ASSURANCE SECTION

REPORT OF A COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION VISIT
TO
University of Colorado at Colorado Springs
Colorado Springs, Colorado
November 12-15, 2006
FOR
The Higher Learning Commission

A Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

EVALUATION TEAM

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Contents

I. CONTEXT AND NATURE OF VISIT

A. Purpose of Visit

The purpose of the visit is to conduct a comprehensive evaluation for continued accreditation of the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs.

B. Organizational Context

The University of Colorado's (CU's) presence in Colorado Springs dates to 1925 with extension courses delivered by the Boulder campus. For the next forty years courses were delivered at various downtown locations in Colorado Springs. By the early 1960's an extension campus of CU in Colorado Springs included more than 1,200 students. In 1970 the Regents of the University of Colorado approved a separate mission for the extension center and in the same year the campus began and independent and direct relationship with the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). In 1972, HLC granted full accreditation status and in the same year, the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, through passage of a constitutional amendment officially came into existence.

From its inception, UCCS has had a clearly articulated mission and its integrity was secured by the application of existing laws governing higher education in Colorado and policies of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education as well as policies and bylaws of the CU Regents. In addition to a focus on teaching, learning, discovery, the University's special focus from its origins to the present involve a continuing engagement with the community of Colorado Springs and the region of Southern Colorado.

C. Unique Aspects of Visit

The visit included special requests of the University for the removal of stipulations pertaining to new online programs and permission to offer the Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction, Special Education, and Counseling and the

Doctorate in Nursing Practice and the Doctorate in Educational
Leadership

D. Sites or Branch Campuses Visited

None.

E. Distance Education Reviews

The team conducted a review of the institution's request to
  remove stipulations on the offering of courses and programs
  via online delivery technology.

F. Interactions with Constituencies

 1. The University of Colorado President (System), the
     Chancellor of UCCS, the Interim Vice Chancellor of Academic
     Affairs, the Vice Chancellor of Administration and Finance,
     the Chief of Staff, The Vice Chancellor for Student Success,
     the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Chief
     Operating Officer for University Advancement.
 2. UCCS Dean's Council of Deans. (N=14)
 3. University of Colorado Regents (N=5)
 4.   Student Government Association Co-Executives and
    Officers. (N=6)
 5. Faculty Open Forum (N= 37).
 6.   Directors of Institutes and Centers. (N=12)
 7. Director of Resource Management.
 8. UCCS Controller.
 9. Business, Community Leaders and Alumni. (N=c.15)
 10.   University Budget Advisory Committee (N= 20)
 11. UCCS Students Open Meeting. (N= c. 20).
 12. Director of Diversity Strategic Planning,
 13. Members of the Faculty Minority Affairs Committee (N=5)
 14. Assistant Director of Student Recruitment and Admissions
 15. Student Diversity Council members
 16. Faculty Records Manager
 17. Student Multicultural Affairs Director
 18. Director of Teaching and Learning Center
 19. Randomly selected minority students for luncheon meeting.

(N=5)
20. Staff Council Meeting - (N=21)
21. All Staff Meeting (N= 88)
22. Academic Department Chairs (N=20)

G. Principal Documents, Materials, and Web Pages Reviewed

1. UCCS Self-Study Report and Appendices.
2. University of Colorado at Colorado Springs Institutional
Change Requests
    a.   Removal of Stipulation Requiring Prior Commission
        Approval of Distance Education Programs.
    b.   Approval of Distance Programs in the College of
        Education for the Master of Arts in Special Education,
        the Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction, the
        Master of Arts in Counseling and Human Services
    c.   Approval of the Doctorate of Nursing Practice
    d.   Approval of the Doctorate (Ph. D.) in Educational
        Leadership, Research and Policy.
2.   Course Syllabi.
3.   Graduate and Undergraduate Bulletins
4.   Faculty Handbook (Online Version)
5. Campus Securities and Safety Report
     (Annual Reports for 2004-06)
6. University of Colorado at Colorado Springs Unaudited
   Supplement to the 2004 and 2005 Annual Financial Reports
7. University of Colorado 2004 and 2005 Financial Reports
(Audited)
8. History Majors survey, History Academic Program Revision
   application, History Department Self-Study (2003), History
   499 Syllabus (it was revised as a result of assessment).
 9.   Assessment Progress Report & Accountability Data -
Anthropology Department
 10.   Matrix Center for Equity and Inclusion Mission
Statement
11. Teaching and Learning Center Program Evaluation
12. UCCS Uniform Grading Policy
13.   Cohort Default Rate (Financial Aid) & Graduating
Students' Cumulative
     Loan burden - 1997-2006.
14.   Text & Syllabus for ID 111---(an orientation and skills

course).

15.   Diversity Strategic Plan (will be submitted to Administration by Diversity Committee)

16. Course sections taught by PT & non-tenure track faculty.

17. Program brochures for Ethnic Studies,
       Women's Studies, and Matrix for Equity and Inclusion.

18. Proposed Ethnic Studies Major (content outlines)

19.   The Seven-Year Growth Plan Fiscal Year 2006 to fiscal year 2012.

20.   Multiple Examples of Assessment Implementation and Curriculum Changes driven by formal and informal assessment activities.

21.   Faculty Initiatives in Assessment 2005
                 Annual Report (UCCS-Wide)

22.Annual Research Report Fiscal Year 2005 (UCCS-Wide)

24.   NCAA Graduation Rate Summary

25. ADA Compliance Reports.

26. UCCS Reports and Budget Priority Planning documents.

27. Graduate Policy and Curriculum Decision documents.

28. Undergraduate Policy and Curriculum Decision documents

29. Mission and Vision Statements for UCCS.

30. Institutional Snapshot (HLC document).

31.   Survey Results Summaries:
  a. Institutional Self-Study Faculty Questionnaire Results, Fall 2005.
  b. Institutional Self-Study Staff Questionnaire Results, Fall 2005.
  c.   Institutional Self-Study Student Questionnaire Results, Fall 2005.

II. COMMITMENT TO PEER REVIEW

A. Comprehensiveness of the Self-Study Process

Planning for development of the self-study began in June 2004 with a decision on the part of campus leadership to combine the process of generating a Self-Study document with a self-reflection and analysis of possible futures for UCCS. This planning process was called "Inventing the Future" and involved a wide variety of participants from the University and its constituencies in Colorado Springs and in the state of Colorado. The Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs convened a steering committee composed of the Vice-Chancellors, the then President-elect of the Faculty Assembly, Registrar, Director of Institutional Research, and Budget Director.

