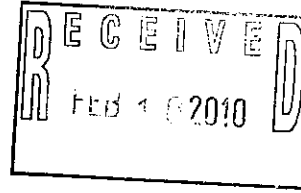


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February 10, 2010

Dr. Thomas L. Krepel
President
Fairmont State University
1201 Locust Avenue
Fairmont, WV 26554

Dear President Krepel:

The progress report you submitted to our office has now been reviewed. A staff analysis of the report is enclosed.

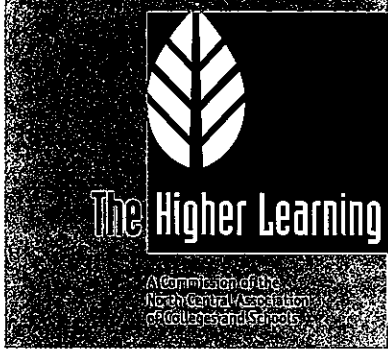
On behalf of the Commission, I accept the report on the implementation of graduate education infrastructure. No further reports are required. The institution's next comprehensive evaluation is scheduled for 2012.

I am also enclosing a copy of the institution's Statement of Affiliation Status, which reflects the actions I have taken on behalf of the Commission. If you have any questions about this analysis or any other evaluation matters, please let me know. I can be reached via email at alootenswhite@hlcommission.org or by voice at (800) 621-7440 x 105.

Sincerely,

Andrew C. Lootens-White, Ph.D.
Vice President for Accreditation Relations

Enclosures



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STAFF ANALYSIS OF INSTITUTIONAL REPORT

DATE: February 9, 2010

STAFF: Andrew C. Lootens-White

REVIEWED BY: Katherine C. Delaney

INSTITUTION: Fairmont State University, Fairmont, WV

EXECUTIVE OFFICER: Thomas L. Krepel, President

PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTION RE: REPORT: A progress report due on 1/15/10 focused on the implementation of graduate education infrastructure.

ITEMS ADDRESSED IN REPORT: The office of the Commission received Fairmont State University's report on the above topic on 1/*19/10.

STAFF ANALYSIS: Fairmont State University hosted a focused visit in December 2007 to consider the institution's request for approval to offer an M.S. in Human Service: Human and Community Service Administration (HCSA) degree. The visiting team recommended approval of the request, but also called for this progress report on the development of a strong graduate education infrastructure.

The progress report was originally due on 6/1/09, but the institution was granted an extension to 1/15/10. As the progress report clarified, the University has had several transitions of leadership. In addition to an interim president during the 2008-2009 academic year, the VP for Research and Graduate Studies left the University in May 2009.

With respect to the governance structures and policies, the progress report notes the following progress:

- A standing Graduate Council has been appointed.
- Graduate study policies in areas of admission, matriculation, transcript and graduation have been developed.
- All graduate academic functions and responsibilities have been brought under the Office of the Provost and are part of Academic Affairs.

The focused visit team recommended that the progress report address faculty workload, research/scholarly activity, assessment, professional development of graduate faculty and programs, budget support and addition of faculty to support graduate programs. The progress report addressed each of these issues in turn.



Faculty Workload and Research/Scholarship Expectations

- Definitions of faculty characteristics for appointment to graduate status have been approved.
- The Provost, Deans, and the Graduate Council are currently engaged in a process to design strategies and support mechanisms to build a more intensive focus on faculty scholarship using the Boyer model of scholarship.
- Graduate teaching loads within general load expectations for teaching 12 credit hours per semester have been settled.
- Funds for professional travel for graduate faculty have been established.
- Over the last three years, thirteen of the fourteen faculty members in the School of Education who hold graduate status have participated in and/or presented at regional, national and international conferences.

Assessment of Graduate Programs/Students

- Faculty members and adjunct faculty for graduate status have been reviewed and approved.
- The first program reviews of graduate programs have been accomplished.
- Graduate programs continue to refine course level learning outcomes, assessment systems for graduate programs, outcome databases and strategies for use of assessment data.
- All graduate programs at Fairmont State University are reviewed every five years as required by the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission. The process includes both the Graduate Council at the University and the FSU Board of Directors.
- Fairmont State uses Taskstream as the primary tool for archiving program and course level outcomes and for managing outcome-related data. Since 2006, all graduate programs on campus have been engaged in a process to develop and implement program standards, outcomes and assessments, as well as those at the course level.

Budget Support of Programs and Professional Development of Graduate Faculty

- A template for analyzing and projecting revenue and cost implications for graduate programs has been developed.
- All programs have redesigned the use of space to support graduate program needs (office space, administrative support and classrooms).
- The three academic units that house graduate programs have created and enhanced library resources to support faculty and program candidate academic work.
- A fiscal planning strategy for graduate programs was included in the progress report and will serve to identify long-term revenue trends that may support new faculty lines tied to graduate programming.



Addition of Faculty to Support Graduate Programs

- Budgeted resources at the University level include a full time staff member, graduate assistantships, tuition waivers, student recruitment and marketing funds, and fund for travel to professional conferences and workshops.
- Three new faculty lines have been incorporated into the 2011 budget to support graduate programming.
- Academic units have expended the number of faculty who hold graduate status and teach in graduate programs.

In addition to the general accomplishments at the University, the progress report articulated the measures taken by each of the academic units/schools to strengthen the graduate infrastructure of the institution.

The progress report concluded with the plans the University will follow to continue the strengthening of the graduate infrastructure. To support the implementation of the graduate infrastructure plan, the University will solicit an external analysis to provide feedback on progress in developing a strong graduate program infrastructure in March 2010.

Fairmont State University has clearly focused energy and resources on its graduate infrastructure. As the graduate enrollment and culture of the University continue to evolve, the infrastructure will also continue to build on the early and continuing efforts the University has dedicated to its graduate mission and students.

STAFF ACTION: Accept the report focused on the implementation of graduate education infrastructure. No further reports are required. The institution's next comprehensive evaluation is scheduled for 2012-2013.



The Higher Learning Commission

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STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS

FAIRMONT STATE UNIVERSITY

1201 Locust Ave.
Fairmont, WV 26554-2470

Affiliation Status: Candidate: Not Applicable
Accreditation: (1928-34; 1947- .)

PEAQ PARTICIPANT

Nature of Organization

Legal Status: Public
Degrees Awarded: A, B, M

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, Master of Science in Criminal Justice and the Master of Science in Human Service: Human and Community Service Administration.

Approval of New Degree Sites: Prior Commission approval required.

Approval of Distance Education Degrees: No prior Commission approval required to offer the Master of Business Administration.

Reports Required: None.

Other Visits Scheduled: None.

Summary of Commission Review

Year of Last Comprehensive Evaluation: 2002 - 2003

Year for Next Comprehensive Evaluation: 2012 - 2013

Date of Last Action: 12/01/2008

Name Change:

Fairmont State Teachers College to Fairmont State College to Fairmont State University (4/7/04)