Middle States Commission for Higher Education

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Ten-Year Accreditation Review of Morgan State University

April 6 - 9, 2008

Middles States Commission for Higher Education Evaluation Team Members:

Dr. Ronald Mason, Jr., Team Leader

Dr. Ronald Baenninger

Dr. Phyllis Edamatsu

Dr. Richard English

Dr. Janet Manspeaker

Dr. Joseph Marchetti

Dr. Brent Ruben

Dr. Dorothy Echols Tobe

Dr. Derek Wheeler

Dr. Doris Withers

Morgan State University Administration
At Time of Visit:

Dr. Earl S. Richardson,
President

Dr. T. Joan Robinson,
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Mr. Dallas R. Evans,
Chair of the Board of Regents

I.   Context and Nature of Visit

Founded in 1867, Morgan State University was designated in 1975 by the Maryland General Assembly as the State's urban university. It is one of two public universities that have governing boards separate from the University System of Maryland Board. Morgan State is a historically Black research university that offers bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees. Its enrollment is approximately 5955 undergraduate and 750 graduate students, a large portion of who come from the Baltimore metropolitan area.

The institution utilized the "Comprehensive Report Reordering Standards to Reflect an Institution" model for its Self-Study. This model was chosen because the institution aligned the Middle States standards for excellence with the Baldrige Education Criteria for Performance Excellence and performed a simultaneous assessment under the latter criteria as part of the self-study process.

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education has continuously accredited Morgan State University since 1925.

II.   Affirmation of Continued Compliance with Eligibility Requirements

Based on a review of the self study, interviews, the institution's self certification and other institutional documents, the team affirms that the institution continues to meet the eligibility requirements in the *Characteristics of Excellence.*

III.   Compliance with Federal Requirements

The institution certifies that it meets all Federal requirements relating to Title IV program participation.

IV.   Evaluation Overview

The Middle States Commission for Higher Education evaluation team conducted a ten-year accreditation review of Morgan State University on April 6-9, 2008. The review sought to determine whether, or to what extent, the institution met the Middle States Commission on Higher Education *Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education* as embodied in fourteen individual standards.

The institution provided input through: the self-study report and related documents; interviews with representatives of various campus constituencies; interviews with members of the Board of Regents and the University Council. The evaluation team also analyzed supplemental materials provided during the three day visit.

The evaluation team was impressed with the progress and advancement of the institution despite difficult circumstances. Morgan State has been designated as Maryland's urban university since 1976. Challenges faced by institutions of higher learning are magnified in the urban setting. However despite statutory pledges of support for the institution's special mission, it seems that the state has historically and continuously failed to adequately provide that support.

It is notable that within the last decade the institution has launched several new bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programs, enabling it to achieve doctoral research status. It graduates the largest number of African American baccalaureate graduates among Maryland's traditional four-year institutions and is a leading producer of African American engineers at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

The review team also recognized the institution's maturity and self confidence in choosing to use the Baldrige Business Model in assessing the degree to which it has met the standards of excellence. This may be a first in the Middle States region.

The institution's successes, both inside and out, have in some ways magnified its long standing challenges. It is Maryland's most recently designated doctoral research university, but it is also historically the least resourced. Investment in programs, faculty, facilities and financial aid has not kept pace with its mission-driven growth. In addition, the state's inexplicable duplication of programs at nearby public universities compromises the institution's ability to increase revenue through increased enrollment.

Nevertheless, the work at Morgan State is impressive. Given the proper support it has the potential to be a truly model urban institution that serves the Baltimore metropolitan area, the State of Maryland and the nation as a whole.

V. Compliance with Accreditation Standards

Standard 1: Mission, Goals, and Objectives

The Institution's mission clearly defines its purpose within the context of higher education and explains whom the institution serves and what it intends to accomplish. The institution's stated goals and objectives, consistent with the aspirations and expectations of institutions of higher education, clearly specify how the institution will fulfill its mission. The mission, goals, and objectives are developed and recognized by the institution with its members and its governing body and are utilized to develop and shape its programs and practices and to evaluate its effectiveness.

The institution meets this standard.

<u>Summary of Evidence and Findings</u>

Additional evidence for this Standard was collected from interviews with key institutional leaders, the Provost, the former Provost, faculty and staff. A summary statement of the mission of Morgan State University is found in the University's Five–Year Strategic Plan, 2008-2012. "The mission of the University is to offer undergraduate programs in a comprehensive range of disciplines; to offer master's and doctoral programs in selected fields of study of significance to Maryland and the nation; provide access to a broad cross-section of the population seeking an undergraduate degree, including a representative number of at-risk students; ensure a supportive environment that promotes student success; carry out research that gives significant priority to solving difficult problems, particularly problems typically found in urban communities; and offer service programs that take advantage of the University's research expertise and which are directed toward the needs of underserved communities."