The organizational structure, which evolved from this Steering Committee, provided for a comprehensive review of campus priorities and more than ample opportunity for participation in the process. The Self-Study document accurately reflects campus strengths and challenges and is presented in a manner document appropriate to the core purpose of determining the status of the campus with respect to the criteria for continued accreditation. During the self-study process of approximately two years, a template was utilized to gather responses to the core components in each of the criteria for accreditation. Forty-one individuals, representing a broad and diverse participation responded to the templates. These responses were reviewed by core committee of five faculty charged with the task of editing the contributions into one coherent document.

This process generated a draft document, which was circulated to the chancellor, governance groups, the leadership team, and deans' council for review in August 2006. The final document reflects changes and fine-tuning from this group.
to conduct a comprehensive review.

The Institution's Website was used extensively for the posting of meeting dates and progress reports on the status of data collection and development of the self-study. All individuals and groups interviewed by the Team confirmed their awareness of the self-study process and their active

involvement with it.

The document, its appendices and a wide variety of supporting materials appear at: http://www.uccs.edu/~ncaport/SelfStudy/outline.htm.

B. Integrity of the Self-Study Report

Contents of the self-study report were congruent with the materials reviewed by the Team, information obtained through interviews, and tours of campus facilities. The Self-Study document is well organized, and, although a bit lengthy, it accurately depicts the campus. The Team found no accuracies or inconsistencies in the self-study report.   Materials in the resource room were clearly indexed and comprehensive. The Team concluded that the self-study process was comprehensive and involved wide representation of all constituencies.

C. Adequacy of Progress in Addressing Previously Identified Challenges

The challenges included:

1. A high rate of turnover in the position of Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs;
2. An over-dependence on part-time faculty;
3. Thinly staffed administrative and support areas;
4. Poorly organized faculty governance structure and the lack of adequate support and recognition of faculty governance;
5. In adequate space for classrooms and offices;
6. Insufficient funding for the library acquisitions.

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

The team notes evidence of significant contributions on the part of faculty, administration, staff and the entire University in contributing time, talent, and effort to address adequately the aforementioned challenges in times of significant institutional financial distress. Evidence reviewed included the imminent completion of a search for the newly defined position of Executive Vice Chancellor and

Provost; data indicating a reduction of total credit hours
taught by part-time faculty and an increase in the number of
full-time faculty; an increase of 18 percent in key
administrative and support staff areas; a new and more
coherent Faculty Assembly constitution and the allocation of
staff and reassigned time for the President and President-
Elect of the Faculty Assembly; significant upgraded space
through renovation and the acquisition of additional space;
a significant increase in the availability online of
periodicals and the implementation of an endowment which
distributes funding to the library for acquisitions.

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

The team has viewed and verified that the University sought
third party evidence in appropriate ways. No third party
comments were received and forwarded to the team by HLC
staff as of the date of the exit interview.

III. COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

The Team reviewed the required Title IV compliance areas and
the student complaint information. The Team noted no
irregularities.

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

The mission of UCCS is driven by its role in the University of Colorado system as well as a set of priorities assigned by the system's Board of Regents.   The Colorado Commission on Higher Education and the Colorado Legislature also supports this mission.   A gubernatorial Blue Ribbon Panel on higher education recommend in 2001 a change in the mission of the University which provided that UCCS be a comprehensive baccalaureate university with selective admission standards, offering liberal arts and sciences, business, engineering, health sciences and teacher

preparation undergraduate degree programs, and a selected
number of masters and Doctoral degree programs. This
mission was authorized by the legislature in 2002. The new
mission statement removed "service area" restrictions and
explicitly encouraged additional doctoral degree programs.

The team reviewed evidence that the University's Board of
Regents were involved in the preparation of the report to
the Blue Ribbon Panel and the Panel sought and received
input from each of the state's governing boards. Through
representation on the Blue Ribbon Panel as well as through
the CU system President's office, the Regents views were
delivered to and clarified for other state governmental
entities and Regential views were accurately represented by
the President's office in its governmental liaison role.

The UCCS Vision Statement reflects the campus's importance
in the University of Colorado system. The Vision Statement
is the result of a planning process under the leadership of
the campus's Strategic Investments in Long-Term Outcomes
(SILO) committee. The Vision Statement reflects broad
statements of mission, values, goals, and more specific
organizational priorities. Interviews with the UCCS
Chancellor, the Board of Regents, the University President,
faculty and students confirm that there exists a broadly
based understanding of the UCCS Vision. Succinctly put, the
Vision Statement for UCCS is that the University become a
strong, regional, University dedicated to excellence in
research, service and teaching. It is as follows:

Vision Statement for the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs.

**The University of Colorado at Colorado Springs will provide
unexcelled, student-centered teaching and learning, and
outstanding research and creative work that serve our
community, state, and nation, and results in our recognition as
the premier comprehensive, regional research university in
America.**

This vision of the institution is widely circulated both

electronically and in all pertinent documents. The
strategic initiatives which flow from this **Vision Statement**
provide a blue print for actions which facilitate the
achievement of the mission and goals of UCCS. All groups
interviewed confirmed that the "promotion of learning" is
the key phrase in the UCCS mission and serves as the driving
force in the development of annual plans and the adoption of
appropriate student outcomes.

The mission document, the core values implied and stated in
the Vision Statement as well as the goals specified as
priorities developed by and for units within the campus,
reflect a commitment to academic quality and excellence
appropriate for an institution of higher education.   Based
upon interviews with faculty, the Deans Council and a review
of the activities of various shared governance committees,
the Team confirmed that UCCS fosters a culture of high
academic standards and takes seriously the advancement of
excellence in its academic programs.

The institution has promulgated its mission and vision to
all interested parties and constituencies through a variety
of media, including written, visual, and electronic.
Interviews with faculty, students, and members of individual
units within UCCS confirm that its mission been communicated
and is generally understood and supported.

The Chair of the Faculty Council serves on the President's
Executive team, providing a key link between faculty
governance and administrative discussions and planning. Both
the Chair and the President are Colorado University system
offices. At UCCS the Chancellor and Vice Chancellor for
Academic Affairs meet with the Faculty Representative
Assembly, the VCCA meets with the Faculty Executive
Committee, and the Chancellor meets regularly with the
presidents of each of the campus governing groups, including
the Chair of the Faculty Assembly.

Responsibility for specific tasks appear to be clearly
articulated, e.g., the faculty oversees the curriculum, and
structures exist to enable communication across the
institution, e.g., the Deans' Council and the University
Budget Advisory Committee. The Chancellor's brief and crisp

exposition in the Vision Statement helps inspire and focus the campus.

The Team's review of the institution's strategic planning process and other supporting documents as well as its goals, and deployment strategies confirm that planning and budgeting priorities align with the UCCS mission. Based on interviews, the Team verified that priorities were developed from a process that engaged the campus community and as a result, the priorities are evident in the operating plans of units throughout the institution.

