REPORT OF A COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION VISIT

TO

FAIRMONT STATE UNIVERSITY
Fairmont, West Virginia

October 29-31, 2012

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

On October 29-31, 2012, the team conducted the comprehensive visit to Fairmont State University in Fairmont, West Virginia. The team evaluated the institution for the purposes of continued accreditation, Federal compliance, and pathway eligibility.

B. Institutional Context

Fairmont State University had its most recent comprehensive accreditation visit in April 2003. The visit was significant for FSU in that it included several requests for change that were subsequently approved, including offering a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration at the Gaston Caperton Center and a Master of Education degree in Middle Childhood Education at the main campus in Fairmont. It also included a request for separate accreditation for Fairmont State University (then known as Fairmont State College) and the co-located two-year institution then known as Fairmont State Community and Technical College (now Pierpont Community and Technical College).

Additional changes followed throughout the next 10 year period. In 2004 the institution underwent a name change from Fairmont State College to Fairmont State University. Other graduate programs were added in 2006, the Master of Arts in Teaching (M.A.T,) and the Master of Science in Criminal Justice (M.S.C.J.). The Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.) was added in 2007. In conjunction with some of the focus visits, Fairmont State University submitted two progress reports. The 2010 report discussed the implementation of graduate education infrastructure.

An important context for Fairmont State University has been and will continue to be for an indefinite period, its relationship to Pierpont Community and Technical College. Pierpont is co-located, sharing facilities, personnel, students and other resources. At the time of the 2003 visit, the two institutions were separated by the West Virginia legislature but remained on the same campus and shared facilities, staff and resources. The request for separate accreditation was a direct result of the legislative separation of the institutions.

In 2006, Fairmont State University re-merged with Fairmont State Community and Technical College, which was renamed Pierpont Community and Technical College in the merger. A Commission-mandated focus visit to examine the merger occurred in 2007. The merger of the two institutions lasted about a year, at which time the state legislature again mandated the separation of the two institutions. Since then, Fairmont State University and Pierpont Community and Technical College have collaborated to develop a process for separation of staff and services. The two institutions will probably continue to share facilities for some time and they share in the bond debt for construction and improvement to the physical facilities. The 2007 report discussed the re-merger with Pierpont Community and Technical College.

At the time of the present visit, FSU and PCTC are working toward the separation of personnel and a process to designate physical resources for each institution. A financial arrangement is in place whereby services provided by each institution to students from the other institution are charged back to the home institution. It was common in interviews to hear units identify themselves as "charge back" units. The two institutions are systematically working through the various units to determine staffing levels. This may contribute to some of the staffing issues seen by the team members.

C. Unique Aspects or Additions to the Visit

Two team members visited additional locations in Clarksburg and Bridgeport, WV.

D. Additional Locations or Branch Campuses Visited (if applicable)

Two members of the team visited the Gaston Caperton Center in Clarksburg, WV and the Robert C. Byrd National Aerospace Education Center in Bridgeport, WV. The team members interviewed the directors of both centers and toured the facilities.

The Gaston Caperton Center is a satellite facility shared with Pierpont Community and Technical College. It serves approximately 1,100 students taking courses from either or both of the institutions. The Center provides coursework to fulfill General Studies requirements for the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees. It also offers courses required for the General Business emphasis within the B.S. degree in Business Administration.

The Robert C. Byrd National Aerospace Education Center was founded in 1993 to support the aerospace industry within the state of West Virginia. Students may earn an A.S. degree in Aviation Technology that prepares them for Federal Aviation Administration certification exams or a B.S. in Aviation Maintenance Management. Students earning these degrees would take non-aviation related courses from the Fairmont campus. The Center is conveniently located to aerospace firms that participate in partnerships and provide internship and employment opportunities for FSU students.

E. Distance Delivery Reviewed

Graduate programs of study are delivered in a variety of formats: face-to-face courses, courses that combine on-line and face-to-face strategies ("hybrid"), on-line courses, and clinical experiences. Two team members reviewed information in the Graduate School Bulletin, the Progress Report to the Higher Learning Commission Graduate Studies (2010), and interviewed the former and current Director of Graduate Studies, and affirmed that graduate programs are operating within the approved percentage brackets for distance education.

F. Interactions with Constituencies

Board of Governors Representatives (Chair, Vice Chair, and Student, Faculty, and Staff
     representatives)
President
President's Council
Provost
Vice President, Administration and Fiscal Affairs
Vice President, Institutional Advancement
Associate Provost
Dean, College of Liberal Arts
Dean, School of Education
Dean, College of Science and Technology and 5 faculty
Dean, School of Fine Arts and 4 faculty
Dean, School of Nursing and Allied Health Administration
Deans and Directors of Graduate Programs
Dean's Council
Director, Budget
Director, Library
Associate Dean and faculty, School of Education

Director, Graduate Studies
Director, Gaston Caperton Center
Director, Aviation
Director, Center for Civic Engagement
Director, International Student Services
Coordinator, Social Justice
Executive Director, FSU Foundation and Foundation members
Manager, Teaching and Learning Commons
Instructional Technologist, Teaching and Learning Commons
Director, Housing
Director, Resident Life
Judicial Affairs Coordinator
Assistant Resident Life Director/Judicial Affairs Officer
Assistant Vice President, Human Resources
Coordinator, Academic Advising Center and Regents Bachelor of Arts Degree Program
Director of Alumni Relations, Staff of Alumni Office and Community Alumni (about 20 people)
Chair, Department of Health and Human Performance
Chairs of criteria committees for self-study report
Members, Criterion 2 Committee
Strategic Planning Oversight Committee
General Studies Committee (11 members)
Faculty Senate Executive Committee (7 members)
Faculty, Open Meeting (19 members)
Students, Open Meeting (about 25)
ABET Coordinator
Senior Budget Analyst
Director, Multicultural Affairs

G. Principal Documents, Materials, and Web Pages Reviewed

Self-Study Report
Financial Statements 2010 and 2009
Financial Statements 2011 and 2010
Audited Reports
Undergraduate Catalog 2011-2012
Undergraduate Catalog 2012-2013
FSU Strategic Plan: Defining Our Future 2006-2011
FSU Strategic Plan Update: Redefining Our Future 2010-2012
Faculty Handbook 2011-2012
Faculty Committee meeting minutes
New Faculty Orientation materials
New Student Orientation materials
Admissions and recruiting materials
Financial Aid policies and procedures
Financial Aid Refund/Repayment Policy
Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy
Campus Police Policies and Procedures
Residence Life Rules and Regulations
Student Handbook

Facilities Master Plan
Student Complaint Records
Budget FY 2013
Assessment reports for academic programs
WVHEPC Program Review reports
Faculty Senate Minutes 2010-2011
Progress Report to the Higher Learning Commission regarding Graduate Studies
(January 15, 2010)
IPEDS Data Reports, 2010 and 2011 for FSU and Pierpont
West Virginia Higher Education Higher Education Planning Commission, Master Plan
2007-2012
U.S. Census Data for the area
West Virginia Research Corporation Report, 2009
Organizational Charts
Enrollment Trends Data (K-12) for West Virginia
(http://wveis.k12.wv.us/nclb/pub/enroll/State_ET2011.htm)
Web Page of the Office of Institutional Research
FELIX course schedules
FSU website
Policy on Social Justice, BOG Policy No. 8 (December 5, 2001)
Falcon Center 20 –year facility maintenance budget plan
BOG Documents for FSU and Pierpont documenting separation agreement (December
16, 2009, made effective retroactively to July 1, 2009)
West Virginia State "Compact Reporting Elements"
EBI Instrument for Residence Life and performance report
Higher Learning Commission Letters of Concern
Library Strategic Plan (through 2010)
Taskstream reports
School of Business Program Reviews
School of Business Internship Requirements and Procedures document
Fairmont State University Board of Governors Resolution (Revision adopted September
17, 2009)
Intramural Participation Records documenting # of teams and student participants from
Spring 2002 –Fall 2011)
Falcon Center Activities and Outcomes (2011-2012)
College Navigator Entry for Fairmont State University
Fairmont State University Program Review for BS Architecture (2012)

II. COMMITMENT TO PEER REVIEW

A. Comprehensiveness of the Self-Study Process

The university conducted the self-study and prepared the report through the use of
steering committees responsible for each of the criteria. Criterion committees included
representatives of the various constituencies, including students, staff, faculty,
administration and community. The report provided a broad look at the activities of the
campus.

B. Integrity of the Self-Study Report

The report accurately represented FSU in such a way that the team was able to validate it during the site visit. In a few cases, changes that occurred between the writing of the report and the team visit lead to some confusion for the team. For example, the Center for Teaching Excellence was discussed in present tense in the report, leading the team to believe it was still operational. However, it had closed prior to the team's arrival. In another case, a reference to plans for "junior varsity" teams was resolved as an issue of semantics. Overall, the report accurately reflected the institution.

C. Adequacy of Progress in Addressing Previously Identified Challenges

The team considers the response of the institution to previously identified challenges to be inadequate regarding assessment of student learning outcomes. The team addresses the challenges in Criterion 3, primarily Core Components A and C.