In 1975 the State of Maryland designated by legislative statute Morgan as a Public Urban University; thereby giving it priority to address the needs of the urban community in general and of Baltimore City in particular through its academic, research and service programs. It was also granted authority to award doctoral degrees.

In 1988 the State of Maryland reorganized higher education through Senate Bill 459 and re-affirmed Morgan University as a public urban university. Every four years the mission statements for higher educational institutions are reviewed with the state plan for postsecondary education. Morgan's Mission Statement was reviewed and approved by the Board of Regents on October 11, 2005. Each time the mission statement is updated a new summary mission statement is broadcast in a variety of University documents. In the 2005 update of the Mission Statement a section on assessment was added. In November 2007 the mission and goals were confirmed by the President and approved by the Board of Regents. The University has been classified by the Carnegie Foundation as a doctoral research institution.

There are many iterations of the University's Mission Statement, usually expressed as Summary Mission Statements without explanation of the source. Since this is frequently the case there can be considerable confusion about the mission statement. It would be helpful to have a descriptive historical chart of Morgan's mission statements. The Mission Statement is a three page document with three sections: institutional identity, institutional capabilities, and institutional objectives and outcomes. Since it is such a lengthy document that is frequently updated, the University has found it convenient to provide shorter summary versions.

The Mission Statement is clear, lengthy and detailed. It describes the institutional identity and defines the University's basic purposes, the populations it seeks to educate and serve, articulates its core values and what it intends to accomplish. The Mission Statement further defines the University's degree programs, targets the type of students for enrollment and states its purpose to enroll a heterogeneous and diverse student body, including African Americans (which constitute 95 percent of the total

enrollment) in fields and at degree levels where they are underrepresented. The Mission Statement articulates the university's responsibility to serve both high ability and "at-risk students" for enrollment. The capability section of the Mission Statement specifically addresses the University's history of educating African American students who might otherwise not have an opportunity for higher education.

The institutional goals and objectives are informed by the University mission and core values. The goals are expressed in terms that can be measured as outcomes. They can serve as well as a framework for ongoing institutional development and assessment. The latest addition to the Mission Statement is a brief statement on the institutional commitment to ongoing assessment of institutional effectiveness and achievement of institutional mission and goals.

While there have been several iterations of the Morgan Mission Statement it has remained essentially consistent in its overall commitments, goals and objectives.

Suggestion

The institution should document the evolution, history and ongoing development of its Mission Statement and standardize the use of summary statements of the mission.

Recommendation

The Mission Statement should be widely distributed and published on the website, in the catalogue and in all public documents.

Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal

An Institution conducts ongoing planning and resource allocation based on its mission and goals, develops objectives to achieve them, and utilizes the results of its assessment activities for institutional renewal. Implementation and subsequent evaluation of the success of the strategic plan and resource allocation support the development and change necessary to improve and to maintain institutional quality.

The Institution meets this standard.

Summary of Evidence and Findings

It is apparent to the team that Morgan State University has embraced the processes of strategic planning as a catalyst for change. Continuing efforts to include the whole community in planning will lead to acceptance and support of future institutional decisions and resource allocations. The University developed a strategic plan spanning the time frame 2008-2012. The University strategic plan, based on the mission and

values, as well as the Maryland State Plan for Postsecondary Education and the emerging needs of the State, identifies eight strategic goals to guide institutional growth and development.

There is a deliberate intent to link the University's strategic priorities to the allocation of resources with measurable/assessable objectives. The planning process involved senior administrators, deans, and middle managers. Each department, school, and division created plans with action steps and time lines. These plans were submitted in 2007, so there was no data showing outcomes and subsequent assessment. Results from the previous plan revealed the transition to a research institution with the development of several new doctoral programs and several new buildings. While the University has done a great job of using institutional plans to meet institutional priorities, it was unclear how involved students were in the process.

Enrollment growth was identified as a major resource planning issue. Enrollment remained flat at the undergraduate level in the last five years, but has increased at the graduate level. Managing increased enrollment growth is a central focus of the current strategic initiatives. More resources have been allocated for recruitment initiatives for the next five years and the Office of Admissions and Recruitment has moved from the Division of Student Affairs to the Division of Academic Affairs. Strategic enrollment management: from recruitment and enrollment through persistence and graduation, informed by data-driven decision-making and assessment, is taking hold in varying degrees throughout the campus. It is too soon to tell how effective these new initiatives will be. Managing the cultural shift to a research institution is a significant shift and will present challenges in resource allocations related to staffing and space.

