

Toward Reaccreditation at UM-Flint



News of the Self-Study Process

September 1, 2007

Volume 1, Issue 1

Points of Interest

- [Message from the co-chairs](#)
- [Committee Structure and Reports](#)
- [Useful links](#)

The following links can provide additional information and insight into the process as well as access to our 1999 Self-Study document.

- [1999 Self-Study](#)

<http://www.umflint.edu/home/ncareport.pdf>

- [Higher Learning Commission \(HLC\)](#)

<http://www.ncahigherlearningcommission.org/>

- [UM-Flint HLC Self-Study SharePoint Site](#)

<http://portal.umflint.edu/sites/s-shlc/default.aspx>

Welcome

Welcome to this first *newsletter* of the University of Michigan – Flint Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Reaccreditation Project. As you may know, our campus will be undergoing its reaccreditation by the HLC during the academic year 2009-2010. Reaccreditation is accomplished through the preparation of a ‘self-study’ document, and culminating with a site visit from a team of HLC consultant/evaluators. I am pleased to inform you that we have formed an outstanding committee of faculty, staff, students and community members to assist with the development of the self-study report and the visit. The HLC Self-Study Committee is led by two distinguished faculty colleagues: Professor Suzanne Selig and Professor Ken Schilling. The co-chairs together with Assistant Provost Bonnie Heckard and myself will serve as a steering committee. Additional details on the structure of the entire committee and membership information is found in another section of this newsletter.

As I am sure most of you recognize, preparation of the self-study report and the site visit are major undertakings, necessitating the assistance and support of all members of the university community. Our campus has had numerous achievements and great successes since the last visit in 1999 and we need to take this opportunity to celebrate them. In addition, we can take this opportunity to review our current practices and make the necessary changes that will ensure our campus continues to offer the quality education we are so proud of.

Vahid Lotfi,

Interim Provost



Committee Structure and Membership

In similar fashion to our most recent self-study process nearly 10 years ago, we have developed a self-study committee that is organized along the five Criteria for Accreditation, with an additional group for data collection and analysis. It should be noted these criteria have changed in the last decade, however they remain the foundational elements by which the Higher Learning Commission conducts its peer review and therefore grants continual accreditation.

The full membership roster for this project can be found in the SharePoint portal: <http://portal.umflint.edu/sites/s-shlc/default.aspx>

A University in Transition

“Voluntary accreditation in higher education originated almost a century ago as a uniquely American process. The two fundamental purposes are: quality assurance and institutional and program improvement.”
(The Higher Learning Commission Handbook of Accreditation)

What an exciting time to be at UM-Flint! We are simultaneously building our first student housing unit, designing a new General Education program and searching for a new Chancellor. We are carrying out a new Strategic Plan, beginning to implement the even newer Blue Ribbon Commission recommendations for Academic Affairs and working toward increased internationalization of our campus. Every one of these initiatives will have a profound impact on our University.

At the same time, our campus will be conducting a self-study as part of the process of our reaccreditation by the Higher Learning Commission. This self-study will require that we examine and evaluate how all of our campus units operate and interact in carrying out UM-Flint’s mission, while simultaneously addressing the impact of these new initiatives.

As co-Chairs of the Self- Study Committee, our charge is to lead the development of this document. We are very much looking forward to this process as an opportunity to explore all aspects of the campus community. Our university has accomplished much since its last accreditation, and our ongoing initiatives promise still greater achievements. A successful self-study will help celebrate what has worked well and identify what needs improvement.

This endeavor will require that every member of the campus community become involved. As we progress through the various stages of this process, please accept the opportunity to take part and let us hear your thoughts and ideas along the way.

Suzanne Selig
Ken Schilling
Co-Chairs HLC Self-Study

Sub-Committee Reports

Criterion One-Teddy Robertson

The Criterion One, Mission and Integrity work group plans to outline and draft our “white paper” during Fall 2007 semester: Not more than 5-6 pages comprising of narrative with graphics, and perhaps photos; we propose to use links to documents along the margins. The narrative may select documented examples to use as illustrative vignettes to highlight themes for Criterion 1. (We note that the University of North Dakota Self Study has a thematic title which is useful both for the institution and the readers of the self-study).

As a group we decided to use Fawn Skarsten’s definitions of internal and external UM-F “constituencies”; for other terms that arise in HLC Handbook of Accreditation, we’ll seek the definitions used by Fawn for Institutional Analysis or definitions agreed upon by the Chairs Group.