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

Requirements were fulfilled.

III. COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

The team reviewed the required Title IV compliance areas and the student complaint information.

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**

   - Fairmont State University's mission documents were revised in 2012 to address 'new realities' and the legislated separation from Pierpont Community and Technical College and to help focus the university in a more sustainable direction. The new mission documents are clearly worded and readily available to the public and potential students via the university's web page. (1a)

   - The university mission statement reflects a commitment to meeting students' professional and personal goals and broadly defines the organization's desire to help students engage in active citizenship. Comments gathered from students, staff, faculty, and community members reflect a strong commitment to meeting the needs of students with a primary focus on effective teaching as evidenced by documents relevant to hiring of faculty and staff, the review process used for tenure and promotion of faculty, faculty and student handbooks, and documents found on the university web site.

   - University planning and budget allocations are somewhat connected to the university's mission. In recent years, the institution has begun to link planning

and budgeting to the strategic plan, for example, with the creation of the 2010-2012 revision to the strategic plan and creation of an initiative fund to support implementation of that plan. Almost everyone interviewed was able to articulate the governing board's allocation of the initiative funds as an example of how planning is connected to resource allocation, but there was little evidence that university planning and budgeting is intimately tied to the strategic plan and assessed for institutional impact beyond that example. At the time of the team's visit, the funds for strategic initiatives had been discontinued.

- The governing board expressed support for the mission of the university and the board chair expressed the board's belief and commitment to the need for university faculty and staff to be innovative, current in their fields, and actively engaged in the lives of students. The board has faculty, staff, and student representation in its membership and meets regularly. Members who met with the team were able to articulate the university's mission and what the application of the mission should be. It is unclear to what extent the governing board encourages the university's chief administrative personnel to exercise effective leadership, as that was not addressed directly or indirectly in the conversation with the governing board members. (1d)

- University personnel, students, and alumni across all meetings with team members expressed a strong commitment to the university, their belief that the university focus is on individual student success, and that the "family" orientation of the campus as a whole is critical to student success. There was clear expression of support for the university's commitment to meeting the needs of students and many stories told about how positive relationships formed at Fairmont State had a significant impact on the lives of students. Evidence is abundant and clearly demonstrates that students are first at Fairmont State University.   (1c)

- The team saw evidence that FSU was fulfilling its mission. It does offer a broad range of traditional baccalaureate programs in the Arts and Sciences, teacher education and business administration; it is working with Pierpont to extend occupationally-oriented curricula; it offers a university education for one of the lower tuition and fees costs in the state; it provides student support services and offers a variety of cultural, recreational, and social activities to complement academic pursuits.

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

- The specific language and principles found in the university's mission statement is not a pervasive part of the language used by students, faculty, and staff when in conversation about the institution's past, current, and future practices and plans. Display boards showing the mission statement are all new and not designed for permanent display. Only three times during two days of meeting with over 100 faculty, staff, students, and community members did the university mission get cited as a reason for intentionally making a planning decision. When a group of approximately 25 students were questioned about the university mission, only one student could articulate the major elements of the mission. Of the faculty and staff who could articulate principles found in the university's

mission documents, none could speak to how those principles are intentionally implemented and assessed for their impact on student learning or student dispositions while at Fairmont State or after they graduate from Fairmont State. For example, there were numerous positive stories shared from alumni indicating how adaptable Fairmont State students are in the workplace and community and how well respected Fairmont students are among employers; however, no one could speak to how students are assessed as they complete their academic program and are followed after they leave Fairmont State in order to add credibility to those statements. (1b)

- Mission documents state that the university is intentional about addressing students' personal goals. However, it is not evident that there is a process or procedure in place to assess how the university is achieving that end. Student engagement in community service is documented in the Office of Civic Engagement, but those data are used to show the number of hours students contribute rather than the impact on student learning or dispositions related to the mission statement's wording that the university meets students' professional and personal goals. Mission documents do not directly address the diversity of learners or how the university plans to address the needs of an increasingly diverse population. (1b)

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

4. **Evidence that one or more specified Core Components are not met and require Commission follow-up.**

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 evidence presented by Fairmont State University indicates that the University is aware of general trends affecting higher education such as technology, changing demographics and globalization. In addition, a review of documents as well as interviews with various stakeholders demonstrated that FSU incorporates information on trends affecting West Virginia. A review of documents as well as interviews with campus constituencies revealed that FSU incorporates the strategic plan of the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission (WVHEPC) into its own planning processes. Among the trends guiding FSU's planning are the growth in online providers for post baccalaureate programs; an increase in demand for science, technology, engineering and

mathematics (STEM) programs; the state recession; and state demographics regarding completion of higher education. Interviews across campus revealed ways in which FSU responds to these changes. (2a)

- In response to national, regional and local trends, FSU seeks ways to distinguish itself from other educational institutions. For example, to strengthen the online program and produce well-prepared graduates, FSU participates in the Quality Matters training offered as part of the WVHEPC initiative. Though this project is still in the early stages and only two faculty were invited by WVHEPC to participate in the initial training, FSU has established a goal of offering 20% of its curriculum through online learning as a way of increasing access for the residents of West Virginia, particularly working adults, a population highlighted in the state's changing demographics. In addition, it has established programs with non-traditional course schedules and targeted other programs to serve this population. It continues to identify programs of distinction and capitalize on opportunities to differentiate itself from the regional higher education market.

- FSU has invested financial and other resources to establish plans to guide its future development. Among the plans are the FSU strategic plan and its update, Redefining the Future, which outlines strategic priorities: quality, distinction, financial strength and resource stewardship. In addition to the Facilities Master Plan, FSU produced a plan for the Falcon Center to address the budget for facility maintenance for 20 years and a five-year staffing plan for the center. FSU established a strategic plan for graduate programs and more recently contracted with a collegiate athletic consulting firm to develop a 20-year master plan and help address challenges with membership in NCAA Division II.

- University planning and budget allocations are somewhat connected to the university's mission. In recent years, the institution has begun to link planning and budgeting to the strategic plan, for example, with the creation of the 2010-2012 revision to the strategic plan and creation of an initiative fund to support implementation of that plan. Almost everyone interviewed was able to articulate the governing board's allocation of the initiative funds as an example of how planning is connected to resource allocation, though there was little evidence that university planning and budgeting are intimately tied to the strategic plan and assessed for institutional impact beyond that example. Further, at the time of the team's visit, interviews with senior leadership and a review of documents did not offer specifics for a sustained plan or strategy to tie resource allocation to strategic objects, or whether there are plans to continue the initiative fund.

- In 2011, the university president implemented the Strategic Planning Oversight Committee (SPOC) with the charge to provide quality assurance that the budget planning process aligned with the revised strategic plan. It also serves to review and recommend budget requests. This committee also assisted with the advancement of the institutional mission and strategic plan by overseeing the process for granting "Strategic Planning Implementation Awards," funds given to internal competitive proposals for ways to advance the attainment of strategic goals. This two-year use of funds for strategic initiative grants reached out to a wide variety of programs across campus. Interviews with members of SPOC and

others on campus, revealed that currently the committee focuses more on the budget process rather than on action plans derived from the strategic plan.

- FSU has a strong resource base to support its programs both now and into the future. Aided by the university's leadership, state appropriations have risen from $14,543,378 in FY 2010 to $17,803,627 in FY 2012. FSU has also continued to generate additional resources to support its educational programs. Grant activity has increased from $10.4 million in 2010 to $11.6 million in 2011. Review of the audited financial statements, other financial documents, and discussions with key administrators and the Board of Governors by the Team verified that during the decade since the last visit, FSU has continued to work on sustaining solid fiscal management performance. An examination of IPEDS reports and the University budget suggest that the University has adequate resources to support its educational programs. (2b)

- The University is also striving to be more energy efficient. For example, the University has a project to overhaul the mechanical and electrical systems for Wallman Hall, Hardway Hall and the Turley Center. These buildings and the Library will also have work done for ADA compliance. Total investment in these upgrades is about $17.5 million. FSU has made impressive improvements in its physical plant and carefully plans for the renovation and construction of facilities.

- The web page of the Office of Institutional Research shows that the University has systematically collected data on enrollments, retention rates, distribution of majors, grade distributions, survey results such as NSSE and the Noel Levitz Survey on Student Satisfaction and other data in response to federal and state reporting requirements. In addition, FSU was an early adopter of the "College Portrait" effort which aimed to disclose important data and information to prospective students and the general public in ways that were easily accessible, enabling prospective students to compare FSU to other institutions participating in the College Portrait initiative. FSU participated in the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) pilot project to measure core learning outcomes, which measures core academic skills such as critical thinking.

- One of the items in the 2010-2012 Strategic Plan Update was to improve the budget process. FSU has developed an impressive process that illustrates a step by step method with attendant timelines. This effort has greatly enhanced transparency in the budget process and has been well received by relevant stakeholders.

