

HLC Self Study Update

528 days and counting. . . .

The site visitors for the 2011 HLC Reaccreditation visit are scheduled to be on campus from **April 18-20, 2011**. As you plan your 2011 get-away, stay away from these dates, as it will be expected that all constituencies are available to the visiting team.

Progress continues to be made on the editing/writing of the entire self-study document. Sandy Balkema has essentially completed Criteria 1 and 2. Each month's update will feature some of the findings.

The entire University community will be invited to read and respond to the entire draft self-study early in the spring semester of 2010.

Profiles in Change

Dean William Potter was invited to prepare a summary of what has changed at Ferris since the last reaccreditation visit. He then shared his list, the first part of which is copied below, with the Deans' Council and invited their additions. If you see things that you believe should be added or corrected, please send them to us at hlcselfstudy@ferris.edu. The balance of the "changes" since the last visit will be included with the next newsletter. Thanks, Bill, for this thoughtful perspective!

A. *External World Changes (Ferris functions in a significantly different environment)*

1. National
 - a. Emphasis on assessment of learning outcomes by HLC, USDOE, and accrediting agencies (this issue has become consuming)
 - b. September 11, the war in Iraq, the war in Afghanistan from 2001-present, and the return of veterans to universities in significant numbers in 2008
 - c. National economic recession in 2008
2. Michigan
 - a. Tanking of Michigan economy starting in 2006
 - b. Reduction of manufacturing jobs in Michigan totaling several hundred thousand
 - c. Continuously shrinking state appropriations for public universities since 1999
 - d. Higher tuition, room and board during same time period
 - e. Lower numbers of high school graduates in state effective in 2009
 - f. Introduction of higher H.S. graduation standards for Michigan students effective in 2010
 - g. Out-migration of Michigan citizens – population declining
3. Big Rapids (many more consumer choices than in 1999 – all we lack is a state-of-the-art movie complex)
 - a. New apartment complexes added in BR (compete with on campus and downtown options)
 - b. New big box stores (Wal-mart, Meijer, Lowes, Menards, RiteAid, Walgreens, MC Sports, Peebles, Staples, Big Lots, Sears) open in BR
 - c. New dining options (Applebee's, Bennigans, Ruby Tuesday's, Blue Cow, Vivo, Adoba, Quiznos, Burrito Loco, China Palace, the Gate)
 - d. Gone are Woody's, the Ferris Inn, CitGo Gas, Carter's, Denny's, Village Market, Southland Pharmacy, Casey McNabb's, and Chinese restaurant next to Dunkin Donuts

- e. Coffee houses on and off campus (Seattle's Best, Starbuck's, Bigbee's)
- f. Increase in arts opportunities – Arts Community, ArtWorks
- 4. Entry of many higher education competitors, many crossing state and national boundaries, such as University of Phoenix, Baker, Westwood, Capella.

B. University-wide Changes (FSU is bigger, broader, and more complex)

- 1. "Merger" with Kendall College of Art and Design in 2001
- 2. Expansion of FSU-GR to become College of Professional and Technological Studies and subsequent combination in 2008 with former University Center for Extended Learning to put all non-BR centers under one unit
- 3. Instructional and Business Technology – (we really have gone virtual, if not paperless, in so many ways; the constant is change! – hard in every way to keep up)
 - a. Campus-wide change from SIS to Banner in 2005
 - b. Introduction of Web-CT in 2005 and transition to FerrisConnect in 2007
 - c. Introduction of Campus Pipeline e-mail and announcements in 2001 to MyFSU
 - d. Enrollment-related software beyond Banner (e.g., DegreeWorks)
 - e. Business-related software beyond Banner (e.g., Payment-net)
 - f. Fundraising-related software beyond Banner
 - g. Wireless umbrella installed across campus in 2006
- 4. Creation of Chief Diversity Officer position at cabinet level in 2007 (you can usually tell that something is important when a cabinet level position is added)
- 5. Enhancement of the Advancement Division by adding fundraisers in 2003 and again in 2007 along with appointment of VP of advancement.

C. Student Body – (we are working with more and better students; the decision to make the change in admissions standards was a HUGE issue at the beginning of the ten-year period)

- 1. Introduction of admission standards in 2002, with ratchets in 2004 and 2006, has changed the student body from the pre-2002 days of open admissions. Mean ACT and HSGPA have increased as have retention and graduation rates.
- 2. Growth of Honors Program has resulted in the fact that 10% or more of the current BR student body started in Honors. This change also contributes to the increased credentials, retention, and graduation rates.
- 3. Advent of Merit, Transfer, and Geographic Scholarships at Ferris
 - a. WNF (Founders, President, and Deans)
 - b. Great Lakes
 - c. Transfer
 - d. International
- 4. Enrollment Growth throughout the decade, a Fall headcount increase of more than 43% and a Fall SCH increase of more than 36% since 1999
- 5. Racial and ethnic diversity for BR enrollments has declined from about 13% in 1999 to just under 11% in 2009 using total headcount as the divisor; international student enrollments have declined from 3.3% to 1.1% during the same timeframe using the same formula (I'm curious to see how the BR-only ratios have changed)
- 6. Increasing numbers of on-line and off campus enrollments at all locations and in a variety of programs with non-BR enrollments increasing by 200% since 2001 from a headcount of 1,382 to 4,099 (that is as far back as I could easily find)
- 7. Retention of FTIACs from first to second year has increased from 59% (1999 cohort) to 70% (2007 cohort) and the degree completion rate has improved from 34% (1999-2005 cohort) to 40% (2002-2008 cohort) and still climbing, I believe, using the 6-year completion period allowed
- 8. Rise in median age of students as more enroll online and off-campus, with 2635 undergraduate students of age 25 or older in Fall 2008, representing 21% of the total student population. Average age of a part-time student in Fall 1999 was 28.7, while average age was 31 in Fall 2008.