Board practice and policies provide campus leadership with ample opportunity to exercise management and leadership roles within the range of accepted good practice in higher education. Interviews with campus central office personnel, line officers, representatives of the faculty assembly, professional and support staff, alumni, and students as well as comments at open meetings with faculty and students confirm for the Team that the Board, and System President have and continue to enable and empower the Chancellor, Vice Chancellors and line officers (Instructional Deans and Support Area Deans and Directors) with the latitude to fulfill local campus leadership and management responsibilities.

Documentary evidence and interviews with faculty and members of appropriate shared governance committees reflect strong efforts on the part of University leadership to facilitate through effective communication and promulgation of activities associated with governance processes. The Team also met with representatives of alumni and the University's Public and determined that University leaders do effectively communicate with each of its constituencies. In a meeting with students (primarily officers in student government and other organizations) some reported that their voices were not always heard. These complaints were did not rise to the level of serious concerns and were issues that University leadership were aware of.

The Team confirmed the self-study findings that the University and its Board operates with integrity. Personnel are in place for appropriate management of finances; its financial reports are published and represent effective distribution of resources; audits are of entire University Accounts and reflect coding by receipt and expenditure categories that are cumulative for the entire system and do not break out individual campuses. However, these audits

are clean and conducted by a reputable major auditing firm. The Board's bylaws, policies and procedures insure that it operates in accordance with applicable local, state and federal laws. Interviews and first hand reading of audits, and analyses of internal allocations of available resources confirmed this conclusion.

The Board of Regents' Diversity Policy affirms the institution's commitment to a robust climate of open dialogue among students, faculty, and staff from different backgrounds and with different ideas. This aspiration is echoed in statements from the Core Values of the Vision Statement, the Chancellor's vision, the Student Success Office's mission, and a variety of other places.

Review of documents and interviews confirm that faculty and other academic leaders share responsibility for the coherence of the curriculum and the integrity of the decision-making process. The University and its Board have in place policies and procedures and bylaws at the system level (University of Colorado) and local level (UCCS) which demonstrate that, as organizations or corporate entities, an understanding exists of the importance of abiding by all local, state, and federal laws and regulations. Interviews with appropriate personnel indicated to the Team that pertinent laws and regulations are widely understood, and there was no evidence of disregard for said laws or regulations. Policies and procedures exist which demonstrate the Institution's fair and open regard for the rights and responsibilities of its students, faculty and staff. Academic, intellectual, fiscal, and managerial integrity are supported and upheld through the Institution's system of shared governance.

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 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 Core Components are met

The team reviewed substantial evidence throughout UCCS planning documents and in its allocation processes that data-based attention is given to the consequences of changing demographics in the rapidly growing region of Colorado Springs and southern Colorado. The Institution also has a plan and appropriate deployment strategies for distance learning. This conclusion is based upon documentary evidence available to the team and upon interviews with the broad based planning and budgeting committees. In addition, interviews with administrative officers indicate a high level of long-range awareness of the importance of mission enhancement and strategic choices in providing for the efficient use of resources in a growing population base. A review of recent internal allocation decisions demonstrates the strong linkage between planning and budgeting on the

UCCS campus.

Additional reassurance for the future of the University is
evidenced in the ability of the University, during its
recent past and in the present, to respond to extreme fiscal
challenges generated by a constitutional spending lid in the
State of Colorado. A collegial atmosphere is apparent in the
budgeting process. Interviews and written evidence
underlined the importance of the University Budget Advisory
Committee as means to involve all constituencies of the
campus in allocation decisions. The UBAC has also proved an
effective group for communicating the rationale of behind
budget decisions.

Budget policies and allocations at UCCS are aligned with the
University's mission, goals and strategic priorities and are
reviewed periodically to keep policies current with changing
circumstances. The University's operating budget is targeted
toward the UCCS mission to promote learning through the
allocation of faculty and staff salaries, assistantships and
stipends, and educational equipment. Funds are earmarked
for strategic priorities and for centrally funded
initiatives that emphasize planning for future development.

The Board of Regents of the University of Colorado System
has designated the University as "the growth campus". UCCS
personnel have devoted much attention to planning for the
long-range development of campus grounds and facilities. The
campus began with 80 acres in 1965 and now owns 508 acres.
Current planning calls for developing a campus capacity to
enroll 25,000 students. The campus adopted "The Long Range
Development Plan and Master Plan" in 2000 and has completed
a "Facilities Strategic Plan Update" this year, both
prepared with assistance from recognized professional firms.
In addition to planning to assure a rational distribution
and grouping of functions across available land, the update
prioritizes reducing energy consumption, conserving open
space, preserving the natural landscape, constructing long-
life facilities, and creating a pedestrian-friendly campus.
Universities of Colorado System officials have supported
these planning efforts and have assisted in strategic land

purchases.

While UCCS has been challenged by a dramatic decline in State appropriations and the consequences of that decline in maintaining and enhancing the quality of its programs, its programs have continued to attract growing numbers of undergraduate and graduate student enrollment. Tuition, both in state and out-of-state have risen dramatically, but student debt levels at the time of graduation have not increased correspondingly. Interviews with University personnel and students indicate that a sizeable majority of students at UCCS combine work, many at full-time jobs or careers, with pursuit of undergraduate and graduate degrees.

The Institution intentionally develops its human resources in order to meet future changes. In recent years, emphasis has been placed upon competitive salaries for faculty and staff. While salary increases have outpaced inflation, despite severe cutbacks in state appropriations, continued growth of base salaries will be a priority for attracting and retaining a well qualified and experienced faculty.

Opportunities for faculty development exist at the University, but the spending lid realities have not permitted the expansion of opportunities for individual faculty development. The University's Teaching and Learning Center does provide technology and teaching assistance to approximately one third of the full time faculty. Sponsorship of a Master Teachers series, including inviting colleagues into the classrooms of recognized teachers, the explicit statement that teaching is valued as much as research for tenure and promotion consideration, the assortment of unit, institution, and system specific annual teaching awards, and the resources devoted to the Teaching and Learning Center amply support UCCS's contention that effective teaching matters.

The Institution has a history of setting priorities driven by the mission and the anticipation of possible future needs, challenges, and opportunities. It sets aside some funding for strategic priorities and maintains a healthy reserve fund to cushion unanticipated needs. Based on a

review of the Institution's Strategic Plan, <u>Vision 2010,</u>
Goals and Objectives and other documents, as well as
interviews with campus constituencies, the Team concluded
that planning is closely aligned with the evolving UCCS
mission as the growth institution within the University of
Colorado system.

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

After reviewing documentary evidence of the financial
exigencies of recent years, the Team notes that University
of Colorado System and other state policy making and budget
developing authorities need to consider enhanced state
funding of the UCCS, the University's designated growth
campus. This need should receive immediate attention in
light of the recent suspension of the spending lid.