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

- During the visit, the team became aware that several administrative personnel were handling multiple sets of responsibilities. While this happens from time-to-time at most institutions, the difference here is the degree to which it appears to be happening and the positions involved. For example in 2011-12, the person listed as Director of Retention was also the Interim President. The team found multiple examples of people who were doing two and three jobs that at most campuses of this type would be considered full-time jobs. The team understands

that FSU has been in the process of separating from co-located Pierpont Community and Technical College (PCTC) since the state legislature provided for the separation effective July 1, 2008. FSU and PCTC have shared not just facilities but also staff and other resources. FSU is understandably in a process of reviewing the staffing levels of various offices and has a rollout plan for the review of various offices, but the frequency of the wearing of "multiple hats" raised concerns for the team about the appropriateness of the staffing levels for FSU to continue realistically to fulfill its mission. Additionally, a review of documents and interviews with senior administrators, faculty, and staff revealed that recruitment, review and evaluation, especially in the non-instructional areas of the university are not clearly or broadly understood, consistently applied or codified in policy and practice. In situations where policies and procedures exist, they are not consistently applied. Interviews with administrators, faculty, and staff and a review of the Self Study documents suggest that professional development for staff is not happening consistently at FSU. The extent to which support and pursuit of professional development are incorporated in the institution's expectation of employees is unclear.

- The team's review of financial trends—primary reserve ratio trends, net operating revenue ratio, return on net assets, and viability ratios—suggest that finances may hinder the institution engaging in transformative activities. The Combined Financial Index (CFI) ratios resulted in an expression of concern from the Higher Learning Commission in 2011. FSU believes the ratio is a result of the Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) liability and presented evidence that the institution is on track to perform better in the future. The team believes that FSU needs to continue to monitor this situation.

- The team believes that significant and sustained organizational attention should to be focused on enrollment, particularly the development and refinement of strategic enrollment management best practices appropriate for FSU. This includes not only planning for recruitment and admission, but also planning for retention of the students FSU recruits. While FSU enrollments have declined, student retention of first-time, full-time students has also declined from 70.4% in 2006 to 66.4% in 2011. The percentage change in the award of Bachelor's degrees of -15.4% at a time when other West Virginia schools were experiencing increases is also worth noting. Examining results of student surveys such as NSSE, Noel Levitz, and EBI for Residence Halls also point to areas in need of improvements if FSU is to foster growth in enrollment trends and student success. For example in looking at factors regarding the decision to enroll at FSU, the availability of financial aid and tuition costs are at the top of the list along with academic reputation and personalized attention, while the opportunity to play sports is a minor factor at the bottom of the list. FSU may want to consider using data and involving constituents who may be affected by enrollment planning to inform the development of a strategic plan for enrollment management. The Self-Study and documents presented for review did not indicate how FSU attends to student life matters. The Team found a paucity of documents or assessment of student life areas. In a meeting with students, the interview process revealed a lack of understanding of available resources or complaint procedures. Several students indicated that regardless of the problems they had they always went to see a librarian because they could count on them.

- One of FSU's challenges, based on review of the Self-Study and conversations with key administrators is that "Institutional research focuses primarily on responding to external requests for data." FSU has not invested in conceptualizing what data it needs to collect and for what use. Effective institutional research covers a whole gamut, including the ability to gather, combine, and analyze information from various offices. Consequently, the Team believes that FSU needs to integrate assessment and evaluation as a routine, cyclical process at all levels of the institution. This strategic approach to a unified system of data collection and analysis should benefit FSU immensely by enhancing its capacity to use the results for informed programming, continuous improvements, and institutional effectiveness.

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

- The team saw evidence of instability or lack of continuity in planning processes. Although FSU had a plan for 2006-10 and then updated a plan for 2010-12, at the time of the visit no plan was in place. To some extent, FSU was waiting for WVHEPC to come forth with its plan setting state priorities, but the team also heard in many places on campus that FSU was waiting for the HLC visit to conclude before beginning work on the plan. The understanding communicated to the team during interviews was that the HLC visit would help set the direction of the plan. This hindered the work of the team in confirming that FSU's plan for the future is grounded in its mission or the way in which planning is tied to budgeting or assessment activities. This makes it difficult to ascertain whether or not the mission strategies endure beyond the lifecycle of the strategic plan, or how and whether or not the mission and core values guide actions and infuse every activity undertaken to accomplish the strategic goals of the university. Further, the Self-Study, other documents and conversations with senior administrators, faculty, and staff did not provide assurance that planning occurs at various levels of the institution through regular meetings of the departments, committees, and councils.

- Although some planning efforts are evident, key plans that provide major direction for the University are either in an infancy stage or non-existent. These include: a University Strategic Plan; A University Assessment plan; A Strategic Plan for Enrollment management; and a Strategic Plan for online education and faculty and staff development.(2a)

- The team recognizes that there are examples of assessment in pockets of the University such as those programs that have disciplinary accreditation. However, no assessment was evident in a number of academic programs chosen for review by the team from the Taskstream system and no comprehensive assessment plan for student life areas or the library. Further, the team was not presented with concrete evidence of how assessment results are utilized to inform planning for the University. (2c)

- The SPOC represents the beginning of efforts to align all levels of planning with FSU's mission, thereby enhancing the capacity to fulfill the mission. However, a review of the documents presented and interviews with various campus

stakeholders did not yield clarity on plans that would lead to the sustainability of these efforts.

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

Recommendation of the Team

Criterion met; commission follow-up recommended.

Focus visit on strategic planning, to include development of process and an implementation cycle. Due July 2015.

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**

    - FSU faculty members are required by the Faculty Handbook 2011-2012 (p. 23-37) to meet minimum qualifications. Faculty members are systematically evaluated for evidence of effective teaching in the review for tenure and/or promotion and the annual faculty report. This process includes student evaluations that are used to inform and improve teaching. (3b)

    - FSU is attentive to the needs of students by creating environments that are conducive to learning. Examples include The Tutorial Services Center, which is available to all FSU students, and the planned Student Access and Success Center which will provide access to a variety of resources. In addition, the university has implemented technologies in all classrooms to improve teaching and learning. The Musick Library provides services over 115 hours per week and extended 24 hours/day for the last three weeks of fall and spring semesters. Campus facilities are attractive and well-maintained. (3c)

    - The Strategic Planning Grant provides monies for such projects as high fidelity simulation technology in the nursing Simulation Laboratory and allows all clinical nursing courses to provide a simulation component. Within a two-year period, the university invested approximately one million dollars to support initiatives to enhance strategic planning efforts, including curriculum development.(3d)

    - The "General Education Outcomes and Desired Profile" (FSU Catalog 2011-2012, p. 7) describes the attitude, behavior, and competency outcomes the university expects students to develop at both graduate and undergraduate levels. This statement forms the foundation for the development of student learning outcomes for general studies. FSU faculty have developed program student learning outcomes for virtually all academic programs and for these general studies outcomes that, overall, are measureable, objective statements of what faculty expect students to know and be able to do upon graduation. The outcomes appear to be appropriately differentiated for undergraduate and

graduate programs, and are aligned with the course objectives. The learning outcomes will provide the basis for systematic assessment plans in the future. (3a)

- During Faculty Development Week of each semester, a slate of faculty professional development events is offered on campus. Across the institution, total departmental funds to support faculty development ranged from $152,000 to $160,000 over the past three years. In addition, the provost has funding of about $13,000 per year with another $5,000 coming from the Fairmont State Foundation. Funding is also available for sabbaticals, and the university seeks partnerships with business and industry in an effort to provide additional faculty development opportunities. (3b)

- FSU provides support for students and faculty engaged in online courses. They receive technical assistance in the use of the learning management software system and other support as needed. Library resources are also available for the online learner.

- Both the Gaston Caperton Center and the Robert C. Byrd National Aeronautics Education Center complement the focus of the main campus in Fairmont by providing comfortable learning environments and a commitment to student service. Staff at the off-campus locations demonstrated pride in the facilities, the staff with whom they work, and the students they serve.

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

- Graduate Studies do not have a "centralized" presence on campus as indicated by the absence of a Graduate Catalog, and only one graduate program is included in the Undergraduate Catalog. Currently, a brochure is used to inform constituencies of graduate class offerings. Additionally, Graduate Studies has no support staff to aid the Director. (3d)

- While student learning outcomes have been developed and entered into TaskStream, the assessment software management system, they do not appear in the catalog nor are they available on the FSU web site. During an interview, faculty and staff reported that they are available to students as part of internal advising documents, but these documents are not readily available to potential students and other external constituents. (3a)

- Graduate program, undergraduate program and general education student learning outcomes assessment is still in nascent stages. While programs with professional accrediting bodies have systematic assessments in place that are used to modify and improve programs, other programs do not. A review of data in TaskStream indicated that assessment activities were limited to course-level evaluation with little focus on program-level assessment. There was no evidence of a university assessment plan.

