

IUPUI: A Tradition of Innovation

Your update on IUPUI's 2012 Reaccreditation Review

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Welcome to the first issue of the newsletter on IUPUI's Fall 2012 reaccreditation review! This publication will provide monthly updates on the campus's preparations for this important event, including the development of the self-study, which has a new working title: "IUPUI: A Tradition of Innovation." All issues will be archived and accessible at the 2012 reaccreditation web site at nca.iupui.edu.

What is Regional Accreditation and What is at Stake?

Just as many academic disciplines have developed their own accrediting bodies, colleges and universities have established regional organizations to set standards, provide oversight for, and accredit entire institutions. IUPUI is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (HLC/NCA), one of six regional associations. The U.S. Department of Education looks to these regional accrediting bodies to establish and monitor institutional and educational quality standards. Colleges and universities must be regionally accredited in order for their students to be eligible to receive federal financial aid. Since many IUPUI students depend on federal grants to attend the university, maintaining our regional accreditation status is essential to our campus and all of its academic units.

IUPUI was initially accredited by the North Central Association in 1972 and successfully reaccredited in 1982, 1992, and 2002. Regional accreditation includes development of a comprehensive campus-wide self-study that responds to a set of accreditation standards or criteria. A team of peer reviewers—faculty and administrators drawn from other higher education institutions in the region—examines the self-study and then visits the campus to meet with key groups and individual leaders. We are beginning now to prepare for our fifth visit by HLC/NCA peer reviewers in 2012. Further information concerning the accreditation process can be found at www.ncahlc.org/information-for-institutions/publications.html.

WHAT'S AT STAKE:

- *IUPUI's academic reputation*
- *Eligibility of students to receive federal financial aid*
- *Eligibility for federal grants*

Preparing for the 2012 Visit

Chancellor Bantz and Executive Vice Chancellor Sukhatme have asked Trudy Banta and Mary Fisher to lead the initiatives associated with reaccreditation. In 2008 Fisher and Banta convened a broadly representative 2012 Committee (see list of members on the next page) to oversee development of the self-study that will demonstrate that IUPUI meets the five HLC/NCA criteria.

Currently, we are working to fulfill an HLC/NCA requirement that every program of study leading to a degree or certificate at both the undergraduate and graduate levels communicates clearly articulated student learning outcomes. These outcomes statements will appear in the IUPUI online Bulletin. In addition, we anticipate that the 2012 team will seek evidence that our undergraduates

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are mastering the capacities and skills described by the Principles of Undergraduate Learning (PULs), which form the basis for IUPUI’s approach to general education. The PULs include such fundamental abilities as writing, information literacy, and critical thinking. To ensure that our self-study



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can demonstrate our students’ achievements, the 2012 Committee has asked IUPUI faculty members to emphasize and evaluate one, two, or three PULs in every undergraduate course.

In Fall 2010, five Criterion Teams were formed, each focused on one of the five HLC/NCA Criteria for Accreditation that we must address in the self-study. Team members are collecting materials that demonstrate how IUPUI fulfills these criteria. Later this semester, the Criterion Teams will hold town hall meetings where IUPUI colleagues will be invited to suggest additional achievements, examples, and materials that might help us to make a strong case for reaccreditation.

A small team of writers will take the Criterion Teams’ notes and recommendations and prepare draft outlines for each criterion during Summer 2011. The drafts will be posted on the campus web site and publicized widely during Fall 2011, so that all members of the IUPUI community have the opportunity to comment and contribute additional ideas and information. Full drafts will be prepared during Spring 2012 and the final version of the

self-study will be sent to HLC/NCA in late Summer 2012. The peer-review team will visit IUPUI in late Fall 2012.

We cannot overemphasize the importance of a successful self-study and reaccreditation. If the visiting team concludes that IUPUI has a significant weakness, HLC/NCA could require that we work on that area, prepare another extensive report, and undergo a focused review visit in a subsequent year. We believe we have a strong

case to present, but the discovery of multiple weaknesses could result in at least temporary loss of accreditation—and loss of our eligibility for federal funding. No less important, IUPUI’s reputation will suffer if the results of the review are less than successful.

Upcoming issues of this newsletter will discuss each of the five HLC Criteria for Accreditation, along with other news about our preparations.

2012 Reaccreditation Committee Members

Karen Alfrey, Program Review and Assessment Committee

Sarah Baker, Faculty Council

Daniel L. Baldwin, School of Engineering and Technology

Trudy Banta, Office of Planning and Institutional Improvement

Karen Black, Office of Planning and Institutional Improvement

Robert Bringle, Center for Service and Learning

Margaret R. Ferguson, School of Liberal Arts

Mary Fisher, Office of Academic Affairs

Dominique M. Galli, School of Dentistry

Clifford R. Goodwin, School of Engineering and Technology

Michele Hansen, Director of Assessment, University College

Richard D. Jackson, Academic Affairs Faculty Fellow

Kathy Elizabeth Johnson, School of Science

Susan Kahn, Office of Planning and Institutional Improvement

Kathleen Marrs, Undergraduate Curriculum Advisory Committee

Rebecca Porter, Enrollment Services

Sherry F. Queener, Graduate School

Ingrid Ritchie, School of Medicine

Matthew Souza, IUPUC

Terri Tarr, Center for Teaching and Learning

Pratibha Varma-Nelson, Center for Teaching and Learning

Richard Ward, University College

Eric Wright, Faculty Council

Karen M. Yoder, School of Dentistry