All departments, schools, and divisions have submitted strategic plans. Some connect their plans to the institutional strategic plan and the University mission, while others do not. The University has mixed results in assessing accomplishment of goals and objectives. The schools with external accreditation were able to demonstrate the use of planning goals to meet stated objectives, while other administrative units could not. The institution has made great strides in its planning efforts. However, it needs to communicate the accomplishment of objectives and assess whether institutional and unit level mission and goals have been achieved. Further, it needs to assess whether institutional resources allocated for priorities have been used in accordance with their plans.

Significant Accomplishments

Development of a strategic plan

Development of several new academic programs at undergraduate and graduate levels.

Using available resources to grow the institution

The institution should embrace and implement the recommendations made in the self study.

Standard 3: Institutional Resources

The human, financial, technical, facilities and other resources necessary to achieve an institution's mission and goals are available and accessible. In the context of the institution's mission, the effective and efficient uses of the institution's resources are analyzed as part of ongoing outcomes assessment.

The institution meets this standard.

Summary of Evidence and Findings

There is clear evidence that Morgan State University effectively manages its resources to accomplish the institution's goals and objectives. The development of several new academic programs during state budget reductions placed considerable pressure on the budget. Although funded largely with state dollars, Morgan has built several new buildings within the last ten years, the Communications building, student center, parking garage, and library with other buildings being renovated and beautification and the grounds being completed. Additionally, enrollment has grown by 18.8%, primarily in graduate programs, in the last ten years.

Two revenue generating areas have experienced growth in the last ten years, grants and contracts and fundraising. The volume of grants and contracts increased from $13.2 to $26.8 million. The inability to hire additional full-time faculty, however, jeopardizes the institution's ability to maintain this growth. The University embarked on its first capital fundraising campaign five years ago and exceeded its $25 million goal by $6.2 million, thereby increasing the endowment from $2.5 to $20 million. The vice president for institutional advancement in consultation with the president is ready to begin another campaign shortly.

The allocation of resources is closely tied to the strategic plan and the planning process. Yearly budgets are submitted to the state for funding of institutional priorities as well as other funding needs. In its five year financial plan, the institution requested additional state funding to enable it to meet strategic plan objectives, including increasing financial aid to students, supporting new graduate programs, and converting contractual faculty and staff to regular status. Regrettably, the State has not funded these "mission critical" objectives.

Although there is never enough money to achieve all the objectives of the plan, the institution has made the most use of its resources.

Significant Accomplishments

Improved the stability, grew and developed the institution despite significant budgetary constraints.

Classification as a Carnegie doctoral research institution.

Development of several new academic programs at the undergraduate and graduate level.

Increased endowment from 2.5 million to 20 million.

Maintained A1 bond rating.

Exceeded first capital campaign goal by 6.2 million dollars

Standard 4: Leadership and Governance

The institution's system of governance clearly defines the roles of institutional constituencies in policy development and decision-making. The governance structure includes an active governing body with sufficient autonomy to assure institutional integrity and to fulfill its responsibilities of policy and resource development, consistent with the mission of the institution.

The institution meets this standard.

Summary of Evidence and Findings

Morgan State University has a well defined governance structure consisting of a Board of Regents, the administration led by a President and Chief Executive Officer appointed by the Board and a campus-wide University Council with broad membership including administration, faculty, professional administrative staff, classified employees and students.

In 1986 the Board of Regents directed the President to develop a system of internal governance that could promote broader participation of the various University constituencies. These include administrative faculty (which constitutes the largest group of members [4]), professional administrative staff, classified employees and professional administrative staff. The Council meets 4 times a year and conducts its business through five sub committees. The Provost has provided office space and funds to assist the Council in its operations.

Since the last decennial MSCHE review 10 years ago, Morgan State University has had the same system of leadership and governance. Only slight changes have occurred: increase in the number of the members on the Board of Regents including the addition of a student member. The University Council has remained the same as well over the past 10 years with the exception of increases in faculty representatives.

In the Self Study the conclusion is reached that the leadership and governance organization has been effective in policy development and decision making and meets the appropriate fundamental elements of leadership and governance. This assessment was confirmed in interviews with faculty, members of the Council, Deans and the President.

The Board of Regents at Morgan State University is only one of 3 in the State of Maryland governing an institution of higher education. The other two are the University System of Maryland, and St. Mary's College. The Board of Regents consists of 15 members appointed by the Governor. The view established in the Self Study is that the Board governance structure exclusively has enabled the institution to grow and develop consistent with its mission.

Significant Accomplishments

The institution is commended for its twenty-two year old university governance body, with diverse campus-wide constituent representation which deals with a wide range of institutional issues and concerns. It has proven to be an effective institutional governing body.

The institution's Board of Regents is commended for its active support and advocacy on behalf of the institution.