- The campus Assessment Steering Committee, composed of a part-time director, the director of the Center for Teaching Excellence, the Associate Provost, and

the Director of Assessment for the co-located Pierpont Community and Technical College, functioned from 2005-2010. It provided training and peer mentoring for faculty, and was responsible for the selection and purchase of TaskStream. However, the committee disbanded and is no longer functioning, and the Center for Teaching Excellence also closed. These actions leave a void for faculty interested in developing strategies to address gaps in learning identified through assessment. (3b)

- FSU has implemented a number of commercially available skills assessments, surveys and questionnaires including the Collegiate Learning Assessment, the National Survey of Student Engagement, the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement, the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory, and the Resident Student Survey. These measures are not explicitly tied to institutional learning outcomes, academic program student learning outcomes, or administrative unit objectives. Consequently, FSU faculty and administrators have struggled to routinely use the data these tools produce to improve. (3d)

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

- Systematic program review is conducted on a five year cycle in conjunction with the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission requirement. Program reviews are based primarily on WVHEPC expectations and look largely at inputs, enrollment trends, and the feedback from an external auditor. The program reviews typically include student learning outcomes and a description of the assessment process. However, FSU does not show a pattern of measuring or using the outcomes to determine the success of a program or to set future strategic directions. (4c)

- Although learning objectives have been developed for most courses and they have been mapped against the program student learning outcomes, there is no pattern of evidence that assessment of academic programs is systematic across the campus. An on-site review of the TaskStream system and subsequent interviews with faculty from a number of programs (e.g., sociology, mathematics, English, criminal justice, political science, exercise science, biology, health science) indicated that program-level assessment has not sufficiently developed to produce information that can be used to enhance teaching and learning. While professionally accredited programs have developed more intentional assessment processes, other academic programs have not completed, and in some cases, not begun a single cycle of assessment that could provide reliable information on which to base program change. Interviewed faculty mentioned that they have not been provided with adequate, on-going training in the development and use of effective assessment processes for their programs. Furthermore, there is no systematic process of review of assessment information by faculty, students or staff. Data are entered into TaskStream but faculty and administrators were unaware of existing processes for reviewing the information, providing feedback to departments on their progress on assessment or setting targets for improvement. This was true for graduate and undergraduate programs, and for general studies. Furthermore, there is no evidence that the information has been accessed and summarized to inform strategic planning and budgeting activities. (3c)

- Many academic programs have articulated multiple measures of the student learning outcomes in their assessment plans but they are currently basing their assessment processes on course grades. This may be due to a misunderstanding among faculty of sound assessment practices. Other programs are developing assessment processes involving the use of rubrics for embedded assessment but have not yet developed or implemented the rubrics. Consequently, few programs have implemented improvement to teaching and learning based on consistent, intentional assessment processes. (3a)

- Assessment of student learning outcomes or service outcomes for programs in the non-academic areas is haphazard and tends to focus largely on student satisfaction. While student satisfaction is an important aspect of the student experience, program effectiveness based on national best practices such as those articulated by the Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) in higher education and Learning reconsidered from the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) would assist in facilitating student outcomes in the co-curricular areas in a way that complements academics and provides results that can be utilized for program improvements for an overall enhanced student experience.

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

   Recommendation of the Team
   .
   Criterion met; commission follow-up recommended. Minimum Expectation 3.3.2 (Assessment provides evidence of student learning: Processes for assessment of student learning are in effect.) is not met. Monitoring Report due in 3 months on a plan for coming into compliance with Minimum Expectation 3.3.2 and a Focused Visit within 2 years to verify that the plan has been implemented. If the institution has not developed a plan to resolve the issue, then Commission staff will recommend appropriate action.

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**

- In 2005, FSU faculty began a long process leading to the revision of the general education curriculum. Faculty worked systematically through early steps that focused on the delineation and articulation of the desired profile of an FSU graduate. The process then progressed to establishing and approving general studies outcomes before proceeding to course outcomes. These outcomes were entered in TaskStream, a software product purchased to help track the data. During the 2012-13 academic year, the programs are working to convert to 120

hours from 128, and the General Studies outcomes are being mapped to show where they are being covered within the curriculum. Implementation of the curriculum is scheduled for 2013-14.

- When Fairmont State College, as it was formerly known, separated initially from Fairmont State Community and Technical College, it evaluated the kinds of credentials needed by faculty teaching at a four-year college level and the standards for teaching and scholarship. The promotion and tenure process reflects these expectations. Seed grants are available for faculty professional development activities where appropriate.

- The university seeks partnerships that will provide additional opportunities and funds for support of faculty and student development and scholarship. Programs like the Open Source Intelligence Exchange Program (OSIX), a program unique to West Virginia, links students to national security and law enforcement agencies. They gain hand-on experience preparing documents used by these agencies. Others programs like the Mobile Collaborate Education Consulting (MCEC) initiative give faculty access to resources in support of curriculum development and research.

- The university has established an undergraduate research program to promote student scholarship. It provides students with research grants and recognizes their work each spring with the Celebration of Student Scholarship. The state also sponsors an Undergraduate Research Day each year at the capitol, and FSU provides funds for students to attend this as well. Faculty strongly support student research, and FSU reported that 19 percent of seniors work with faculty on a research project.

- FSU developed appropriate policies and procedures to assist faculty, staff and students with the responsible acquisition and use of scholarship. The Fairmont State Institutional Testing and Research Committee functions as the Institutional Review Board (IRB) to ensure the protection of human and animal subjects in research. Procedures for approval of research through the IRB are publicly disseminated on the IRB website. The institution also publicizes other documents such as Board of Governors' documents related to copyright law, academic freedom, the appropriate use of information technology, sabbaticals, conference travel, seed money for grants and academic integrity policies. (4d)

- FSU has made a strong commitment to the application of knowledge through service learning. The Center for Civic Engagement is at the forefront of this, and numerous programs, both academic and non-academic, take advantage of the opportunities to extend the classroom into the community. The work in this area has been so strong that FSU has been recognized nationally for its efforts to engage students, faculty, and staff in these activities. FSU was recognized the by the Corporation for National and Community Service and it was placed on the 2010 President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll.

- In 2010 and again in 2011, the FSU Board of Governors allocated a $500,000 to fund campus-wide initiatives for improvement. Proposals for initiatives linked to the strategic plan could be submitted by faculty and staff for consideration. This

resulted in the implementation of a number of initiatives designed to advance the institution in achieving its strategic goals. (4a)

- The Musick Library serves both FSU and PCTC. It increased the number of computers available to students and staff from 20 in 2000 to over 100 at the time of the visit.   It also subscribes to over 67,000 online journals. The team was informed that the library is working with students and faculty on strategies for maximizing the library's resources and measuring its effectiveness. The library currently uses *LibQUAL* to measure user satisfaction with library services and *Serial Solutions* to track usage.

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

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

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

Recommendation of the Team

Criterion 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**

- FSU's efforts to engage and serve constituents focus on civic engagement, cultural engagement, education, facilities and workforce development. FSU has a long tradition of reaching out to local, regional and statewide constituencies to meet their needs and to develop mutually beneficial relationships. Its work to engage students, faculty and staff in service has resulted in national recognition by the Corporation for National and Community Service and by placement on the 2010 President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll. The NCAA also recognized student athletes in 2010-11 for their community engagement initiation "Put Your Best Fairmont Forward."

- To engage and serve constituents, FSU has created units to support various initiatives at the institutional level, such as the Center for Civic Engagement (CCE) established in 1996 as the Community Service Learning Program, and at college or program levels, such as The Center for Arts Engagement. These units function to promote programming and activities that serve identified needs and enhance the educational experience of FSU students. For example, the CCE enhances student learning through service learning projects designed to revitalize the community. These partnerships involve approximately 60 agencies

and focus on youth services, crisis and disaster services, and the provision of basic services.

- FSU gathers data to determine the needs of its constituents and the institution's ability to meet those needs. Data may come from community surveys, statewide demographics, initiatives identified by WVHEPC, attendance rates at campus events, feedback from those served, and other sources. They allow FSU to make decisions about the value of the service and the need to sustain it.

- Although its role in workforce development has historically been fulfilled through its association with Pierpont Community and Technical College, FSU is redefining its role in ways that reflect its status as a separate university. For example, the College of Science and Technology and the School of Business are reaching out to business and industry. The Business Outreach Center focuses on professional development opportunities supported by strong partnerships. The Center for Economic Development and Community Engagement, undertaken by the College of Science and Technology, similarly seeks partnerships with business and industry.

- Through various documents and interviews with campus personnel and external constituents, the team saw evidence that FSU engages the community in ways valued by constituents. Community members interviewed expressed the belief that the institution provides excellent academic programs and is a sound and reputable institution. They feel invested in the institution and the lifelong learning opportunities and general access to academic and non-academic programs it provides. They believe that the outreach opportunities of the campus prepare students for positions of community leadership.

- The institution makes a special effort to engage constituents in ways that celebrate the cultural heritage of the peoples of the region. For example, community arts activities incorporate cultural traditions of the early settlers of the region, and study abroad opportunities are created to experience the ancestral cultures of the region it serves.

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

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

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

Recommendation of the Team

Criterion met; no commission follow-up recommended.

V. STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS

A. Affiliation Status

Recommendation:

No change

Rationale for recommendation:

B. Nature of Institution

1. Legal status

No change.

2. Degrees awarded

No change.

C. Conditions of Affiliation

1. Stipulation on affiliation status

No change.