Our drafted white paper will **seek to establish thematic continuity** with our past (all the bibliography listed in Appendix 4 of the Strategic Plan), our present, and our future as articulated in the 2010 “Identifiers of Success” (p.17) of the current Strategic Plan.

Criterion Two- Chris Waters

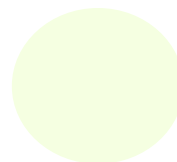
The charge of Criterion Two is to examine the organization's allocation of resources and its processes for evaluation and planning demonstrating its capacity to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its education, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The challenge will be to not only speak to our hopes and plans for the future but also to demonstrates our capacity to shape it as we wish it to be. It is a wonderful time to plan big for the University of Michigan-Flint. This criteria also requires we address less pleasant subjects, such as the State of Michigan's waning financial support for its higher education public institutions and the general woeful outlook for the State in so many ways.

We have the good fortune to have a team made up of representatives from all academic units and our chief budget guru, Vice Chancellor for Administration David Barthelmes. It is our intention to add a community voice to this team. We know our future is tied to the future of Flint, especially downtown Flint. We would appreciate a representative of the community who has been involved in redevelopment efforts and cooperative ventures in our community. We have some thought concerning who this might be and will happily entertain suggestions and self-nominations.

Our group has met a number of times during which we have examined our charge and tried hard to really understand the parameters. We have asked questions, identified issues, ideas and even words that could benefit by definition and clarification, and have amassed lists of documents and data sets that will help us in our task. We will meet biweekly through the next many months. We hope to identify the specific areas our report will cover early this fall and begin to put together our first white paper.

Criterion Three– Donna Fry

Group three has been working on compiling a list of all of the educational programs we have on campus. The list includes both traditional academic programs offered for credit as well as all of the non-credit bearing education that occurs on campus. We will then review the list to determine which programs require assessment and the extent of assessment required for each of the programs.



Criterion Four– Marge Andrews

Criterion Four focuses on the ways in which UM-F promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff, and students by supporting inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility in ways consistent with the university’s mission.

Committee members discussed the overall spirit and meaning of Criterion 4 in the broader context of the HLC Self-Study and agreed to work in pairs to: 1) begin interpreting each of the four core components as they relate to UM-F; 2) identify existing documents that provide evidence or documentation that departments, academic units, professional schools/college of arts & science, and/or the university have satisfied the intent of the criterion and its core components; and 3). analyze gaps in information that might necessitate additional data collection strategies such as surveys or focus groups in the future.

In working with the co-chairs, it is clear that coordination of data requests will be important. There will be great effort to assure that faculty, staff, and/or students receive a single streamlined, focused request rather than multiple requests as each committee works to fulfill its respective charge.

Criterion Five-Tony McGill

The C5 team (as we call ourselves) is charged with demonstrating: “as called for by its mission, the organization identifies its constituencies and serves them in ways both value.” We have talked about the purpose of a self-study document and examined various sections of the HLC handbook. In addition, we examined several University documents which we believe will be helpful in answering our charge and supporting it with data. We quickly realized that we needed clarification on at least three key terms; engagement, service, and constituencies. We have a preliminary, yet lengthy, list of the various internal and external constituencies of the University of Michigan-Flint. We quickly realized that this relatively minor part of the process was complex and required a great deal of additional information which we need to find. We noticed significant overlap between the charges of the various criterion teams and began to draft some requests for inter-group findings. Our next meeting is scheduled for August 20, 10:00 am. We all left with much to think about, and a lot of reading to do!

Data Collection and Analysis-Fawn Skarsten

If you’re looking for information to support the criterion with evidence and your work group or just want to know more about our campus, check out the Institutional Analysis Departmental Web page and the Self-Study Portal.

Departmental Web page

http://www.umflint.edu/institutional_analysis/

UM-F Self Study Portal - Shared Documents

<http://portal.umflint.edu/sites/s-shlc/pages/Data%20Collection%20and%20Analysis.aspx>

The available documents lists will continue to grow as the process kicks off, bookmark the links and check often. If you have something you’d like to see, or need more information, please access the **membership list and contact information** located on SharePoint.

<http://portal.umflint.edu/sites/s-shlc/data-collection-analysis/default.aspx>