Standard 5: Administration

The institution's administrative structure and services facilitate learning and research/scholarship, foster quality improvement, and support the institution's organization and governance.

The institution meets this standard.

Summary of Evidence and Findings

Morgan State University is administered through a traditional organizational structure for an institution of higher education. The President, the Chief Executive Officer, is appointed by the University Board of Regents and the President is responsible for providing executive leadership and oversight to the University. The President's immediate staff includes the General Counsel, his Executive Assistant, as well as State

Relations and Internal Audit. The University-wide Council also has a formal consultative relationship with the President.

In order to direct the activities of the University, the President appoints and oversees the activities of divisional Vice Presidents for: Planning and Information Technology; Student Affairs; Academic Affairs (the Provost); Finance and Management; and Institutional Advancement. In turn, each of these Vice Presidents has instructional or operating departments reporting to them, consistent with the division's role within the institution.

The President of Morgan State University has been serving since 1984. During his tenure, the institution has made major accomplishments including the recent reclassification from a Masters I/Comprehensive to Doctoral/Research University, and gaining new construction to replace and/or renovate many of the core buildings on campus. The President has also directed and overseen a new Strategic Plan that is guiding the institution to this new mission and assembled an executive and management team that is fully cognizant and committed to the new future of the University.

One key additional development that will support this transition is the acquisition of the Banner administrative software system, which will provide the integrated "student", human resources, and financial management systems for the University's expanded mission. Morgan State, led by President Richardson, seems poised to continue to make major strides as an important institution of higher education.

Standard 6: Integrity

In the conduct of its programs and activities involving the public and the constituencies it serves, the institution demonstrates adherence to ethical standards and its own stated policies, providing support to academic and intellectual freedom.

The institution meets this standard.

Summary of Evidence and Findings

MSU demonstrates integrity internally and externally with respect to college constituencies and the public. Standard 6 was evaluated from information presented in the Self-Study, supplemented and supported by review of college documents and reports, and by interviews with MSU administrators, faculty, staff, and students. MSU fosters an environment that is conducive to student learning and success, to faculty academic freedom and engagement, and to development of programs and services. MSU has embraced and integrated the Board of Regents, University Council, and State Higher Education Commission requirements and mandates into its policies and practices which adhere to and support ethical standards.

The University has established and/or implemented policies that inform and direct procedures and ethical practices for hiring, compensation, dismissal, faculty and staff

evaluations and career progression, freedom of expression, intellectual property rights, and conflict of interest. Policies and procedures are found in their comprehensive *Faculty Handbook* and in the University Council By-Laws; *Policy of Faculty, Student and Institutional Rights and Responsibilities for Academic Integrity*; *Conflict of Interest for Faculty Interest in Sponsored Research; Professional Manual for Executive and Professional Administrative Staff; Classified Employees Manual; Memorandum of Understanding of American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees; Policy on Nondiscrimination*; *and Policy on Sexual Harassment.*

Procedures for student grievances and for disciplinary actions are in place and are codified in the Student Code of Conduct and Policy on Academic Dishonesty which are published on the web site and in the Student Handbook. The Office of Judicial Affairs in Student Affairs and Academic Affairs are charged with adjudication of student misconduct.

Students have access to information about programs and services that is widely publicized through current undergraduate and graduate catalogues, the Student Handbook and course of study semester planning forms. In addition, the information about programs and services is posted on the university's website for current and prospective students and parents of prospective students. Current and archived catalogues are available on the website.

The website and print documents provide to the public, potential students and parents and other interested stakeholders information about MSU and its programs, services, and policies. Accreditation information regarding the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and professional accrediting organizations is posted in an alpha list on the web. Information used for recruiting and admissions is accurate. "On-line Announcements" provides information to various constituents, students, faculty and staff, community, alumni, and business community. There are several print publications, e.g., the *Spokesman, Morgan Magazine, Alumni News*, that inform constituencies about MSU current happenings.

Public Relations is currently undertaking efforts to develop and improve outreach publications in order to better inform the public and improve the image of MSU, and to increase the recruitment of students to new programs in support of the strategic plan goals. Ten years ago the MSU web site was cited as one of the best among HBCU's. However, MSU recognizes the need to update and improve the site to serve as a marketing tool. Among their current initiatives is the revision of web site.

Students report that the campus climate is very positive. The presence of and the ability to interact with diverse students on campus was noted. They also complemented the faculty and support personnel who engage and interact with them as individuals, providing encouragement, instruction, academic support, and mentoring that assist them to achieve their educational and career goals. Faculty likewise report that the environment of the campus is positive. The campus is a place where the faculty are very committed to the mission of the university. It is an exciting place that is both nurturing and full of potential and possibilities, of which they are a part. The climate is positive for conducting business and meeting the diverse needs of students and faculty. The leadership and vision of the University President support and enhance the campus climate of collegiate cooperation through shared governance structures and processes.