2. Approval of additional locations

No change.

3.   Approval of distance delivery

No change.

4. Reports required

Monitoring Report due in 3 months on a plan for coming into compliance with Minimum Expectation 3.3.2. If the institution has not developed a plan to resolve the issue, then Commission staff will recommend appropriate action.

5. Other visits scheduled

Focus Visit by July 2015 to 1) verify implementation of a plan to rectify Minimum Expectation 3.3.2 on assessment of student learning and also to 2) review strategic planning 2015.

Assessment of student learning outcomes has been identified by previous teams as a challenge for the institution. This team found lack of systematic assessment across campus with several pockets in which assessment is limited to course grades. There was no evidence that information from TaskStream is being used to inform program improvements or strategic planning and budgeting processes.

The focus visit on assessment of student learning outcomes should provide evidence of assessments conducted for both graduate and undergraduate programs as well as for general education. Evidence should be provided that results of the assessment process are being used to inform program improvement. Assessment strategies ought to extend beyond course grades to include authentic assessment of student learning.

Strategic plan processes were in a transitional state during the team visit. While the team understands that planning decisions are made daily in the routine course of activities, several times the team was informed through interviews that the institution was waiting for the HLC visit to provide some of the planning direction. It also heard that the WVHEPC planning directions were not set. This made it difficult for the team to assess the effectiveness of planning strategies and determine how well the institution is prepared for the future.

By the time of the focus visit, FSU should have in place a strategic planning identifying priorities and key initiatives. This plan should be linked to budget processes and incorporate the results of assessment of non-academic and academic programs, where appropriate. Common elements for strategic planning would include enrollment management, online education, personnel development and assessment.

6. **Other embedded change request**

None

7. **Campus Evaluation Visit**

None

D. Commission Sanction or Adverse Action

None

E. Summary of Commission Review

Timing for next comprehensive visit (academic year - 2022-2023)

Rationale for recommendation:

FSU embraces its mission to serve the diverse populations of the state of West Virginia with academic and non-academic programs supported by necessary resources. It responds to initiatives prioritized by the state and incorporates these into its service niche. FSU has managed resources wisely and provides quality programming in an attractive environment conducive to learning.

While FSU's strategic planning process is not fully integrated, and the team visited during what appeared to be a gap in the continuity of the process, FSU does rely on planning processes to make major decisions. It routinely hires consulting firms to assist with segments of planning, such as housing issues and athletics. It also works

closely with Pierpont Community and Technical College to assure continuity of programming and services while the institutions work toward ultimate separation.

Assessment of student learning outcomes, though not at a mature level, does have a solid foundation on which to build. In programs with discipline based accreditation, assessment is used for program improvement. Faculty are provided with tools like TaskStream to manage assessment results. Units like the Center for Civic Engagement also provide a basis for assessing the impact of service learning programs.

FSU engages constituents in ways that help both the region and the students it serves. FSU offers a variety of programs to constituents of all ages, and these often reflect the cultural heritage of the region.

WORKSHEET FOR THE EVALUATION TEAM
ON FEDERAL COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

Fairmont State University

INSTITUTIONAL MATERIALS RELATED TO FEDERAL COMPLIANCE REVIEWED BY THE TEAM:

Undergraduate Catalog
Self-Study Report
Class Schedules
Policy documents
University Web site

EVALUATION OF FEDERAL COMPLIANCE PROGRAM COMPONENTS

The team reviews each item identified in the Federal Compliance Guide and documents its findings in the appropriate spaces below. Generally, if the team finds in the course of this review that there are substantive issues related to the institution's ability to fulfill the Criteria for Accreditation, such issues should be raised in appropriate sections of the Assurance Section of the Team Report or highlighted as such in the appropriate AQIP Quality Checkup Report.

1. Credits, Program Length, and Tuition: *The institution has documented that it has credit hour assignments and degree program lengths within the range of good practice in higher education and that tuition is consistent across degree programs (or that there is a rational basis for any program-specific tuition). New for 2012: The Commission has a new policy on the Credit Hour. Complete the Worksheet in Appendix A and then complete the following responses. Attach the Worksheet to this form.*

CHECK THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE THAT REFLECTS THE TEAM'S CONCLUSIONS:

__X___   The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

_____   The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends follow-up.

_____   The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends follow-up.

_____   The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

        Comments:

Additional Monitoring, if any:

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

CHECK THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE THAT REFLECTS THE TEAM'S CONCLUSIONS:

__X___   The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

_____   The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends follow-up.

_____   The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends follow-up.

_____   The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments:

Additional Monitoring, if any:

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

CHECK THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE THAT REFLECTS THE TEAM'S CONCLUSIONS:

__X___   The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

_____   The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends follow-up.

_____   The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends follow-up.

_____   The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments:

Additional Monitoring, if any:

4. Verification of Student Identity: *The institution has demonstrated that it verifies the identity of students who participate in courses or programs provided to the student through distance or correspondence education and has appropriate protocols to disclose additional fees related to verification to students and to protect their privacy.*

CHECK THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE THAT REFLECTS THE TEAM'S CONCLUSIONS:

__X___   The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

_____   The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends follow-up.

_____   The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends follow-up.

_____   The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

    Comments:

    Additional Monitoring, if any:

5. Title IV Program and Related Responsibilities: *The institution has presented evidence on the required components of the Title IV Program.*

- *General Program Requirements: The institution has provided the Commission with information about the fulfillment of its Title IV program responsibilities, particularly findings from any review activities by the Department of Education. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities in this area.*

- *Financial Responsibility Requirements: The institution has provided the Commission with information about the Department's review of composite ratios and financial audits. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities in this area. (Note that the team should also be commenting under Criterion Two if an institution has significant issues with financial responsibility as demonstrated through ratios that are below acceptable levels or other financial responsibility findings by its auditor.)*

- *Default Rates. The institution has provided the Commission with information about three years of default rates. It has a responsible program to work with students to minimize default rates. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities in this area.*

- *Campus Crime Information, Athletic Participation and Financial Aid, and Related Disclosures: The institution has provided the Commission with information about its disclosures. It has demonstrated, and the team has reviewed, the institution's policies and practices for ensuring compliance with these regulations.*

- ▪ *Student Right to Know*. *The institution has provided the Commission with information about its disclosures. It has demonstrated, and the team has reviewed, the institution's policies and practices for ensuring compliance with these regulations. The disclosures are accurate and provide appropriate information to students. (Note that the team should also be commenting under Criterion One if the team determines that disclosures are not accurate or appropriate.)*

- ▪ *Satisfactory Academic Progress and Attendance*. *The institution has provided the Commission with information about policies and practices for ensuring compliance with these regulations. The institution has demonstrated that the policies and practices meet state or federal requirements and that the institution is appropriately applying these policies and practices to students.*

- ▪ *Contractual Relationships:* *The institution has presented a list of its contractual relationships related to its academic program and evidence of its compliance with Commission policies requiring notification or approval for contractual relationships (The institution should review the Contractual Change Application on the Commission's Web site for more information. If the team learns that the institution has a contractual relationship that may require Commission approval and has not completed the appropriate Commission Contractual Change Application the team must require that the institution complete and file the form as soon as possible.)*

- ▪ *Consortial Relationships*: *The institution has presented a list of its consortial relationships related to its academic program and evidence of its compliance with Commission policies requiring notification or approval for consortial relationships (The institution should review the Consortial Change Application on the Commission's Web site for more information. If the team learns that the institution has such a consortial relationship that may require Commission approval and has not completed the appropriate Commission Consortial Change Application the team must require that the institution complete and file the form as soon as possible.)*

CHECK THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE THAT REFLECTS THE TEAM'S CONCLUSIONS:

__X___   The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

_____   The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends follow-up.

_____   The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends follow-up.

_____   The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments:

Additional Monitoring, if any:

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

4

CHECK THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE THAT REFLECTS THE TEAM'S CONCLUSIONS:

__X___   The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

_____   The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends follow-up.

_____   The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends follow-up.

_____   The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

      Comments:

      Additional Monitoring, if any:

7. Relationship with Other Accrediting Agencies and with State Regulatory Boards: *The institution has documented that it discloses accurately to the public and the Commission its relationship with any other specialized, professional or institutional accreditor and with all governing or coordinating bodies in states in which the institution may have a presence.* ***Note that if the team is recommending initial or continued status, and the institution is currently under sanction or show-cause with, or has received an adverse action from, any other federally recognized specialized or institutional accreditor in the past five years, the team must explain the action in the body of the Assurance Section of the Team Report and provide its rationale for recommending Commission status in light of this action. In addition, the team must contact the staff liaison immediately if it learns that the institution is at risk of losing its degree authorization or lacks such authorization in any state in which the institution meets state presence requirements.***

CHECK THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE THAT REFLECTS THE TEAM'S CONCLUSIONS:

__X___   The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

_____   The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends follow-up.

_____   The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends follow-up.

_____   The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

      Comments:

      Additional Monitoring, if any:

8. Public Notification of an Evaluation Visit and Third Party Comment: *The institution has made an appropriate and timely effort to solicit third party comments. The team has evaluated any comments received and completed any necessary follow-up on issues raised in these comments.* ***Note that if the team has determined that any issues raised by third-party comment relate to the team's review of the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation, it must discuss this information and its analysis in the body of the Assurance Section of the Team Report.***

CHECK THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE THAT REFLECTS THE TEAM'S CONCLUSIONS:

__X___   The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

_____   The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends follow-up.

_____   The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends follow-up.

_____   The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

        Comments:

        Additional Monitoring, if any:

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Fairmont State University
Appendix

Team Worksheet for Evaluating an Institution's Program Length and Tuition, Assignment of Credit Hours and on Clock Hours

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Part 1: Program Length and Tuition

Instructions

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

Review the *"Worksheet for Use by Institutions on the Assignment of Credit Hours and on Clock Hours"* as well as the course catalog and other attachments required for the institutional worksheet.

