic records. Finally, graduate programs that do not have a handbook should be encouraged to develop one.

D. Analysis of Opportunity Costs of Decentralization

The team observed that decentralization of planning and management has been overall very beneficial to DU and that the culture clearly supports continuation of that paradigm. However, the team also noted that there are some aspects of the principle that might well be studied to determine if they provide the full benefit that is commonly assumed. We believe that the institution could benefit from a thoughtful analysis, perhaps provided by an external consultant with expertise in this area, of the hidden costs that occur in this mode of operation. Here are four areas where we observed some indicators that such a study might be worthwhile:

- Decentralized budgets require that every unit have expertise at a high level on fiscal management. The number of budget officers seems to be higher than prevails in many similarly sized universities, with attendant expenses.
- Decentralization of graduate recruitment is common in higher education, but where programmatic collaboration is clearly present between colleges, pooling resources at some level might help enhance the quality of students who enroll in all, and might attract students who are otherwise not interested in one program only. We heard from some current graduate students that they had to enroll in order to discover these opportunities, some of whom almost went elsewhere because of a perceived absence of such interdisciplinary collaboration at the recruitment level.
- Some ambiguity about promotion and tenure policies, as reported by some faculty members, suggests that a centralized new faculty orientation program that focuses on these and other institution-wide policies and practices might be helpful. (See section C. above.)
- Policy development itself seems to be very localized. The team did not encounter any general policy documents that provide guidance to units and require some central concurrence before such local policies on common areas of practice are implemented. If these exist, they need to be more visible. If they do not exist, it would be useful to discuss the limits of local authority on matters where broader institutional risk is high, such as personnel evaluations.

E. Distance Learning

As a result of DU's continued growth and success with distance learning, there is an opportunity to develop and sustain distance learning through consolidation of management of programs and services. While DU's Distance Learning Council has done outstanding work in its initiatives, there could now be consideration of a more centralized approach to the effort. This could be realized through either an established Office of Distance Learning, with oversight from the Distance Learning Council, or a dedicated manager or coordinator of distance learning managed through an established, related department such as the Center for Teaching and Learning which currently assumes this role on a limited basis since they have a broader mission than just distance learning alone. With such a defined role, the distance learning effort could have the following, ongoing capabilities:

- Ability to coordinate and manage the Distance Learning catalog
- Managing, with collaboration with Office of Academic Assessment, assessment of student learning outcomes for all DU Distance Learning programs and courses
- Standardization and implementation of a viable remote proctoring solution
- Responsibility for training and certification of DU distance learning instructors
- Preliminary review of new distance learning programs
- Providing tier 2 support for distance learning faculty

- Developing templates for distance learning courses
- Consolidation of instructional technology and technologists efforts with specific expertise in distance learning
- Maintaining responsibility for communication through a newsletter, website, workshops, and meetings
- Establishment and management of a standardized quality control program, such as Quality Matters, in order to ensure and promote the quality of all DU distance learning programs and courses

Similarly, there could be a consideration of standardization of technologies used to support Distance Learning at DU. While Blackboard is used throughout most of the University, eCollege is being used at the University College. Recognizing the benefits of meeting individual needs, a consideration of cost and programmatic benefits of a single learning management system is also important. Such consolidation permits delivery of cross program courses and services with much less confusion on the part of students and faculty as well as standardization of training, certification of faculty, and quality assurance. While providing 24/7 support for distance learning is important, use of services already available such as Sungard, may be competitive.

F. Student Career Development

Assistance in career development is an area that could be enhanced. As students approach graduation, they expect to have assistance in developing a career. While some academic programs have dedicated offices and staff to provide professional and career development, other programs do not have such resources. Career development is therefore uneven and is an area that could be enhanced to provide further services for students.

G. Assessment

While the Office of Assessment has a director and a full-time staff person and each unit or program has an assessment liaison, additional resources may be needed to ensure complete development of assessment systems and sustainability of assessment systems which ensure ongoing data collection and analysis of student learning outcomes to inform program improvement. The Academic Assessment Director believes that a cadre of Assessment Fellows is needed to carry forward and sustain the culture of assessment that is being established at DU. This would require budgeted resources for intensive professional development in regard to best practices in higher education student learning assessment.

H. Program Review

The program review process could complement the annual assessment reports and make use of those data in reviewing each program over a set number of years. The team was impressed with the many tools available to support student learning, but the team did not observe any assessment of the effectiveness of the media/technology/CTL training in supporting learning. Such assessments could be included in program reviews. It is recommended that comprehensive program reviews be established for all programs and become regularized every five to six years.

I. Expanding Community Service Assessment

The University could do more to assess its community service activities. DU assesses its program of service learning through end-of-term faculty and student surveys relating to defined course outcomes. Living and Learning Communities have also conducted some assessments of their volunteer programs using focus group discussions. However, there is no evidence of written follow-up with community organizations to determine if students are being adequately prepared for their service assignments, if they are being used effectively in these assignments, or if DU community service activities are significantly impacting the problems/projects being addressed. This follow-up could provide opportunities for faculty research which could benefit both the University and community agencies.