**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

Program descriptions, including the Bulletin, Course Syllabi
outline desired student-learning outcomes. Course Syllabi
specify in most instances the means of assessment of the
learning outcomes.

Assessment processes are carried out at all levels, course,
program and institutional. Appropriate feedback loops are
operative to facilitate institutional reviews back to
program and individual faculty. Faculty members uniformly
embrace the UCCS mission to promote learning and there have
been major gains in the implementation of a process for
assessment of the general education curriculum.

Results obtained through assessment of student learning are
available to appropriate constituencies, including the
students. The Team in several external review reports
observed assessment data that includes both direct and
indirect measures of student learning the content of courses
at various levels. Interviews and surveys indicate that
faculty expectations require students to demonstrate a
mastery of skills necessary for applied practice and
continued education upon graduation.

Through discussions with faculty and reviews of faculty vitae, the Team concluded that UCCS Faculty is well qualified and dedicated to the development of students. The Teaching and Learning Center offers opportunities and programs designed to help faculty improve teaching skills. The Center also provides training to help faculty remain abreast of state-of-the-art technologic advances in areas related to instruction.

Budget priorities reflect an institutional commitment to teaching and learning.

The University Library's Collection reflects a strong and continuing commitment to the teaching mission of the University.

The Teaching and Learning Center provides technology and teaching assistance to approximately one third of the full time faculty.

The University recognizes and values alternative methods of teaching and learning including but not limited to web-based access, inter-active learning in real time, off-campus learning sites, and provides adequate support for these alternative styles of delivery.

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

Based upon interviews, reviews of reports, and records of the Student Achievement Committee, the team recommends continued development of an assessment culture to insure a more even acceptance and use of evaluative measures across the campus.

The current percentage of faculty FTE allocated to the non-tenure track rank of Instructor constitutes approximately one fifth of the full-time faculty. As funding increases and flexibility becomes possible in the allocation of full time tenure-track lines becomes feasible, the University

should expand tenure eligible faculty lines.

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 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

The General Education program at UCCS reflects the needs of individual professional programs to meet specialized accreditation as well as provide a broad-based liberal undergraduate experience.

The University has made a concerted effort to involve undergraduate students in research opportunities of both an applied and basic nature. . Including students in faculty field and lab research and in publishing the results tangibly integrates the institution's and higher education's dual education and research enterprise for students. Beginning in 1998, the Education Policy and University Standards Committee (EPUS) helped establish a "campus interdisciplinary core curriculum," which is aligned with the mission, vision, and core values of the institution.

Interviews with students and staff indicate that support services, including those for students of a multicultural background, are available and effective.

UCCS through its policies and procedures has set forth rights and responsibilities for students, faculty and staff. Interviews with research, service, and instructional Center Directors and comments at open meetings confirm the existence of a climate that supports academic freedom in the classroom, research, and scholarship.

The University allocates resources for strategic priorities, which support activities that encourage lifelong learning for students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, and other community members. The Institution offers opportunities for continuing discovery through performance of artists, lectures, workshops, and extended learning programs. A number of projects for support of learning and development were funded based on recommendations of task forces and committees. Theses and other research reports reviewed on-site as well as information gathered in interviews support the conclusion of the Team that the Institution values undergraduate and graduate student research as expressed in the UCCS mission.

There is a strong involvement in the scholarship of teaching to support educational improvement and units outside the academic division use internal research to improve individual unit support for the mission of the Institution. The Institution has created the Teaching and Learning Center to facilitate the promotion of learning. As confirmed by the Team in interviews with faculty and students, undergraduate research experiences is considered a valuable and appropriate venue for improvement of student learning.

Assessment of graduate degree accomplishments is done through traditional use of capstone experiences in research or thesis and through placement data on successful students. Through various advisory councils to the Chancellor and campus, external constituencies have an opportunity to provide feedback on the effectiveness of the Institution's educational programs. In addition, the Annual Progress reports imbedded in the University's formal assessment and feedback loop included graduate programs and the team reviewed evidence of a number of curricular changes in graduate programming driven by that process.

The Library's holdings are geared toward supporting the curriculum rather than research. Smart classrooms are increasingly in demand by faculty to enrich the teaching and student learning experience. Labs are equipped with computers and electronics to facilitate student learning. UCCS has invested in E-College service, as well as WebCT to

enhance the mechanics and substance of learning for students enrolled in mediated, blended and online classes.

Approximately six years ago (2000) following a campus-wide process, UCCS adopted its current general education requirements. The faculty put forward a set of general guidelines and allowed the colleges to integrate those guidelines into their curricula; the flexibility allowed the colleges to meet their area accrediting requirements, state teaching certification requirements, and the like. UCCS also takes into account state transferability requirements.

Some colleges have chosen a straight cafeteria approach, permitting students to choose any Humanities course, while others have a modified cafeteria approach, allowing students to choose among a select group of Humanities courses. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences delivers the overwhelming majority of the general education requirements. Sometime colleges collaborate to develop a new course, such as when CEAS, interested in a course that combined writing and oral presentation, worked with LAS to develop a course that incorporated sound rhetorical principles and met general education guidelines.

Some consideration is being given to designating a few "tracks," constellations of courses that would within the broad general education framework give students the opportunity for some cohesion, e.g. Western Civilization or International Relations.

The general education program is also integrated throughout undergraduate degree programs in ways to ensure that students gain the necessary skills to function effectively in a diverse society. The stated student learning goals for general education are assessed and feedback is provided to administrators and faculty that assist in the continuing improvement of the core program.

Core components for the General Education Program are reviewed by a 23 member Core Curriculum Committee created by the Educational Policy and University Standards Committee to insure the continued assessment of the General Education Program. These committees work directly with the office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

The campus completed a careful process of developing

baseline data for the evaluation of student progress in general education-using instruments such as the Academic Profile Examination, graduating senior and alumni surveys. A Writing Competency Portfolio was implemented in the Fall of 2001 with results available from 2002 forward. The University completed in 2005 the first complete four-year assessment cycle of student learning in the General Education core components. The process shows much promise for the future and its progress is tied to required collegial responses from the various Colleges contributing to the Core program.

Programs are in place to assure that ethical conduct and integrity in research are assured. Animal and human subjects review policies are in place as is a program to assure that health and safety issues are appropriately addressed. All policies are published electronically and in other formats and widely disseminated to all constituencies.

The Team observed linkages between curricular and co-curricular activities that support inquiry, practice, creativity, and social responsibility. Based on the Team's review of course syllabi, a number of academic programs have included learning outcomes in their courses which relate to social responsibility, particularly in the categories of human diversity, global perspective, ethical and civic responsibility as they apply to people and the environment. Service Learning opportunities are available to students in selected programs.