Worksheet on Program Length and Tuition

A. Answer the Following Questions

Are the institution's degree program requirements within the range of good practice in higher education and contribute to an academic environment in which students receive a rigorous and thorough education?

| X | Yes | | No |

Comments:

Are the institution's tuition costs across programs within the range of good practice in higher education and contribute to an academic environment in which students receive a rigorous and thorough education?

| X | Yes | | No |

Comments:

B. Recommend Commission Follow-up, If Appropriate

Is any Commission follow-up required related to the institution's program length and tuition practices?

☐ Yes   ☒ X ☐ No

Rationale:

Identify the type of Commission monitoring required and the due date:

Part 2: Assignment of Credit Hours

Instructions

In assessing the appropriateness of the credit allocations provided by the institution the team should complete the following steps:

1. Review the Worksheet completed by the institution, which provides information about an institution's academic calendar and an overview of credit hour assignments across institutional offerings and delivery formats, and the institution's policy and procedures for awarding credit hours. Note that such policies may be at the institution or department level and may be differentiated by such distinctions as undergraduate or graduate, by delivery format, etc.

2. Identify the institution's principal degree levels and the number of credit hours for degrees at each level. The following minimum number of credit hours should apply at a semester institution:

   - Associate's degrees = 60 hours

   - Bachelor's degrees = 120 hours

   - Master's or other degrees beyond the Bachelor's = at least 30 hours beyond the Bachelor's degree

   - Note that one quarter hour = .67 semester hour

   - Any exceptions to this requirement must be explained and justified.

3. Scan the course descriptions in the catalog and the number of credit hours assigned for courses in different departments at the institution.

   - At semester-based institutions courses will be typically be from two to four credit hours (or approximately five quarter hours) and extend approximately 14-16 weeks (or approximately 10 weeks for a quarter). The description in the catalog should indicate a course that is appropriately rigorous and has collegiate expectations for

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Published: December 2012   Page 2
Version 01 – 2012-12

objectives and workload. Identify courses/disciplines that seem to depart markedly from these expectations.

- Institutions may have courses that are in compressed format, self-paced, or otherwise alternatively structured. Credit assignments should be reasonable. (For example, as a full-time load for a traditional semester is typically 15 credits, it might be expected that the norm for a full-time load in a five-week term is 5 credits; therefore, a single five-week course awarding 10 credits would be subject to inquiry and justification.)

- Teams should be sure to scan across disciplines, delivery mode, and types of academic activities.

- Federal regulations allow for an institution to have two credit-hour awards: one award for Title IV purposes and following the above federal definition and one for the purpose of defining progression in and completion of an academic program at that institution. Commission procedure also permits this approach.

4. Scan course schedules to determine how frequently courses meet each week and what other scheduled activities are required for each course. Pay particular attention to alternatively-structured or other courses with particularly high credit hours for a course completed in a short period of time or with less frequently scheduled interaction between student and instructor.

5. **Sampling.** Teams will need to sample some number of degree programs based on the headcount at the institution and the range of programs it offers.

- At a minimum, teams should anticipate sampling at least a few programs at each degree level.

- For institutions with several different academic calendars or terms or with a wide range of academic programs, the team should expand the sample size appropriately to ensure that it is paying careful attention to alternative format and compressed and accelerated courses.

- Where the institution offers the same course in more than one format, the team is advised to sample across the various formats to test for consistency.

- For the programs the team sampled, the team should review syllabi and intended learning outcomes for several of the courses in the program, identify the contact hours for each course, and expectations for homework or work outside of instructional time.

- The team should pay particular attention to alternatively-structured and other courses that have high credit hours and less frequently scheduled interaction between the students and the instructor.

- Provide information on the samples in the appropriate space on the worksheet.

6. Consider the following questions:

- Does the institution's policy for awarding credit address all the delivery formats employed by the institution?

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Published: December 2012   Page 3
Version 01 – 2012-12

- Does that policy address the amount of instructional or contact time assigned and homework typically expected of a student with regard to credit hours earned?

- For institutions with courses in alternative formats or with less instructional and homework time than would be typically expected, does that policy also equate credit hours with intended learning outcomes and student achievement that could be reasonably achieved by a student in the timeframe allotted for the course?

- Is the policy reasonable within the federal definition as well as within the range of good practice in higher education? (Note that the Commission will expect that credit hour policies at public institutions that meet state regulatory requirements or are dictated by the state will likely meet federal definitions as well.)

- If so, is the institution's assignment of credit to courses reflective of its policy on the award of credit?

7. If the answers to the above questions lead the team to conclude that there may be a problem with the credit hours awarded the team should recommend the following:

- If the problem involves a poor or insufficiently-detailed institutional policy, the team should call for a revised policy as soon as possible by requiring a monitoring report within no more than one year that demonstrates the institution has a revised policy and evidence of implementation.

- If the team identifies an application problem and that problem is isolated to a few courses or single department or division or learning format, the team should call for follow-up activities (monitoring report or focused evaluation) to ensure that the problems are corrected within no more than one year.

- If the team identifies systematic non-compliance across the institution with regard to the award of credit, the team should notify Commission staff immediately and work with staff to design appropriate follow-up activities. The Commission shall understand systematic noncompliance to mean that the institution lacks any policies to determine the award of academic credit or that there is an inappropriate award of institutional credit not in conformity with the policies established by the institution or with commonly accepted practices in higher education across multiple programs or divisions or affecting significant numbers of students.

Worksheet on Assignment of Credit Hours

A. Identify the Sample Courses and Programs Reviewed by the Team (see #5 of instructions in completing this section)

Business Administration, master's
Education, bachelor's
Nursing, associate's

B. Answer the Following Questions

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Published: December 2012   Page 4
Version 01 – 2012-12

1) Institutional Policies on Credit Hours

Does the institution's policy for awarding credit address all the delivery formats employed by the institution? (Note that for this question and the questions that follow an institution may have a single comprehensive policy or multiple policies.)

X	Yes		No

Comments:

Does that policy relate the amount of instructional or contact time provided and homework typically expected of a student to the credit hours awarded for the classes offered in the delivery formats offered by the institution? (Note that an institution's policy must go beyond simply stating that it awards credit solely based on assessment of student learning and should also reference instructional time.)

X	Yes		No

Comments:

For institutions with non-traditional courses in alternative formats or with less instructional and homework time than would be typically expected, does that policy equate credit hours with intended learning outcomes and student achievement that could be reasonably achieved by a student in the timeframe and utilizing the activities allotted for the course?

	Yes		No

Comments:

Is the policy reasonable within the federal definition as well as within the range of good practice in higher education? (Note that the Commission will expect that credit hour policies at public institutions that meet state regulatory requirements or are dictated by the state will likely meet federal definitions as well.)

X	Yes		No

Comments:

2) Application of Policies

Are the course descriptions and syllabi in the sample academic programs reviewed by the team appropriate and reflective of the institution's policy on the award of credit? (Note that

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Published: December 2012   Page 5
Version 01 – 2012-12

the Commission will expect that credit hour policies at public institutions that meet state regulatory requirements or are dictated by the state will likely meet federal definitions as well.)

| X | Yes | | | No |

Comments:

Are the learning outcomes in the sample reviewed by the team appropriate to the courses and programs reviewed and in keeping with the institution's policy on the award of credit?

| X | Yes | | | No |

Comments:

If the institution offers any alternative delivery or compressed format courses or programs, were the course descriptions and syllabi for those courses appropriate and reflective of the institution's policy on the award of academic credit?

| X | Yes | | | No |

Comments:

If the institution offers alternative delivery or compressed format courses or programs, are the learning outcomes reviewed by the team appropriate to the courses and programs reviewed and in keeping with the institution's policy on the award of credit? Are the learning outcomes reasonably capable of being fulfilled by students in the time allocated to justify the allocation of credit?

| X | Yes | | | No |

Comments:

Is the institution's actual assignment of credit to courses and programs across the institution reflective of its policy on the award of credit and reasonable and appropriate within commonly accepted practice in higher education?

| X | Yes | | | No |

Comments:

C. Recommend Commission Follow-up, If Appropriate

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Published: December 2012   Page 6
Version 01 – 2012-12

Review the responses provided in this section. If the team has responded "no" to any of the questions above, the team will need to assign Commission follow-up to assure that the institution comes into compliance with expectations regarding the assignment of credit hours.