Curricula, service programs, and research programs are established by the Management Team, Extended Management Team, and Deans working with chairpersons. The University Council reviews proposed policies and advises the President concerning those policies of University-wide impact, with final approval by Board of Regents There are established procedures for instituting new courses and programs that involve department faculty, School Deans, the University Council, the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, and the President.

Confidentiality of information and student privacy are appropriately protected and related policies are respected. Appropriate access, accuracy, and security of computerized student information and course information are maintained and will be enhanced as the new management information system, Banner, is implemented.

Suggestions

The institution should list accreditation by Middle States Commission on Higher Education, a regional institutional accrediting body, separately from the discipline based and professional accreditations on the web page and in other print documents and include information about the status of accreditation.

The institution should publish in the catalogue and on the web site information on institution-wide assessments to include, but not be limited to graduation, retention, certification and licensure pass rates, and other selected outcomes appropriate to programs.

The University should review the web page and other print documents to insure that all information is current, consistent, and accurate, e.g., mission statement, University Council leadership and posted web links that are currently not available.

The institution should consider creative ways of using the web page (and other outreach materials) to inform the public and its students about programs, and recent developments and improvements, such as the new buildings and the new degree programs, which can attract and entice potential students and parents to choose MSU.

Standard 7: Institutional Assessment

The institution has developed and implemented an assessment process that evaluates its overall effectiveness in achieving its mission and goals and its compliance with accreditation standards.

The institution meets this standard.

Summary of Evidence and Findings

Standard 7 was evaluated from information presented in the Self-Study, supplemented and supported by review of university documents and reports, and by interviews with Morgan State University administrators, faculty, and academic support staff.

Morgan State University has identified and embraced the goal of institutionally based assessment as a way to provide feedback for improvement of student learning, academic programs, services and administrative processes. The institution's Comprehensive Assessment Plan for Student Learning and Institutional Effectiveness (CAP) is evidence of this commitment to institutional assessment in order to promote the effectiveness of the institution and to achieve its Mission. In light of this commitment, the institution has revised its mission statement to reflect the importance of comprehensive, systematic, on-going, institutional assessment as means to improve the institution's teaching, learning, services and processes, and effectiveness of planning and resource allocation for institutional renewal and accountability. A value added model has been selected for the assessment of student learning and development.

The process of sustained, ongoing, systematic institutionally based assessment of the total range of programs and services that provides evidence of mission achievement is in its early stages. However, with the exception of one new professional accreditation for the public health program, all of the other program-based assessment activities have been for reaccreditations. Assessment is among the requirements by these professional accrediting bodies. In addition, the General Education Program, developed in the 1950s, was recognized for its excellence dating back to 1969, following Morgan's designation as a case study by the Middle States Association during its centennial decennial review. Morgan has used assessment as a way to provide feedback for improvement since the initiation of this program. The assessments of speech proficiency at the sophomore level and writing proficiency at the junior level are long-standing activities of the General Education program. In addition, general education exit exams for general education courses serve as assessment of student learning and for program improvement. The General Education program has under-gone a comprehensive review and revision on average every 8 years since its inception.

Other assessments include grade distribution and review of course syllabi. The institution requires graduating seniors to take and pass a discipline-based comprehensive exit examination, either locally constructed criterion referenced or nationally norm-referenced commercially available tests, or to produce a senior project as a graduation requirement as a means of demonstrating student learning. Graduating seniors must meet these exit requirements to be certified for graduation.

The institution has a wealth of exiting data, information and assessment activities that can be incorporated into mission-based institutional assessment strategies. If they are systematically identified and matched with institutional outcomes goals, assessment gaps can be identified and assessment strategies developed.

The CAP lists expected benefits of assessment of institutional effectiveness, "Expected Outcomes". These are not learning outcomes that are mission based. However,

the learning goals of the General Education Program are representative of the kinds of institutionally based and mission related learning outcomes. Several documents have these learning goals, e.g., *MSU Catalogue*, CAP, *Annual Report of College of Liberal Arts*, and *Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report* to State Higher Education Commission that may serve as institutional learning goals.

The institution has undertaken the assessment of services and processes. Several focus groups were conducted in 2007 to explore policies and procedures in the colleges and schools for improving institutional effectiveness. The findings published in the *Focus Group Report on Improving Processes* are being used for improvement of the institution. The focus groups are effective and can be used as an ongoing assessment strategy. In addition, the *Board of Regents' Assessment and Evaluation Report* provides further evidence of the assessment of institutional effectiveness and areas for improvement. Information Technology is also undertaking assessment of its services such as the help desk and use of labs.