UCCS students who participate in intercollegiate athletics in the Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference have consistently demonstrated superior academic performance. Grade point averages for student athletes are higher than University averages. Graduation and program completion rates for UCCS student athletes are also above the University average.

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

While both faculty and students are actively engaged in
scholarship and basic and applied research, institutional
support of such efforts should be strengthened by the
focused investment of resources. The culture of inquiry and
creativity necessary to fulfill Criterion Four as described
in the mission statement of the Institution must be more
fully developed if graduate level programming continues to
expand as is anticipated in the University's revised role
and mission. Additional formal support structures need
attention to establish and implement policies that support
faculty scholarly growth. In doing so, the institution will
improve the ability of faculty to seek and obtain external
support for their research and other scholarly activities.
A formal program in support of undergraduate research
experiences is in place and well supported.

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 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 Core Components are met

Since its inception, UCCS has been deeply embedded in the local community and firmly defined itself as in the service of the city and region. The institution demonstrates its responsiveness by tracking the needs of southeastern Colorado, particularly the more isolated pockets, and ensuring that its program offerings and their availability (evenings, online) suit the needs of actual and potential students and employers. A notable number of the research and service center carry "Colorado" in their title and boast a local focus.

The University's commitment to this criterion is central to its mission as a metropolitan university. A national an Award recently recognized this commitment for Engagement and Service from the American Association of State Colleges and Universities.

Based on interviews both on campus and with individuals external to the Institution, there is evidence that the University's commitments to its constituencies are shaped by its mission and capacity.UCCS planning processes involve regular scanning of the environment and careful consideration of proposals from an array of constituents, both internal and external to the campus. To ensure that needed services are provided, many parts of the institution make use of external advisory boards and commissioned studies to ascertain needs. The institution participates in a wide range of partnerships that focus on shared educational, economic, and social goals.

The University's ability to engage is evidenced in the fact that the majority of major private gifts come from community donors. The Institution has a demonstrated commitment to regularly communicate with all constituencies it serves. Through its review of a wide range of UCCS outreach activities and discussions with representatives of the

external community, the Team verified that the University is involved with a variety of initiatives whose collective aim is to bring the University into its community as a contributing member and a positive influence.

The University has developed structures, which effectively network with its Community to mutual advantage.

The University's planning process involves effective and ongoing environmental scanning and meaningful involvement in the economic development of its Community.

The University's commitment to diversity is evidenced in many and varied outreach activities.

Interviews with Community leaders indicate that the University's economic development and workforce development activities are crucial to the growth of the community and valued by business leaders.

Several examples of services UCCS provides to meet the needs of the region were observed by the Team. The Kraemer Family Library has extensive holdings and a wide range of delivery systems to allow easy access to materials for individuals both on and off campus. Since 2004, the Library has implemented a Library Programming Committee for the purpose of designing and developing a library lecture series. Beginning in Fall 2004 and each semester since, this series has attracted community and campus involvement in three or more panel discussions and/or lectures each semester.

Extended Studies programming at UCCS is decentralized in its administration and delivery. Each College is responsible for following principles of good practice established by the University. A Campus Extended Studies office assists each college Dean in the management of funds available for extended campus programming. Credit is awarded by the individual Colleges and is the equivalent to on-campus credit.

Through this decentralized process the University's emphasis on community support and service has involved a significant increase in the ability of individual units to serve community needs for continuing education. Data indicate a large increase in support for ES offerings over the last two years. The team reviewed many specific examples of extended studies efforts. One particularly successful effort has provided open advising to military counselors and students on the opportunities for degree completion at UCCS while in the service. The proximity of Fort Carson, Peterson Air Force base, NORAD and the United States Air Force Academic have provided many opportunities for service as well as networking.

The institution has well-developed service learning initiatives as evidenced by programs such as Nursing and Education which work closely with school districts and health care facilities. Conversations with faculty and administrators and reviews of pertinent reports indicate that service-learning activities are growing.

Evidence in reports reviewed by the Team clearly demonstrates that the expertise of UCCS employees and students is valued and utilized. Evaluations of UCCS programs and services indicate that the community is pleased with the level of volunteer activities provided by students, faculty, and staff.

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

       None

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

3.

       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.)

5.

> None

Recommendation of the Team

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

IV-A. REQUESTS FOR INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE REVIEWED BY THE TEAM AT THE REQUEST OF THE UNIVERSITY AND COMMISSION STAFF AS PART OF THE COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION.

1. **PERMISSION TO OFFER THE DOCTORATE IN NURSING PRACTICE.EVALUATION OF DOCUMENTATION SUPPORTING THE UNIVERSITY'S REQUEST FOR CHANGE TO ADD THE DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE:** *The format used by the team was taken from the HLC common format for the evaluation of IRC's contained in the template and instructions for an evaluation of an IRC in a focused visit. This format is embedded in this Comprehensive Report because the changes were reviewed as part of a Comprehensive Report.*

EVALUATION OF DOCUMENTATION SUPPORTING ORGANIZATION'S REQUEST FOR CHANGE:

A.   **Evaluation of Request:**

1. **Evidence that demonstrates adequate preparation and planning.**

- There is a definite need for the proposed program. One other such program exists at the UCDHSC, and it is the only one presently operating in the region. The two schools collaborate, so duplication is not an issue. The team reviewed data indicating a need and system support for the new doctorate was presented to the team.

- The national standard for *advanced nursing practice*, as recommended by the *American Association of Colleges of Nursing*, is moving quickly to the practice doctorate. This move to the doctoral level of educational preparation is justified by the incredible complexity of health care and the sophisticated level of care delivered by advanced practice nurses (in the case of the proposed program, nurse practitioners) in both in-patient and ambulatory care settings – also by the need for qualified nursing faculty. Evidence reviewed included consultant comments and assistance and interviews with nursing practitioners.

- In light of the experience of other institutions offering the DNP and the demographics of the University's service region, it can be anticipated that the number of applicants will exceed the projected enrollment, and that graduates will be in high demand.

- Appropriate institutional approvals have been secured. Evidence reviewed on site included curriculum approvals, participation by faculty and review at U. C. system level.

- Ultimately (after graduating the first class) the program will be subject to accreditation by the Commission on Colleges of Nursing Education, which accredits the other programs of the college.

- Appropriate administrative oversight is in place.

- The curriculum is consistent with national standards as set forth in *Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice* (2006).

- The curriculum is designed to be either post-baccalaureate or post-master's, and initially (for 2 years) only the post-master's portion will be offered. This decision will minimize the resource demands and allow a reasonable period of transition.

- Curriculum vitae of faculty and practitioners involved in the delivery of the program indicate that, with the addition of the planned two FTE Faculty, the program will be adequately staffed.

- The team reviewed the Beth-El College of Nursing staffing and organizational charts, the University Catalog, both internal and external letters of support for the Program.

