

**Quality Program Summary
Concordia University
March 1, 2007**

Overview of AQIP History (2000-2007)

The following is brief history of Concordia University's AQIP involvement:

- Spring 2000: Campus Visit by Steve Spanghel to address faculty and staff concerning new accreditation process
- Summer 2000: Invitation received to make formal application as a member of the Academic Quality Improvement Project of the NCA
- Fall 2000: University representatives participate in an AQIP Interest Exploration Session
- Summer 2001: University team attends AQIP Strategy Forum and begins process of identifying three Action Projects
- Fall 2001: Three Action Projects identified and designed
 1. Helping Students Learn via Student Assessment and Program Evaluation
 2. Supporting Student Achievement: Coordinating/Integrating Experiences and Support
 3. Increasing Enrollments through Enhance Partnerships and Strengthened Tracking/Reporting
- Summer/Fall 2004: Identification of AQIP Work Groups (forty-five faculty/staff involved) to create the System Portfolio
- Spring 2005: System Portfolio completed and submitted
- Fall 2005: Feedback Report Received
- Spring 2006: University representatives attend second Strategy Forum
- Spring 2006 AQIP Planning Council Inaugurated and Members Appointed by President
- Summer 2006: AQIP Planning Council identifies new action projects and to monitor the quality improvement process
- Fall 2006: Three Action Projects Identified and Designed
 1. Academic Early Warning System – Bridging the Gap
 2. Assessment of General Education Outcomes
 3. Improving Graduate Cohort Faculty/Program Evaluation
- Fall/Spring 2006-07 Additional Quality Initiatives
 1. Mathematics Department: Redesign of Basic Course Offerings
 2. Honor Code Implementation & Evaluation
 3. Communications Taskforce to Address Faculty & Staff Climate
 4. Core Values Approved
 5. Employee Covenant Adopted
 6. Bi-Annual Faculty Staff Climate Survey Administered
 7. Parent's Advisory Board Established
 8. President's Advisory Board Rejuvenated
 9. Faculty Committee Streamlining and Restructuring Project

10. Ongoing Updating of Classroom Technology as Outlined by Teaching, Learning, and Technology Committee
 11. Regular Staff/Faculty Development in Effective Technology Usage
 12. First Steps to Enhance Academic Service Learning – Director Position Authorized for 2007-08 Academic Year
 13. Continuation of weekly Arts and Sciences “Dean Dialogs” and “Soup Lunches”
- Spring 2007: Preparation for Quality Check-up Visit

Membership of AQIP Planning Council (2.15.07)

- Elizabeth Becker, Associate Director of CURES
- Manfred Boos, Sr. VP for Academics
- Astrida Cirulis, Associate Professor of Mathematics
- Mary Goetting, Associate Professor of Mathematics
- Debra Herman, Associate Professor of Art
- Andrew Pollom, Director of Residential Life
- Deborah Serra, Asst VP for Academics
- Harry Therwanger, Director of Church Relations
- Christine Wedekind, Administrative Assistant to Sr. VP for Academics
- Gary Wenzel, Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences

Potential Action Project Areas Investigated – Short and Long Term (Summer 2006)

The following list of potential Action Projects was created by the Planning Council after debriefing the report from the spring 2006 Strategy Forum:

- Assessment & Evaluation of University Attendance Policy
- Articulation w/ Local Public and Private High Schools
- Spiritual Nourishment of Lutheran Teacher Diploma students
- Residence Life
- **Graduate Program Assessment (Chosen as 2006-2009 Action Project)**
- Program Assessment (Ongoing Discussions With Departments)
- Follow-up w/Alumni Placement (Project for Career Services Office)
- Service Learning – Active Learning (Director Position Authorized)
- Greater integration of faculty and professional staff w/students
- Academic Standards
- Honor Code Program (New Director Charged with First Year Review)
- Define Measurable Expectations for Faculty/Staff
- **Systems To Insure University Values Its People (Initiated by Communications Taskforce)**