The institution established an Assessment Committee/Student Learning Outcomes Committee in Fall 2007. It is headed by the VP for Planning and Information Technology. The membership consists of the Associate VP for Academic Affairs, Academic Deans, one faculty representative from each department, the Coordinator of General Education, VP and Assistant VP for Student Affairs, Director of Institutional Research, and VP for Finance and Management. A major focus of the committee is assessment of student learning. This organizational structure can promote collaboration of faculty and administration.

The role of the Provost and VP of Academic Affairs is to provide resources for the faculty; she does not have oversight or administrative responsibility for assessment of student learning or academic programs and support services. The VP for Planning indicated that the he was not a faculty member and was not the best person to respond to issues related to assessment of student learning and academic programs. The establishment of the committee promises to facilitate sharing and discussion of results with the various constituents in the University as well as a way to assess the assessment process.

The University has obtained a Title III grant to support the initiation of institutional assessment. Much of the grant funds will be used to purchase norm-referenced discipline based tests to assess student learning in degree programs and related general education content and skills attainment, e.g., critical thinking, reading, writing, mathematics and information literacy. Another report (March 2008), "Using Assessment Tools at Morgan State University: A Proposal", by the Coordinator of General Education and a Professor of Business recommends a battery of tests and surveys to evaluate student learning and instructor effectiveness to accomplish the CAP. It is not clear whether the funding for these commercial tests can be sustained after the Title III grant expires.

There is good evidence that assessment results have been used by some of the constituents of the institution prior to CAP. CAP is in its early stages of development and implementation, consequently there is not sufficient evidence that institution-wide mission-referenced assessment results are being used to any great extent to inform planning and resource allocation. A few of the strategic action plans submitted by the

academic, service, and administrative units of the University do indicate assessment of the achievement of strategic goals, with timelines and assessment targets.

Significant Accomplishment

Assessment of the General Education Program has a long history at the institution. It has been recognized as an exemplary program by external agencies. The assessments have been ongoing, student learning outcomes based, and institutionally focused. There is evidence that assessment of the general education program using local instruments at the department/course levels, performance-based data analyses, and national tests have resulted in improvements in student learning, the curriculum, and the process of assessment.

Suggestions

The Team suggests that the institution identify a senior administrative person in Academic Affairs, reporting to the Provost, to provide leadership for the faculty regarding assessment of student learning and programs. The Provost and the VP for Planning and Information Technology along with other members of the Management and/or Extended Management Team can consider the outcomes of the CAP.

The Team suggests that multiple measures be used in assessment. Measures, both quantitative and qualitative, which exist or are to be developed, can be used along with tests that provide evidence of end-point achievement or value added achievement.

The Team suggests that one or more faculty be invited to participate in the primary Baldridge training activities.

The Team strongly suggests that the institution conduct an "assessment mapping", an institution-wide inventory of current assessment activities, results, and institutional data/information reports.

The Team suggests that the institution establish mission-based institutional effectiveness outcomes/goals.

Recommendations

The Team recommends that the institution re-examine and rewrite the Comprehensive Assessment Plan to include mission-based assessment goals for student learning, academic programs, services and administrative processes.

The Team recommends that the institution implement the revised CAP in timely fashion.

Standard 8: Student Admissions

The institution seeks to admit students whose interests, goals, and abilities are congruent with its mission and seeks to retain them through the pursuit of the students' educational goals.

The institution meets this standard.

<u>Summary of Evidence and Findings</u>

Morgan State University has established admissions policies that reflect the institution's mission statement. A review of the data indicates that undergraduate program enrollment is flat and graduate program enrollment has increased over the most recent five-year period. The effectiveness of newly developed enrollment strategies, including work being done by the Enrollment Management Advisory Committee and the institution's participation in Noel-Levitz programs, has positioned the university to strengthen undergraduate enrollment and retention.

Since the Periodic Review Report in 2003, Morgan State has begun to develop an assessment plan which will, when fully operational, assist with better alignment of enrollment strategies with desired outcomes. Organizational changes have already been made, most notably reassigning the enrollment management function to the Office of the Provost. Under this new arrangement, the success of data-driven enrollment decisions will be heavily dependent on expanded cooperation and collaboration among Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, academic program faculty, and various support constituencies including alumni, student athletes, etc.

While the university clearly has some challenges to meet enrollment targets, particularly at the undergraduate level, staff are confident in accepting this challenge. The majority of students admitted are "regularly-admitted students." The increased refinement of Banner utilization to better seamlessly integrate data will assist with future admissions/financial aid awarding cycles.