- The team reviewed curricula vitae of all nursing faculty positions in the College of Nursing.

- The team also reviewed the UCCS Academic Strategic Plan (Spring 2006).

- Appropriate administrative oversight and student advisement is in place.

- Much of the program will be offered online, which will help with student recruitment and faculty scheduling. Support for online courses is presently adequate.

- Laboratory and library resources seem adequate.
- The team reviewed the Standard Financial Performa for New General Fund Academic Programs information while on-site.

- Support for online courses is adequate.

- Library and laboratory resources are adequate.

Evidence that Indicates that further organization attention is required:

None

Evidence that demonstrates that further organizational attention and Commission follow-up are required:

Implementation of the program will require at least two additional qualified faculty. One faculty position has been approved for '07-'08, and a prospective well qualified candidate has been identified. Another position has been requested for '08-'09, but approval has not yet been secured. Progress toward securing and filling these positions should be monitored.

B. Other Accreditation Issues: None

C. Recommendation of the Team.

Based upon an on-site review, evidence cited above in A-1, consultant assistance directly to the team by the Dean of the College of Nursing at The Ohio State University, including teleconference while the team was on site, the team recommends approval of the request to add the Doctorate of Nursing Practice.

Evidence that demonstrates that further organization attention is required.

Evidence that demonstrates that further organizational attention and commission follow-up are required.

The University has committed to two additional faculty positions and is in the process of hiring one new nursing faculty in support of this doctorate. Approval for an additional position was pending at the time of the team visit. The University's commitment to these two positions is essential. The team recommends a progress report be filed with the Commission no later than July1, 2010 which addresses the University's continued commitment to this program and the adequate staffing of its faculty, including, but not limited to, the proposed two faculty positions.

2. **REQUEST TO OFFER THE DOCTORATE IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP, RESEARCH AND POLCIY.**

   EVALUATION OF DOCUMENTATION SUPPORTING ORGANIZATION'S REQUEST FOR CHANGE:

   A. Evaluation of Request:

   1. Evidence that demonstrates adequate preparation and planning.

   ▪ The need for scholar-practitioners to lead schools and agencies in the University's primary service area of Southern Colorado was documented in the material reviewed by the team during the on-site Comprehensive Visit.
   • The evidence reviewed included surveys, letters of support from the K-12 community, and officials at the state level. The surveys included potential interest on the part of K-12 teachers, Community College personnel a well as administrators.
   • Curriculum preparation included a review of peer institutions and the primary responsible consultant evaluator's expertise is in the area of Educational Leadership.
   • The curriculum review included a detailed study of proposed course syllabi; performance objectives; anticipated student learning outcomes and proposed assessment methodologies and tools.
   • The review of need, proposed curriculum, performance objectives, on the surface indicated

the presence of an understanding of the appropriate depth and breadth in a doctoral program designed for those interested in Educational Leadership. The program subsumes throughout its content the importance of Research and the understanding of Policy development driven by solid basic and applied research methodologies.

- Interviews with faculty provided the team with verification that the knowledge base and professional attitude appropriate for doctoral training in Education were present on campus and would be necessarily enhanced with planned additions to faculty.

- The team reviewed evidence that appropriate institutional approvals were in place. The Department of Educational Leadership, Dean of the College of Education, the Graduate Executive Committee and the Associate Vice Chancellor for Research and Dean of the Graduate School have approved the program proposal. The team reviewed material in written and digital format that supported the reality that while the local and state level approvals involved a focus on need, substantive review of proposed program content occurred as well.

- The University's Budget Advisory Committee reviewed the proposal and approved the program's budget. The budget proposal is realistic in terms of program needs and includes the addition of three additional full-time faculty in support of the program.

- The team reviewed the proposed curriculum, program proposal, and documents detailing enrollment projections, budget estimates (the *Standard Financial Performa for New General Fund Academic Programs)*. (System Documentation for Approval of Budget Support for the Program). This information proved helpful in understanding the benchmarks that the University will use to monitor the initiation and ongoing progress of the program. Those benchmarks are detailed and substantive.

- The team reviewed the College of Education staffing and organizational charts, the University Catalog,

both internal and external letters of support for the Program. The curriculum is well designed to meet the need for educational leadership practitioners in Colorado. The program's curriculum design is comprehensive with leadership as well as scholarship and research emphasized as skill and knowledge areas. The team reviewed data related to the review of peer programs used by the University in the development of program. The programs and ideas incorporated into the proposed new doctorate showed evidence of careful thought and consideration and represented quality levels that, if appropriately implemented, will serve the common god of the people of Southern Colorado.

- The team reviewed the <u>curricula vitae</u> of faculty positions in the College of Education.

- The team also reviewed the UCCS Academic Strategic Plan (Spring 2006).

Evidence that Indicates that further organization attention is required:

None

Evidence that demonstrates that further organizational attention and commission follow-up are required.

- The University's plans to implement the program depend upon the allocation or re-allocation of existing faculty lines in addition to the addition of three new faculty positions. The planned additions for these faculty positions are (in sequence) 2008, 2009, and 2010.

- Additional budget resources have been planned and allocated in support of the program.

B. Other Accreditation Issues: None.

C. Recommendation of the Team

The team recommends approval of the request of the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs to offer the Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Leadership, Research and Policy.

Evidence that demonstrates that further organization attention is required.

NONE

Evidence that demonstrates that further organizational attention and commission follow-up are required.

The University's plans to implement the program depend upon the allocation or re-allocation of existing faculty lines in addition to the addition of three new faculty positions. The planned additions for these faculty positions are (in sequence) 2008, 2009, and 2010.

The team recommends that the University file a progress report no later than July 1, 2010 that demonstrates that the faculty support has been provided for the new Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Policy, Leadership, and Research.

3. REQUEST FOR REMOVAL OF THE STIPULATION PERTAINING TO NEW ONLINE PROGRAMS AND PERMISSION TO OFFER THE MASTER OF ARTS IN CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION, SPECIAL EDUCATION, AND COUNSELING ONLINE.

EVALUATION OF DOCUMENTATION SUPPORTING ORGANIZATION'S REQUEST FO CHANGE:

A. **Evaluation of the Request.**

1. **Evidence that demonstrates adequate preparation and planning.**

   - The distance degree offerings are consistent with the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs' mission and an audience exists for distance degree

programs. Evidence reviewed included curricula and delivery for most of the existing online course and program offerings at the University, including online platforms, and patterns of delivery.

- A process to approve and monitor online course and program delivery is in place at the University. This process includes both peer and administrative review and is sufficient to insure the quality of online offerings.

- The team reviewed written evidence and interviewed faculty involved in the delivery of online courses and degree programs.

