

Conclusion

Request for Continued Accreditation

IU Bloomington has a long and proud history of international focus and commitment in our research, teaching, and service. In order to build effectively on these strengths, we felt that our campus would benefit from a fresh look at how our institution is prepared to move into the new century, to take advantage of the emerging challenges and opportunities that globalization brings to higher education. Thus, after campuswide discussions during the 2004–05 academic year with faculty, chairs, academic deans, and administrative staff, we proposed the theme of globalization and internationalization to the Higher Learning Commission as the self study emphasis for our reaccreditation consideration. In effect, we have used this special focus as a lens through which to examine our campus during a time of unprecedented leadership turnover and structural change. We expect our self-study, coupled with the feedback we receive from the Higher Learning Commission, to help frame a variety of strategic issues in our ongoing institutional planning and development processes. We can consider just one example, in conclusion, as an illustration of the opportunities that lie ahead.

Herman B Wells, president from 1938 to 1962, was the architect of Indiana University's early attempts at moving from a regional college to an international university. While today our institution is part of a global intellectual community with dimensions that would have been difficult to anticipate half a century ago, we believe that our strong traditions have positioned us well to meet the emerging challenges of this new era. In particular, Wells understood that the faculty was at the heart of any such effort; indeed, he asserted that "the University was the lengthened shadow of its faculty."

This principle endures. The extent to which we can recruit, support, and retain faculty who match our aspirations for the 21st century will be fundamental to our continuing success as a public institution, committed to providing outstanding, comprehensive educational opportunities to the citizens of our state, the nation, and the world. Since our last reaccreditation visit in 1997, our faculty has grown and diversified, in no small part due to explicit goals set by campus leaders, matched with structural changes and investments. While the proportion of non-tenure-track faculty has increased significantly, we also have more full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty on campus than at any previous time in our history.

Notably, a significant number of our most recent faculty hires have been in response to campus incentives. The Strategic Hiring fund and Commitment to Excellence fund both facilitated the recruitment of many of our national minority, international, and senior women faculty. Of the 99 new full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty who arrived on campus during the 2006–07 academic year, for example, 13 percent were women of senior rank, 17 percent were from national minority groups, and 25 percent held foreign citizenship. While improving the recruitment and retention of a diverse faculty remains a concern, during the last five years we have increased the proportion of women in tenured or tenure-track positions from 28 percent to almost 32 percent, with particular progress in science and technology fields, and actually doubled the number of our tenured or tenure-track faculty who are non-U.S. citizens from 6.1 percent in 2003 to 12.7 percent in 2007.

It is clear from this faculty cohort example that if we set focused institutional goals, we can act deliberately to achieve them. As we look ahead to the next decade, we can expect over a third of our faculty to retire. While this turnover will challenge us as we compete with our peer institutions to attract outstanding faculty to Bloomington, it also represents a significant opportunity. Our academic deans and campus leaders will have a chance to rethink how our faculty is structured academically, within and between schools, and design collaborative recruitment strategies sensitive to RCM budget processes which could both further our collective aspirations and enhance our ability to align programs and priorities with our evolving campus mission.

This example, anticipating long-term issues of faculty recruitment and retention, illustrates just one of the ways we are preparing for the future, as demonstrated in Criteria 1–2. Whether they have been here two years or 20, faculty members across campus are deeply engaged in curricular design and evaluation, in the scholarship of teaching and learning, in leading their disciplines in research and research mentorship, and in stimulating student excitement and commitment through community, national, and international service and professional practice. Criteria 3–5 demonstrate examples of our continuing efforts to develop innovative and internationally recognized approaches to fulfill our core mission as the flagship campus of our comprehensive, public university: “to create, disseminate, preserve and apply knowledge.” Globalization and the Internationalization of the IU Bloomington Campus reexamines many of these same themes within the context of our special interest in international and global issues—issues that transcend institutional boundaries and that will shape the future of higher education, on our campus and beyond.

We are pleased to be able to share with you the variety of ways in which we meet the Higher Learning Commission's five criteria for accreditation. IU Bloomington has been continuously accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools since 1913. But this latest self study process has been particularly timely for our institution, marking a moment of new leadership, restructuring, and rapidly evolving global educational challenges. We are planning for the next decade with enthusiasm and renewed vision, committed to outstanding scholarship and creative activity, intellectual stewardship, and public educational opportunity.

Therefore, Indiana University Bloomington formally requests continuing accreditation with no change in its status.