J. Unrealized Public Relations Opportunities

Denver University has a wonderful story to tell. Many of the University's accomplishments are cited in the self-study report and are noted in this Assurance section of the HLC team report. But the commitments, strengths, and accomplishments of the University and many of its programs, faculty, and staff might be better shared with the community and other constituents. This includes celebrating community outreach, sharing the amazing accomplishments related to students studying abroad, and making the academic community nationally aware of the incredible accomplishments that the University has achieved in building a state-of-the-art physical plant. We encourage DU to explore a more extensive focus on such issues in its public relations efforts.

*Team Recommendations for the
STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS*

INSTITUTION and STATE: University of Denver, CO

TYPE OF REVIEW (from ESS): Continued Accreditation

DESCRIPTION OF REVIEW (from ESS):

DATES OF REVIEW: 11/8/10 - 11/10/10

Nature of Organization

LEGAL STATUS: Private NFP

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: No Change

DEGREES AWARDED: B, M, S, D

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: No Change

Conditions of Affiliation

STIPULATIONS ON AFFILIATION STATUS: The University must seek prior Commission approval before initiating any new degree programs outside of the United States.

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: No Change

APPROVAL OF NEW ADDITIONAL LOCATIONS: The Commission's Streamlined Review Process is only available for offering existing degree programs at new sites within the United States.

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: No Change

APPROVAL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION DEGREES: New Commission policy on institutional change became effective July 1, 2010. Some aspects of the change processes affecting distance delivered courses and programs are still being finalized. This entry will be updated in early 2011 to reflect current policy. In the meantime, see the Commission's Web site for information on seeking approval of distance education courses and programs.

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: No Change

REPORTS REQUIRED: None

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: Progress Report on assessment of student learning and the general education curriculum, November 1, 2014. Monitoring Report on faculty credentials in University College due three months after final Commission action on November 2010 comprehensive visit.

OTHER VISITS SCHEDULED: None

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: None

Summary of Commission Review

Team Recommendations for the
STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS

YEAR OF LAST COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION: 2000 - 2001

YEAR FOR NEXT COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION: 2010 - 2011

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: 2020-2021

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

INSTITUTION and STATE: University of Denver, CO

TYPE OF REVIEW (from ESS): Continued Accreditation _X_ No change to Organization Profile

Educational Programs

	Program Distribution	Recommended Change (+ or -)
Programs leading to Undergraduate	Associate	0
	Bachelors	86
Programs leading to Graduate	Masters	84
	Specialist	1
	First Professional	
	Doctoral	23

Off-Campus Activities

<p>In-State:</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">Campuses: Additional Locations:</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">Course Locations:</p>	<p>Present Activity:</p> <p>None Aurora (Aurora Public Schools Leadership Academy) ; Aurora (Northrup Grumman Mission Systems, Data Systems) ; Colorado Springs (Principal Leadership (WSSEP)) ; Denver (Boettcher Teachers Program) ; Denver (Buell Early Childhood Leadership) ; Denver (Ritchie Program - Denver Public Schools) ; Durango (GSSW 4 corners) ; Littleton (Lockheed) ; Thornton (Ritchie Program - Adams County District 12)</p> <p>None</p>	<p>Recommended Change: (+ or -)</p>
<p>Out-of-State:</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">Campuses: Additional Locations:</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">Course</p>	<p>Present Wording:</p> <p>None Houston, TX (Lockheed Martin Space Systems Company)</p> <p>None</p>	<p>Recommended Change: (+ or -)</p>

Locations:

Out-of-USA:

Present Wording:

Recommended Change:
(+ or -)

Campuses: None
Additional Locations: None
Course Locations: None

Distance Education Programs:

Present Offerings:

Bachelor - 09.0101 Communication Studies/Speech Communication and Rhetoric offered via Internet; Bachelor - 09.0101 Communication Studies/Speech Communication and Rhetoric (Bachelor of Arts in Communication Arts) offered via Internet; Bachelor - 30.1501 Science, Technology and Society (Bachelor of Arts in Science and Technology) offered via Internet; Bachelor - 30.2001 International/Global Studies (Bachelor of Arts in Global Studies) offered via Internet; Bachelor - 44.0501 Public Policy Analysis (Bachelor of Arts in Public Policy and Social Services) offered via Internet; Bachelor - 52.1003 Organizational Behavior Studies (Bachelor of Arts in Leadership and Organization Studies) offered via Internet; Master - 03.0201 Natural Resources Management and Policy (Master of Applied Science in Environmental Policy and Management) offered via Internet; Master - 11.0103 Information Technology (Master of Applied Science in Technology Management) offered via Internet; Master - 22.9999 Legal Professions and Studies, Other (Master of Science in Legal Administration) offered via Internet; Master - 24.0103 Humanities/Humanistic Studies offered via Internet; Master - 30.2001 International/Global Studies offered via Internet; Master - 43.0112 Securities Services Administration/Management (Master of Applied Science in Security Management) offered via Internet; Master - 44.0701 Social Work offered via Internet; Master - 45.0701 Geography offered via Internet; Master - 51.0701 Health/Health Care Administration/Management offered via Internet; Master - 52.0206 Non-Profit/Public/Organizational Management (Master of Professional Studies in Organizational Leadership) offered via Internet; Master - 52.1001 Human Resources Management/Personnel Administration, General (Master of Professional Studies in Human Resource Administration) offered via Internet; Master - 52.9999 Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services, Other offered via Internet

Recommended Change:
(+ or -)

Correspondence Education Programs:

Present Offerings:

None