- Teaching/Learning Center
- Embracing Urban Environment – International Studies
- **General Education Assessment (Chosen as 2006-2009 Action Project)**
- Create Student Support – Minority/Commuter Students
- Multi-cultural Experience
- **Improvement of Basic Mathematics Placement and Courses (Short-term Action Project Initiated by Mathematics Department)**
- **Academic Early Warning System (Chosen as 2006-2009 Action Project)**
- Comprehensive Academic Advising
- Encourage and Support of Scholarship Involving Faculty, Staff, and Students

Continuing Discussions for AQIP Planning Council

- Merging the AQIP process with the Strategic Planning Initiative
- Evaluate current data sources and use
 1. Index of Current Data
 2. Log of Reports
- Concordia's Quality System Website
- Revitalize Campus-Wide Commitment to Quality
 1. Continue to Remove Silos
 2. Good Enough is not Good Enough
 3. Communication

Initiatives Related to Systems Portfolio Feedback Report

Measuring Success - Distinctive Objectives:

During spring 2006 the university established the Strategic Planning Council, consisting of administration, faculty, staff, and students, charged with the development of short and long term strategic plans. The work of the Council is supervised by the Vice President for Planning and Research. The first task of the Council was to craft a Vision Statement based on the Mission Statement adopted in 1998. This statement would serve as the basis for all future planning.

Vision: Concordia University is the university of choice for those seeking a Christian institution in the Midwest which provides a broad, liberal arts based undergraduate education, as well as graduate and professional programs in areas of demonstrated competence, which serve a particular need of society and advance the mission of the Church.

From this vision the following statement of Core Values were adopted.

Core Values: As a Christian University of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, we, at Concordia University, value:

- **Community** by caring for each other in our work, in the classroom, and beyond;
- **Individuals** as fellow members in God's creation
- **Excellence** in our responsibilities as staff, faculty, and students;
- **Service** as embodied by the servanthood of Jesus Christ.

These Core Values were further amplified to form the basis of the Employee Covenant and by the adoption of Critical Targets and Institutional Goals.

Critical Targets and Institutional Goals:

- **Academics** Excellent programs, intentional continuous improvement, and development of new programs align with the University's mission and vision.
- **Finances** Long term financial stability and fiscal independence provide critical resources to meet challenges and take advantage of programmatic opportunities.
- **Enrollment** An increasing number of qualified students select the University for their educational needs, with the University becoming more selective as a sustainable enrollment is reached.
- **Sphere of Influence** An ever-increasing sphere of influence heightens the University's appeal to prospective students, broadens its donor base, and enhances its impact on church and society.
- **Collegiate Environment** A vibrant collegiate environment engages students both in and out of the classroom, fosters academic challenge, nurtures relationships, and supports active and collaborative learning experiences.
- **Facilities and Technology** Competitive facilities and progressive technologies attract and retain students, faculty, and staff, and support the programs of the University.

The Critical Targets were then further refined into ten Objectives.

Objectives:

- Concordia will launch a minimum of one new program each year at the graduate level.
- Concordia University will launch a College of Business contingent upon the positive outcome of a feasibility study and the approval of the Board of Regents and other accreditation agencies.
- Concordia will operate within balanced budgets annually and increase an operating contingency.
- The fund raising support base of the University will be dramatically enhanced by 2012.
- Concordia will embark on a major campaign in FY 2008.
- Concordia undergraduate enrollment will be no less than 1,400 students by academic year 2011-12. (Fall 2006 1,074 undergraduate students)
- By academic year 2010-11, 420 students pursuing a church profession will be enrolled. (Available respective student pool declining)
- Concordia will build or remodel three major structures by 2017.
- Concordia will continue to maintain and upgrade its facilities through renovation of existing facilities.

- Concordia will maintain an excellent faculty and staff.

Liberal Arts Culture – College of Arts & Sciences:

The Feedback Report indicated a need to quantify the academic climate currently existing on the campus as well as establish benchmarks that could be used to measure this climate. The Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences together with the eleven departments assigned to this college have taken the lead on this issue and in December 2006 completed the first stage of identifying the characteristics of a liberal arts culture desired for their students and faculty. These characteristics are identified in a document called the “Liberal Arts at Concordia” and will appear in the 2007-08 Undergraduate Catalog. The second stage has been to develop “tangible ideas” that would make the statement “come to life.” Sixty ideas were generated by the faculty members and in February the college faculty selected three ideas to pursue for implementation between now and the 2007-08 academic year. The Dean will be appointing three task forces to examine each idea and recommend means of implementation and assessment. The task forces will report their recommendations to the College of Arts and Sciences at an April meeting.