Given that undergraduate student persistence and graduation rates are not at desired levels, the university continues to examine reasons for undergraduate student attrition through appropriate committees. In particular, an examination of policies and procedures in place regarding lack of payment by students and course schedule cancellations should be undertaken to identify ways to improve retention and participation in university and other payment plans.

There is evidence that the establishment of a university-wide enrollment management advisory committee, coupled with increased data analysis through Noel-Levitz and the establishment of a new Transfer Evaluation Center have been productive.

The academy has a demonstrated commitment of working at all levels to increase enrollment from representative constituencies, particularly Hispanic. While some of these

efforts have been productive, additional initiatives need to be considered to achieve goals to increase student representation from contiguous and nearby counties.

Significant Accomplishments

Efforts to improve the facilities and infrastructure are well-documented and have contributed to increased student satisfaction.

The effort to attract, retain and graduate "high ability" students is impressive.

Suggestions

Continue progress toward expanded use of Banner for integration and ease of registration, grade reporting, financial aid packaging and billing.

New ways to market and promote availability of payment plans should be implemented in order to improve retention.

The institution should establish goals to achieve a diverse student body, including "at-risk students".

The effect of perceived poor customer service on enrollment and retention rates should be examined.

Efforts to better understand patterns of student enrollment and attrition and the effect of student services on retention and graduation should remain a priority.

The balance of evening versus day academic and support program offerings should be examined.

The institution should analyze: the desired balance of baccalaureate and graduate programs; improved revenue streams including system and external sources; and an appropriate tuition and fee structure to ensure high quality academic programs that can be effectively marketed, maintained and expanded.

The Opportunities for Improvement as outlined in the Self-Study should be embraced.

Standard 9: Student Support Services

The institution provides student support services reasonably necessary to enable each student to achieve the institution's goals for students.

The institution meets this standard.

Summary of Evidence and Findings

A wide array of support services provides opportunities for Morgan students to interact with each other with the addition of a new student center. A walk-through of the facility reveals a certain pride and spirit among students and community members. The new student center provides excellent opportunities for student community building and personal development. Discussions with student leaders, random students, student support staff and others were enlightening and validated written materials shared with team members.

At the same time, there are strong indicators that a vibrant and engaging co-curricular program promotes community building and development of personal connections both on- and off-campus in a structured, organized, and responsive fashion. A comprehensive and supportive community life and co-curricular program also buttresses the vigorous academic regimen of classes and scholarly activities. The University is to be commended for establishing community life and personal development as a hallmark of the total educational experience for Morgan students. A vibrant and engaging residential life program augments total student development in a substantial way. The University continues to focus attention on community life enhancement and leadership development as a hallmark of the total educational experience for undergraduate students.

The value of the athletic and recreational programs as part of the total learning experience cannot be underestimated. It is clear to the review team that the athletic and recreational program affords students the opportunity to have a total educational experience at the University. Recent efforts to improve facilities and ongoing review and evaluation of program offerings suggest continued emphasis will be placed in these critical areas of student development.

The recently completed library complex has added significantly to the quality of academic life on campus. Renovation plans are scheduled for other facilities that will impact the quality of campus life as noted in the facilities master plan. In particular, efforts to centralize various student service functions in one location should remain a high priority. Investments of this nature are critical for community building and enriching the overall quality of life for students.

Efforts to provide a desired "mix" of representative constituency groups from regionally geographic areas are evident. Evidence suggests the university values diverse perspectives as reflected in its marketing campaign and student support services organizational structure.

A recent (December 2007) exit survey of seniors revealed higher levels of satisfaction with web registration, the bookstore, counseling services and student academic support services. Services receiving somewhat lower levels of satisfaction include the student financial aid office, campus security, the library, and the Bursar's office.

There was a palpable sense of pride and honor exhibited by those with whom team members met in the various meetings and interviews conducted. Longevity of faculty and staff employed by the University suggests their work at the University goes beyond only being a job. It is a vocation. It is clear that those who live and work at the university both welcome and respect this distinctive and unique learning environment, even given the challenges they face.

Suggestions

Emphasis on the growth of student financial support programs should continue so as to accelerate student persistence toward degree completion, thus improving retention and graduation rates.

The development and expansion of living-learning communities in support of academic programs and themes should be continued as additional resources become available.

Learning outcomes for co-curricular areas should be included in the action plan of the division of student affairs, including targeted outcomes for each functional area, and assessed regularly with the results shared with appropriate university decision makers responsible for resource allocation.

Ways to improve customer service should be explored.

The scope of student services for evening and graduate students should be reviewed to ensure that these students have access to similar services available during daytime hours. Services such as library hours (specifically quiet meeting areas conducive to teamwork), expanded food service hours, and health services were specifically raised by students.

Standard 10: Faculty

The institution's instructional, research, and service programs are devised, developed, monitored and supported by qualified professionals.