Is any Commission follow-up required related to the institution's credit hour policies and practices?

☐ Yes   ☒ No

Rationale:

Identify the type of Commission monitoring required and the due date:

D. Identify and Explain Any Findings of Systematic Non-Compliance in One or More Educational Programs with Commission Policies Regarding the Credit Hour

None.

REPORT OF A COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION VISIT

TO

FAIRMONT STATE UNIVERSITY
Fairmont, West Virginia

October 29-31, 2012

FOR

The Higher Learning Commission
A Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

EVALUATION TEAM

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I.   OVERALL OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

Fairmont State University is an integral part of the community in West Virginia. It provides a broad higher education curriculum, services, and many opportunities for student engagement. In recognition of the fact that many of its students come from low income families and the region is in a recessionary time, FSU has worked hard to maintain a lower tuition and fee structure for its students, while at the same time has worked with the Advancement Office and Foundation to secure scholarships for its students. In recent years it has faced additional challenges: the legislative mandate to separate its operations from those of Pierpont Community and Technical College and the relatively high turnover in the position of the Presidency and other staff positions.

On October 29-31, the team visited Fairmont State University for the purpose of a comprehensive review for continued accreditation. FSU had its most recent comprehensive accreditation visit in April 2003. At that time, several requests for change that were reviewed, including offering the first graduate level program at the main campus in Fairmont and a bachelor's degree program at the Caperton Center. FSU, then known as Fairmont State College, also sought separate accreditation for itself and the co-located two-year institution then known as Fairmont State Community and Technical College (now Pierpont Community and Technical College).

Additional changes followed throughout the next 10 year period. In 2004 the institution underwent a name change from Fairmont State College to Fairmont State University. Other graduate programs were added in 2006, the Master of Arts in Teaching (M.A.T,) and the Master of Science in Criminal Justice (M.S.C.J.). The Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.) was added in 2007. In conjunction with some of the focus visits, Fairmont State University submitted two progress reports. The 2010 report discussed the implementation of graduate education infrastructure.

An important context for Fairmont State University has been and will continue to be for an indefinite period, its relationship to Pierpont Community and Technical College. Pierpont is co-located, sharing facilities, personnel, students and other resources. At the time of the 2003 visit, the two institutions were separated by the West Virginia legislature but remained on the same campus and shared facilities, staff and resources. The request for separate accreditation was a direct result of the legislative separation of the institutions.

In 2006, Fairmont State University re-merged with Fairmont State Community and Technical College, which was renamed Pierpont Community and Technical College in the merger. A Commission-mandated focus visit to examine the merger occurred in 2007. The merger of the two institutions lasted about a year, at which time the state legislature again mandated the separation of the two institutions. Since then, Fairmont State University and Pierpont Community and Technical College have collaborated to develop a process for separation of staff and services. The two institutions will probably continue to share facilities for some time and they share in the bond debt for construction and improvement to the physical facilities. The 2007 report discussed the re-merger with Pierpont Community and Technical College.

II.   CONSULTATIONS OF THE TEAM

A.   Graduate Education

Graduate Education has grown since its first program was begun in 2003. Given the increase in the number of programs, FSU would be well-served to develop and formalize institutional and academic policies, procedures and assessments for all graduate programs. A graduate catalog would be the ideal means of ensuring that all constituencies have access to information about graduate programs.

The team encourages FSU also to review the infrastructure and other resources that support graduate education. This review might include fiscal resources, staffing levels, and graduate faculty workloads. In addition, the university is encouraged to develop a graduate recruitment and enrollment plan that would serve also to inform the strategic plan.

B.   Assessment

While some efforts have been initiated to encourage participation in assessment across campus, there is neither clear leadership for synthesizing and using assessment and effectiveness information, nor is there evidence that the information is used for improvement.

Further, the roles and responsibilities of faculty in assessing student learning and closing-the-loop on the processes is not readily apparent, possibly contributing to a lack of clarity about how faculty should engage. The team believes that FSU has a foundation already on which to advance its assessment initiative. FSU can engage in a number of activities to strengthen and expand assessment activities so that they become in fact a part of the culture of the campus. The team offers the following suggestions for consideration.

Establishing a position responsible for assessment and effectiveness with the requisite level of expertise. This would 1) allow the campus to simplify its assessment processes and assure their effectiveness, 2) sustain assessment and effectiveness efforts over time, 3) assure that sound best practices are implemented and maintained, 4) provide consultative services for faculty and staff responsible for assessing and evaluating curricular, co-curricular, and support unit services, and 5) assure that assessment information is used to inform strategic planning and budgeting in the spirit of improving the entire campus.

To further enhance the sustainability of assessment and effectiveness efforts, the team encourages FSU to integrate them fully into the fabric of its business. Doing so will assure that assessment is on-going and that it results in improvement. For example, we encourage consideration of a model of assessment that is integrated with the strategic plan, budget planning and allocations, and action planning. Information about what FSU students know and can do as determined by assessment should help set the strategic direction for upcoming actions and inform on-going decision-making.

Modifying the program review process. The program review processes, while holding potential for improving programs and services, appear to be marginally useful. Efforts

could be made to evaluate them to maximize effectiveness and assure that information is useful. In addition, an outcomes-based program review process might be considered for its potential to support FSU's interest in quality programming. (For examples, please see Bresciani, M. [2006], Outcomes-based academic and co-curricular program review: A compilation of institutional good practices and a Council of Graduate Schools publication, Assessment and review of graduate programs: A policy statement [2005]).

Broadening knowledge of good practices of assessment. The team strongly encourages the campus to learn more about good practices of assessment for graduate and undergraduate programs, and for general studies. Faculty development of genuine, intentional assessment plans is an essential step in this direction. Embedded and independent processes that include direct and indirect measures of assessment should be identified and implemented (some of these are currently in place). Artifacts of student learning (e.g., exams, papers, presentations, case studies, internship projects) should be evaluated by two or more faculty using rubrics tied to the outcomes. And finally, a clear plan for the evaluation and use of the information generated should be developed and implemented. This process is described in a number of publications readily available to faculty and staff. (For examples, please see Allen, M. [2004], Assessing academic programs in higher education; Banta, T. [2002], Building a scholarship of assessment; and Maki, P. [2004], Assessing for learning: building a sustainable commitment across the institution.)

Engaging faculty leadership. The faculty senate could take a leadership role in this area and the faculty handbook could be altered to include describe these functions. Faculty hiring processes, promotion and tenure, and annual performance reviews should explicitly identify the importance of assessing learning in the role of faculty members. While such information would be useful for current faculty, it would be especially helpful in communicating to new faculty that FSU values the on-going process of improvement. Communicating the expectations of assessment will contribute to the culture of assessment emerging at FSU. (3b)

Engaging students and other constituents. A promising practice in the area of assessment is to involve students to the degree possible. Representatives from a variety of student organizations and students at large can provide important input into shaping the assessment process itself, increasing response rates, evaluating assessment information, and in engaging in conversations about ways to improve teaching and learning. Fully implemented, this model also can promote more student responsibility for learning.

Make program student learning outcomes readily available to the public. For example, include them for each program in the catalog and at the programs' web pages. At the graduate level, FSU now needs to develop and formalize institutional and academic policies, procedures, and assessments for all graduate programs and make that information accessible to constituents in a graduate catalog. (3a)

In refining the procedures for the assessment of student learning, the FSU might also consider making use of the larger community to provide information concerning the qualities of FSU's students who are in contact with the community. Involving alumni in assessment by having them observe student presentations comment on student characteristics, and review student performance would increase the range of perspectives on student performance. Program advisory councils are potentially valuable

for assessment of student academic achievement, as an avenue by which professionals in the field can help continually improve the quality of student learning. The university should develop more systematic and accessible ways to document the results, dissemination, and any utilization of the input from program advisory councils.

Enhancing the Scope of Assessment Activities. Enhancing the assessment process to include administrative process and program review would further demonstrate FSU's commitment to holistic assessment. While all units can be expected to pursue objectives directly related to the institutional mission, the relationship of some departments/unit efforts towards student success may be indirect. Rather than ask these units to evaluate their effectiveness with respect to the student success, it might be better to ask them to assess the degree to which they are achieving their objectives and then identify the ways they provide direct or indirect support to the academic and broader institutional programs, thereby improving the impact these programs have on student learning outcomes.

Most of FSU's faculty members, especially those in programs where professional or discipline accreditation is not a requirement, do not appear to have embraced systematic assessment of student learning. FSU might benefit from providing assessment training to faculty, both full-time and adjuncts. Some faculty might attend national assessment conferences, including HLC assessment workshops. Faculty should be encouraged to use assessment results in evaluating student learning in their individual courses. There are also publications, such as those from the American Association of Colleges and Universities, which would provide guidance in the assessment of general education.