This project is ongoing with activities scheduled during the bi-monthly meetings of the faculty of the college.

Service:

The feedback report indicated that the university had not identified sufficient measures to assess the attainment of the “other distinctive objectives” identified in the System Portfolio. The Feedback Report indicated implicit distinctive objectives were not adequately measured and that daily chapel attendance should not be the primary measure of these objectives. After review the Planning Council realized that the Portfolio had not made reference to other measures that would have measured the core value of compassion together with other distinctive features of the university.

Although not specifically included in the Portfolio, there are numerous opportunities that exist for faculty, staff, and students to demonstrate the core value of compassion. The opportunities continue and are expanding. These include:

- Five mission trips during the 2005-06 academic year to assist the victims of the hurricanes in New Orleans are involving approximately ninety faculty, staff, and students
- One international mission trip to the Czech Republic during summer 2006 where faculty and staff participated in a Habitat for Humanity building project.
- Spring break 2006 mission trip to Appalachia sponsored and attended by students in the Director of Christian Education program. These are annual events that involve approximately twenty students.
- Summer mission trip to Mexico sponsored by student-led campus ministries involving staff and students

- A Deaconess mission trip to Latin America
- Various service learning activities integrated in the First Year Experience course (Freedom & Responsibility) and the senior capstone course (Values & Virtues)
- Other service learning projects in undergraduate courses in business and social sciences
- Student service organizations
- Continuing activities organized by CU-Cares
 1. Weeks of Welcome Service Day (i.e. OPRF Food Pantry, Marrillac House, British Home, and Greater Chicago Food Depository)
 2. Academic Year Relationships/Projects (i.e. Bethel and LIDERr)

Because of the increasing number of service learning projects and activities the university has authorized the establishment of the full-time faculty position, Director of Academic Service Learning beginning in the 2007 – 08 academic year. This person will coordinate the service learning activities and work closely with the division of student services where the various volunteer activities are monitored and coordinated.

Academic Integrity:

All universities strive to maintain and improve the climate of academic integrity on campus. In a move to improve this climate on our campus, the faculty devoted time during the 2005 – 06 academic year to the development of a university-wide Honor Code. After extensive discussion and deliberation the Faculty Senate approved the establishment of the code in spring of 2006 and the code was subsequently approved by the university Board of Regents. The code was initiated in summer 2006 and a director was appointed. All current and incoming graduate and undergraduate students signed the honor code pledge before the fall 2006 semester began.

The Director of the Honor Code will be presenting data from the first year of the program to the members of the faculty Senate at their May 2007 meeting. At this meeting the data will be reviewed and revisions to the system will be proposed based on the data collected during the initial year of the process.

Increased Communication:

Another of the opportunities identified in the Feedback Report was the need for increased communication. The reviewers of the Portfolio indicated that the university needed to design and implement a university wide communication plan that would insure that faculty, staff, and students as well as external stakeholders were provided information in a consistent and timely manner to insure that the goals and objectives of the university were accomplished. Since the Feedback Report was received, several initiatives were undertaken including:

- Creation of the President's Advisory Council (PAC). This Council includes several types of stakeholders including but not limited to community leaders, university

donors, and other friends of the university. The PAC and the Concordia University Foundation Board of Directors receive summary reports of the information presented to the Board of Regents. The PAC provided valuable input during the College of Business feasibility study.

- Establishment of a Parents Advisory Council organized by the Vice President of Student Services
- Bi-monthly faculty/staff forums organized by the Office of the President devoted to strategic topics and opportunities for Q&A
- Student forums allowing for the dissemination of the Strategic Plan, the plans for food services, and other topics of interest to students.
- Electronic updates of the Board of Regents meetings by the President

Assessment of General Education:

The Feedback Report includes a statement that “there does not appear to be any general education assessment (or plan for incorporating information from future assessment) occurring at CURF”. At the time that Concordia’s Systems Portfolio was written this statement was true.