- The well-defined process for program approval, and governance of distance programs rests with the departmental level evaluations of the overall program programs with appropriate oversight by College Deans and the Office of the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs.

- The team interviewed faculty involved in the delivery of online instruction.

- The team interviewed students and consumers of online delivery.

- The current online MBA program acts as a model for other online programs.

- UCCS has a process for online program approval.

- Courses using E College Software include a help desk that is important to the students.

- Many faculty members have experience in teaching online classes.

- An advising program for online students was present and well accepted by the students.

- The technology infrastructure is in place to support the delivery of the current and future online programs.

- This institution has the necessary distance learning experiences to remove the stipulation for prior Commission approval to offer new online programs.

- The Library has appropriate online resource tools to support the degree programs being provided via distance delivery.

- An institutional financial structure and plan have been developed for various online programs.

- The University has put into place appropriate and effective academic and student services support systems to ensure that the students have a positive learning experience in the distance delivery of various programs. The team reviewed written evidence relevant to such disparate structures as application and admission; financial aid and student accounts; registration and other academic support aid and student accounts; registration and other academic support services; advising; instruction; student services and the evaluation of online programs.

Evidence that indicates that further organization attention is required: None

Evidence that demonstrates that further organizational attention and commission follow-up are required.

   None

     B.   Other Accreditation Issues:

       None.

     C.   Recommendation of the Team

       1. Evidence sufficiently demonstrated to recommend approval of change request.

The University of Colorado – Colorado Springs has the appropriate systems in place to ensure offering excellent online programs using various distance delivery systems. The team recommends removal of the stipulation pertaining to online program delivery. Evidence for this conclusion is

referenced in A-1 above.

- *The removal of the stipulation subsumes the team's concurrence that the University proceed with online delivery of the **existing** Master of Arts programs in Special Education, Curriculum and Instruction, and Counseling. However, **should the Commission deny the removal of stipulation on online deliver**, the team recommends the specific authorization requested for online delivery of the Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction, Special Education, and Counseling.*

V. STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS

A. Affiliation Status

No change

Based on its review of documents examined and interviews during the comprehensive evaluation visit, the Team concludes that the Institution provides high quality academic and co-curricular activities for its students and works diligently to meet the needs of constituencies in the region and beyond. There is strong leadership and well-qualified faculty and staff. The Team believes that UCCS's activities and processes sufficiently respond to the accreditation criteria as defined by the Higher learning Commission.

B. Nature of Organization

1. Legal status

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No change

2. Degrees awarded

No Change

3. Distance Education

No prior Commission approval required.

Rationale:
The University of Colorado - Colorado Springs has the appropriate systems in place to ensure offering excellent online programs using various distance delivery systems. The team recommends removal of the stipulation pertaining to online program delivery.

C. Conditions of Affiliation

1.   Stipulation on affiliation status

Accreditation at the doctoral level is limited to the programs in Engineering, Geropsychology, Educational Leadership and Nursing Practice.

2. Approval of degree sites

No change

3.   Progress Report

The team recommends a progress report on staffing for the new doctoral programs in Educational Leadership and Nursing Practice due no later than July 1, 2010.

Rationale and Expectations

The University's plans to implement the programs depend upon the allocation or re-allocation of existing faculty lines in addition to the addition of three new faculty positions for the Educational Leadership program and two new faculty positions for the Nursing Practice program. The Progress report must detail new or re-allocated faculty support for the Educational Leadership program and new faculty support for the Nursing Practice program.

5. Other visits scheduled

No visits recommended

6.   Organization change request

The team recommends the removal of stipulations for the delivery of online courses and programs.
The team recommends, *with a Progress Report due on 2010*, the approval of doctoral programs in Educational Leadership, and Nursing Practice.

The institution's request for permission to offer the Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction, Special Education, and Counseling are subsumed by the team's recommendation regarding online delivery. However, should the Commission deny the removal of the stipulation on online deliver, the team recommends the specific authorization requested for the online delivery of the Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction, Special Education, and Counseling.

D. Summary of Commission Review

Timing for next comprehensive visit (academic year 2016-2017).

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The Team concludes that the criteria are met.

REPORT OF A COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION VISIT

TO

University of Colorado at Colorado Springs

Colorado Springs, Colorado

November 13-15, 2006

FOR

The Higher Learning Commission

A Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

EVALUATION TEAM

Dr. Samuel H. Rankin, Board of Trustee Professor and President Emeritus, Chadron State College, 1000 Main Street, Chadron, NE. 69337

Dr. Joel E. Anderson, Chancellor, University of Arkansas at Little Rock, ADS 309 2801South University Avenue, Little Rock, AR 72204-1099

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Dr. Tom J. Seymour, Professor MIS-Telecommunications Consultant, Minot State University, 500 West University Avenue, Minot, North Dakota 58707

Consultant Team Member:

    Dr. Elizabeth Rothfus Lenz, RN, FAAN, Dean and Professor, College of Nursing, The Ohio State University, College of Nursing 1585 Neal Avenue, Columbus, Ohio 43606. (Dr. Lenz was an official member of the team and participated in the on-site review of the DNP by teleconference and online review of documentation.)

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I.   OVERALL OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

The University of Colorado's (CU's) presence in Colorado
Springs dates to 1925 with extension courses delivered by the
Boulder campus. For the next forty years courses were
delivered at various downtown locations in Colorado Springs.
By the early 1960's an extension campus of CU in Colorado
Springs included more than 1,200 students. In 1970 the Regents
of the University of Colorado approved a separate mission for
the extension center and in the same year the campus began and
independent and direct relationship with the Higher Learning
Commission (HLC). In 1972, HLC granted full accreditation
status and in the same year, the University of Colorado at
Colorado Springs, through passage of a constitutional
amendment officially came into existence.

From its inception, UCCS has had a clearly articulated mission
and its integrity was secured by the application of existing
laws governing higher education in Colorado and policies of
the Colorado Commission on Higher Education as well as
policies and bylaws of the CU Regents. In addition to a focus
on teaching, learning, discovery, the University's special
focus from its origins to the present involve a continuing
engagement with the community of Colorado Springs and the
region of Southern Colorado.

The campus serves as the cultural and educational center for
Colorado Springs, but its outreach extends across the state
and around the globe.

Major changes since the last comprehensive Higher Learning
Commission (HLC) visit in 1996 included: adoption of a mission
statement that is widely understood and embraced by all
constituencies; implementation of a new strategic planning
process and the adoption of selected Strategic Priorities; a
new general education curriculum; expansion of distance
education, including several programs delivered fully online.
In developing the Institution's mission, goals and Strategic
Priorities, the institution used its designation as the growth
institution within the University of Colorado system and the
results of a Blue Ribbon panel, which recommended that its

mission be expanded. A focused visit in 2002 was conducted to clarify questions relation to sources and levels of revenue, assessment of student academic achievement, and graduate education. All questions were resolved and no follow-up reports required.