Evaluating the assessment process. This can be achieved by developing clearly stated objectives for a process of assessment that covers student learning, student life and other institutional units, and collecting data on the extent to which those objectives are met. These objectives and measures might include both direct measures (e.g., changes made in organizational practices and programs in response to assessment results) and indirect measures (e.g., information from faculty and staff surveys about the use and usefulness of the assessment process). The results from these evaluation processes could then be used to continually improve overall university assessment processes.

C. Learning Environment

FSU has a good "nuts and bolts" system of advising. The Advising Center serves both FSU and Pierpont. The team believes that FSU needs to review its advising resources, particularly with regard to underprepared students. This is even more urgent given the separation of FSU from Pierpont Community and Technical College. The Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) would be invaluable in this regard. FSU would also be well served to augment academic advising by incorporating developmental advising strategies so as to assist students with other issues, e.g., transition to college. FSU would be well served to examine resources in the advising area, including opportunities for staff professional development based on "best practices."

D. Capital Campaign

Conversation with administration and staff revealed that FSU is considering entering into another capital campaign following the success of the last one. The team recognizes that most successful capital campaigns are conducted following the building of a solid strategic plan and its foundational relationship-building and giving successes. This is not to say that a capital campaign in the absence of a strategic plan cannot be successful, but the probability for substantial success is typically limited. Should FSU have individuals, foundations, corporations, or other funders who are in a state of readiness to contribute to the new capital campaign project, the team encourages the university to appropriately pursue those sources. However, given declining state and federal resources, enrollment numbers, etc., the team urges FSU to consider developing a comprehensive strategic plan with key priorities and indicators, and enrollment management plan as a part of a "campaign readiness" strategy in order to provide a strong foundation for using the campaign to propel the university to the next level of excellence.

E. Retention

The new Falcon Center is an impressive facility that has undoubtedly enhanced the learning environment. The renovation of the Turley Student enter is underway. The Team believes FSU would benefit greatly by developing a comprehensive strategic enrollment management plan that goes beyond meeting recruitment goals to facilitating student retention, persistence, and success. This necessitates a review of resources and resource allocation process as well as assessing and responding to student needs. Also, FSU would need to reconfigure its student life and student support services.

Residence Halls. In its facilities master plan, FSU is implementing the renovation of several of its residence halls. This is no doubt an exciting phase for the FSU community. However, the Self-Study and conversations with faculty, staff, and students suggest that not every member of FSU, especially those who would be responsible for integrating residential life into the general educational and learning environment, has clarity on the overall vision for residence life. This is more so given the assertion that FSU plans on recruiting more out of state and international students to boost its enrollment. Further, the evidence presented revealed that more intentional thought should be given to matters of the required support systems, i.e. staffing, student engagement through effective programming, as well as health and safety considerations. The phenomenon of having more out of state and international students on campus presents numerous challenges that require effective proactive planning. Against this backdrop is the fact that currently the individual who has assumed aspects of the chief student affairs officer is an academic dean. The team recommends that FSU review its vision with regard to student life in general, and the basic human resource infrastructure needed to be in place and running as the University grows and enhances its student support services.

Student Sub Populations, Services & Programming. Conversations with students, faculty, and staff revealed that while there are sporadic events and activities geared towards commuter students, it is unclear as to how the University reviews its students including subpopulations, to ensure that it is attending to the needs of students.

F. Library

FSU's commitment to learning is evidenced by its sustained investment in providing a number of facilities to enhance the effectiveness of its programs. Instructional technology has been incorporated into classrooms providing instructors with access to the tools needed to teach effectively. The Team learned however, that this effort is uneven. Integrating aspects of the 2011 Standards for Libraries in Higher Education into the planning and resource allocation process is a viable strategy to assist FSU in the overall enhancement of the library and its resources, as well as provide guidelines for evaluating these efforts against national "best practices."

G. Strategic Plan

The nature of long-range planning is that it requires the organization to predict conditions and actions into the future. It should also recognize that conditions over time may change, particularly the further out plans reach from the present time. Therefore, effective organizations have planning processes which are adaptable and allow for reprioritization of goals, when necessary, based on changes in the environment. While FSU had a strategic plan, it is in its final year. The plan did not demonstrate evidence of how identification of key performance indicators, resources tied to the indicators, results and how the results have been utilized to inform programmatic changes and resource allocation. The Team recommends that FSU embark on a new comprehensive strategic plan immediately.

H. Board Development

During the visit, the Team met with some members of the Board of Governors, discussed board relations with the administration, and carefully reviewed board minutes and other associated documents. It is clear that the board is comprised of a group of highly capable individuals with distinguished careers who are passionately committed to the mission and success of the FSU and its students. It is also clear that the board has high esteem for the dedication, commitment, leadership and vision, and capability of the President and her team. The Team believes that FSU and the board would benefit from developing the board, its organizational structure and work, in keeping with best practices, particularly those as promoted by the Association of Governing Boards (AGB). Further, FSU also may benefit from engaging a knowledgeable and experienced consultant to assist the board in assessing its current capabilities and creating its plan for developing itself more fully in the future.

I. Communication and Human Resource Issues

The team observed the existence of some faculty teaching awards, etc, demonstrating that the institution does value a life of learning and reward hard work. In view of the fact that many of the faculty and staff members do wear multiple hats, a review of the organizational structure is recommended to assist FSU in creating a viable infrastructure that facilitates the support of its overall student success.

Another issue that arose during the visit is communication. Many lauded the improvement in communication and the annual budget process. However, many

expressed concern about the lack of communication regarding key decisions especially with regard to senior staff changes. The team recommends that FSU explore an appropriate mechanism to effectively share key issues with the campus. This concern has been amplified by the impending separation of FSU from Pierpont. Something as simple as a "Friday Letter" could go a long way to address this concern.

INSTITUTION and STATE: Fairmont State University, WV

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

DESCRIPTION OF REVIEW *(from ESS)*: Multi-campus visit (2 campuses).

DATES OF REVIEW: 10/29/12 - 10/31/12

Nature of Organization

LEGAL STATUS: Public

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: No Change

DEGREES AWARDED: A, B, M

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: No Change

Conditions of Affiliation

STIPULATIONS ON AFFILIATION STATUS: Accreditation at the Master's level is limited to the Master of Business Administration, Master of Education, Master of Arts in Teaching, and Master of Science in Criminal Justice.

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: No Change

APPROVAL OF NEW ADDITIONAL LOCATIONS: Prior Commission approval required.

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: No Change

APPROVAL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION DEGREES: The institution has been approved under Commission policy to offer up to 20% of its total degree programs through distance education. The processes for expanding distance education are defined in other Commission documents.

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: No Change

REPORTS REQUIRED: None

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: Monitoring Report due 8/31/13; a report on a plan for coming into compliance with Minimum Expectation 3.3.2. If the institution has not developed a plan to resolve the issue, then Commission staff will recommend appropriate action.

OTHER VISITS SCHEDULED: None

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: Focused Visit 2014-2015; a visit to verify that the institution meets Minimum Expectation 3.3.2 on assessment of student learning and on strategic planning.

Summary of Commission Review

YEAR OF LAST COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION: 2002 - 2003

YEAR FOR NEXT COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION: 2012 - 2013

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: 2022 – 2023

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

INSTITUTION and STATE: Fairmont State University, WV

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

_x__ No change to Organization Profile

Educational Programs

		Program Distribution	**Recommended Change (+ or -)**
Programs leading to Undergraduate			
	Associate	7	
	Bachelors	50	
Programs leading to Graduate			
	Masters	4	
	Specialist	0	
	First Professional		
	Doctoral	0	

Off-Campus Activities

In-State:		Present Activity:	**Recommended Change: (+ or -)**
	Campuses:	Bridgeport (Robert C. Byrd National Aerospace Education Center) ; Clarksburg (Gaston Caperton Center)	
	Additional Locations:	None	

Out-of-State:		Present Wording:	**Recommended Change: (+ or -)**
	Campuses:	None	
	Additional Locations:	None	
	Course Locations:	None	

Out-of-USA:		Present Wording:	**Recommended Change: (+ or -)**
	Campuses:	None	
	Additional Locations:	None	
	Course Locations:	None	

Distance Education Programs:

Present Offerings:

Bachelor - 13.1308 Family and Consumer Sciences/Home Economics Teacher Education (Family and

Consumer Sciences) offered via Internet; Bachelor - 13.1334 School Librarian/School Library Media Specialist (Teaching Specialization) offered via Internet; Master - 13.0101 Education, General (Master of Arts in Teaching) offered via Internet; Master - 13.0101 Education, General (Online Learning) offered via Internet; Master - 13.0101 Education, General (Professional Studies) offered via Internet; Master - 13.1001 Special Education and Teaching, General (Special Education for Certified Teachers) offered via Internet; Master - 13.1001 Special Education and Teaching, General (Special education for those without teaching certification) offered via Internet; Master - 13.1315 Reading Teacher Education (Reading) offered via Internet; Master - 45.04 Criminology (Criminal Justice) offered via Internet; Master - 52.0201 Business Administration and Management, General (Master of Business Administration) offered via Internet

Recommended Change:
       (+ or -)
Correspondence Education Programs:

Present Offerings:

None