Up until 2004-05 academic year, the university maintained a “Senior Testing” program making use of the College Outcomes Measures Program (COMP) from ACT and The Academic Profile (TAP) from ETS to assess the competencies included in the university’s general education curriculum. All senior students were required to sit for a three hour examination that was scheduled on selected Saturdays during the semester during which they were to graduate. The information from these assessments was then tabulated and compared to peer institutions which used the same instrument.

The results of the “Senior Testing” had no bearing on their academic record or their graduation status. During the last several years that the testing was administered in this manner, the test administrators reported that the students appeared not to take the testing “seriously” and on a number of occasions the proctors noted that students appeared to be randomly marking answers and/or were not even answering all of the questions. When the testing results during these final years were analyzed it became evident that the data gathered did not provide accurate or useful data. Therefore the results of the testing program could not be used to assess the effectiveness of Concordia’s general education curriculum.

It became clear that a different approach and possibly a different instrument was needed. The staff of the Office of University Research Services (OURS) was charged with this task. After researching the available instruments the staff of OURS recommended that the university make use of Measurement of Academic Proficiency and Progress – Abbreviated Form for Online Administration (MAPP) to assess the general education curriculum.

Beginning with the fall 2007 semester all students registered for the First Year Experience course, Freedom & Responsibility and the senior capstone course, Values & Virtues, were required to complete the MAPP. Freshmen were included in the testing program to provide

baseline data that could be used in four years as a comparison of the results recorded when those students completed the instrument as seniors. At the end of the spring 2007 semester data from both the fall and spring semester will be available and will be compared to the norms produced for this years testing.

Status Report on Current Action Projects

Academic Early Warning System

The idea for this Action Project developed as a result of extended conversations involving the Office of Academic Advising and the Office of the Dean of Students. These conversations were initiated by our desire to consolidate various student services area (one of the original three Action Projects) and the frustration that has developed as a result of the ineffective system that had been in place at Concordia for many years. That system involved the faculty who would send short “notes” to the advisors at the midpoint of each semester if one of their students was having academic difficulties or was not attending classes on a regular basis.

Because the system depended only on faculty notification it provided limited value. An improved system was needed that would continue to involve the faculty but would also allow input from residence hall directors and resident assistants, staff who served as supervisors of student employees, coaches, and other co-curricular leaders. The system also needed to be easy to use both for input of information as well as for those charged with using the data to assist the students identified by the system.

Initial research and development of the system took place during the summer and fall of 2006. This spring approximately twenty faculty and staff members are piloting the new system that makes use of an on-line reporting system. Once the pilot phase has been completed the results will be evaluated and the system will be completely implemented in fall 2007.

Graduate Program Evaluation

Several of Concordia’s graduate programs have experienced a phenomenal growth over the past two years. These programs are being offered off-site using the cohort delivery model. When the initial cohorts began in fall 2003 and spring 2004 the evaluation system in use was found to be inadequate since course coordinators and department chairs that had previously monitored the on campus programs were now stretched because of the increased number of courses and locations.

Although course evaluations were completed by students at the end of each of the courses offered there was need to assess other aspects of the program including student services, off-campus technology needs, communication, and program information. The initial step taken was the creation of an “end of program” assessment instrument that each student completed

which addressed these issues. Although the data collected gave the coordinators, department chairs, and dean important information about the effectiveness of the services the timing at the end of the program did not allow for any interventions which would improve the experience before the students completed their degree.

The next step was the addition of a mid-program assessment that mirrored that which was administered at the end of program. This second assessment allowed the various offices of the university to initiate interventions that would improve the services delivered to cohorts where difficulties were identified.

Currently the university is investigating the use of a shorter “mini” assessment of key service issues that would be administered at the one-quarter and three-quarter mark of the program. These “mini” assessments are currently in the planning stage.

General Education Assessment

This Action Project was described above.

Next “Tasks” for the Planning Council

- Identification of processes that will address the opportunities (O and OO areas) identified in the Feedback Report
- A project to find relationships between strengths and opportunities identified in the Feedback Report
- Updating of the AQIP Website
- Identification of the next Action Projects
- Determining the Relationship of the AQIP Planning Committee and the Strategic Planning Council
- Update of System Portfolio