The Institution continues to face major challenges in funding due to the implementation of spending lid in the state of Colorado. Recently the citizens of Colorado accepted a suspension of the lid for a period of five years, which has stemmed the decline in state funding. Growing enrollments have placed a strain on available facilities. Officials of the Institution are aware of these problems, and there are plans to address them

II.   CONSULTATIONS OF THE TEAM

A.   Distance Learning.

- A formal marketing plan would enhance the probability of success for all distance-learning programs.

- It is clear to the Team that the assessment of student learning in the distance degree offerings is at different stages of implementation in the various programs. UCCS would do well to review all online assessment programs and implement an improvement program where necessary.

- The strategy of increased use of student discussion techniques in online learning shells should be promoted among all faculty members.

- Online shells should be reviewed for common format and sue of appropriate content to improve program consistency.

B.   Faculty Development.

- UCCS should consider increasing the funding for faculty development. Consider increasing faculty professional travel allocations beyond the roughly $500 at present.

- UCCS should continue to increase on-site development opportunities for faculty and staff.

- Develop a center to assist faculty in publication preparation.

- The University needs to continue to invest in more distance education faculty development and instructional design to support quality distance education in existing academic programs.

C.   Library.

- The Library acquisitions are geared to support existing curricula. With greater emphasis in graduate level programming there will come a need for the library to strengthen holdings to support graduate programs, including extraordinarily expensive research journals.

D. Faculty.

- Address idea of including distance education classes in faculty load.

- Continue to increase rewards and support for teaching effectiveness.

- The 1997 Team report cited concerns related to UCCS's dependence on large numbers of part-time teachers. The data provided to the team indicated a significant growth in Senior Instructors and Instructors, who are full-time, non-tenure track faculty. In 1997 there were 41 such faculty; by 2005, the number had increased to 132. Currently, Senior Instructors and Instructors constitute 20% of faculty members. As UCCS continues to embrace its commitment to student learning and effective teaching and as the student body grows, the institution's heavy reliance on full-time, non-tenure track instructors should be reviewed.

- In order of faculty to devote more time to research activities, adjustments in load and priorities may be necessary. A greater number of full-time faculty positions will have to be funded in order to meet instructional needs, free up time for research, and maintain an equitable system of faculty work assignments. Graduate assistants, who can provide valuable assistance in both instruction and research, are typically part of the equation.

- When faculty searches are undertaken, those involved will need to screen and select new faculty members with much more attention to their past record and their promise as researchers.

E.   Research.

- Although there are significant variations among disciplines, in general the space required for research needs to grow and will be extensive and expensive.

- As a result of recent legislative action, the UCCS is defined as a "regional research university." Concurrently, the Board of Regents has declared UCCS its "growth campus." These developments signal that an exciting period of change lies ahead for UCCS. The institution has already begun to take steps that reflect the new mission. For example, staffing has been expanding in the Office of Sponsored Research. However, in order to realize the benefits to Colorado expected as a result of the enlarged mission, those

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involved in campus planning will need to give priority attention to the changes that are required to accomplish an emphasis on research. The changes that will need to be accomplished cannot all be accomplished a once. They will require sequencing and sustained attention over many years.

E. Diversity.

- The University should consider specific budget lines for diversity programs consistent with its Diversity Action Plan.

- The University should consider the development of a center for international students to provide an on-campus anchor and source of social activities and self-help.

- The University should develop a Diversity Sensitivity program that targets faculty, staff, and students through various avenues.

- The University should continue to seek increased resources for increasing diversity in student learning opportunities.

F. Grant Support.

- As pre-award and post-award grant activities increase, the Office of Sponsored Programs as well as selected financial service offices will require additional institutional investments. There will be a need for money to meet the matching requirements of many grants and to support grant-writing incentives. UCCS's existing policy and distribution of indirect cost recovery dollars is already shaped to promote research. As grant awards increase, this source of funding for research should also increase yet for a good distance into the future it will be a very modest source at best.

G. Office of Academic Vice Chancellor.

- Much has happened in the past decade to remedy the problematic turnover in this key position. The addition of staff to the Vice Chancellor's Office preserves institutional memory, provides stability, and helps to train a newly appointed Vice Chancellor. The creation of the Associate Vice Chancellor of Research and Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

positions and the strength of the individuals filling
these positions have alleviated much of the frustration
with and issues.

- Further, the current vacancy has been rethought and re-
titled, resulting in a search for a Provost and
Executive Vice Chancellor. The belief is that with the
growth in the campus, the time is right for a stronger,
more internally focused leader to unite the
academic/research enterprise and the student success
mission; the expectation is that the larger role will
help attract stronger candidates interested in staying
longer in a more interesting and complex position. The
new position better aligns UCCS with its peers in the
Colorado system. This position should be filled with a
well-qualified applicant with all due speed.

H. Institutional Culture and Character.

- Students, faculty, staff, Regents, and members of the
community alike spoke with evident pride and deep
loyalty of the special community that is UCCS—its
"personal touch" and "small campus ease of connection."
As the campus grows in size, UCCS should do its best to
preserve this distinctive and valuable culture and
character.

INSTITUTION and STATE: University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, CO

TYPE OF REVIEW *(from ESS)*: Continued Accreditation

DESCRIPTION OF REVIEW: Visit will include requests by the institution for removal of the stipulations pertaining to new online programs and permission to offer the Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instructions, Special Education, and Counseling and the Doctorate in Nursing Practice and the Doctorate in Educational Leadership.

DATES OF REVIEW: 11/13/06 - 11/15/06

Nature of Organization

LEGAL STATUS: Public

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: no change

DEGREES AWARDED: B, M, D

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: no change

Conditions of Affiliation

STIPULATIONS ON AFFILIATION STATUS: Accreditation at the doctoral level is limited to the programs in Engineering and Geropsychology.

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: Accreditation at the doctoral level is limited to programs in Engineering, Geropsychology, Educational Leadership, and Nursing Practice.

APPROVAL OF NEW DEGREE SITES: Prior Commission approval required.

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: no change

APPROVAL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION DEGREES: Prior Commission approval required for distance education programs other than the MPA, Master of Business Administration, Master of Engineering, and the Master of Nursing.

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: No prior Commission approval required.

REPORTS REQUIRED: None

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: A progress report on staffing for the new doctoral programs in Educational Leadership and Nursing Practice due no later than July 1, 2010.

OTHER VISITS REQUIRED: None

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: no change

Summary of Commission Review

Team Recommendations for the
STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS

YEAR OF LAST COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION: 1996 - 1997

YEAR OF NEXT COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION: 2006 - 2007

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: 2016 - 2017