The institution meets this standard.

Summary of Evidence and Findings

The faculty is central to every institution of higher education. Who they are – whether they are well-qualified or not, whether there are enough of them relative to the

size of the student body – is an important determinant of the educational functioning of the institution. Whether the faculty has what it needs in terms of equipment, space to work and ancillary aspects of their daily lives on campus are also major determinants. Is the faculty content, and is it organized and distributed in an effective and efficient manner? A professor on one end of a log and a student on the other are no longer enough for education to occur – if they ever were.

At Morgan State the major task of regular faculty is teaching, with scholarship and writing coming second. Even in the doctoral programs the emphasis is on doing useful, practical research whether it is done by faculty or by graduate students in their dissertations. This orientation is perfectly appropriate at Morgan State, in terms of its history and position among the universities of Maryland. The drawback with this direction is that external funding may be more limited than in institutions where faculty also do research on "ivory tower" problems. Faculty are also expected to do a certain amount of work on committees and other kinds of service to the institution, although less at Morgan State than at many institutions where the teaching load is lower. Contractual faculty are not expected to be active researchers.

Are there enough faculty to assure that students are learning? On Page 66 of the Self-Study Report it is stated that the University employs 1386 full-time and 571 part-time faculty and staff, but in the following sentence there are said to be 514 academic faculty and staff and 427 full-time faculty members employed (a figure that agrees with the tables on that page. Of that number 158 are "contractual" (i.e. full-time, but without "regular" faculty status), a number that has been creeping higher since the last MSCHE report and is now higher than desirable. Of the regular faculty 87.9% hold terminal degrees. Of the temporary faculty (37.0%) only 28% have terminal degrees in their fields. There are 63.2% tenured faculty, distributed among ranks as Professor (19.3%), Associate Professor (35.3%), Assistant Professor (7.5%).

More than one-third of the faculty is classified as "other non-tenured status". Instructor was 14% ten years ago, but has now diminished to 1%, but the lowest category (Lecturer) accounts for 37% of the entire faculty. This rather startling figure exemplifies what one of the Deans expressed, namely that "one is juggling all the time"; with a limited number of faculty lines and a large number of students some compromises are necessary. There is a feeling among regular faculty that their teaching is better because contractual faculty are less involved (or because they must work so hard in the large classes they teach, or because they are less experienced).

Compared to many universities Morgan State appears to have a younger faculty. Among those between 48 and 57 years old there are 26 %, with only 12% over 68, and 37 % less than 47. Among regular faculty 174 are male and 95 female, while among contractual faculty there are more women, with 66 male and 92 female. These figures are more equable than at most major universities. The report contained little information on procedures for promotion and tenure, or sabbaticals. The report on Faculty Profile 2007 (prepared in March 2008 by Aurora T. Garcia) stated that "Over the past 12 months of

school year 2007, no one was promoted to the next rank". This was disputed by several faculty members in interviews.

At a historically black university the racial mix of the faculty is of some interest. At Morgan State 62% are black (two-thirds of these are African-Americans), 22% are white, and 16% are from other minority groups. They all share with the administration the conviction that teaching loads are too high, with undergraduate faculty having a 12 credit (4 courses per semester) teaching load. Graduate faculty have a 9 credit hour load (3 courses). High teaching loads are usually a sign that more faculty are needed to cover large numbers of students, and a major point made in the self-study report is that more regular faculty should be hired. The Baltimore school system student population is currently 89% African Americans. Within the public school system the graduation rate is 60% African Americans. Morgan State receives approximately 33% of high school graduates who are African-Americans.

Large universities in metropolitan areas all have the same difficulty if they take seriously their responsibility to the communities surrounding them. Although a racial match between students and faculty is not essential for learning to occur, such a match does contribute to the higher comfort level that the university strives for, and helps to ensure a supportive environment, particularly among black students (who are in the majority). The Self-Study Report alludes several times to a shortage of faculty to do advising, something that typically is done by faculty either formally or informally. Particularly among urban first-generation students, advising is extremely important.

How good is the faculty as teachers? All of them are evaluated annually by students, although the instrument used was not described, and it was not clear whether evaluations are verbal or written in open-ended essay form, or in questionnaires. The department chair also evaluates faculty teaching annually, but no details of that procedure were presented. Teaching assistants, part-time faculty, and contractual faculty do much of the instruction, but no comparisons with teaching by regular faculty were presented.

Are the faculty supported by the university in concrete terms such as office space, computers, secretarial help, and all the other little things that contribute to faculty contentment? Part-time and contractual faculty find offices restricted in number, and computers in short supply. While sabbaticals and summer research grants are awarded there are no details on how frequently they are awarded to the same individual, or how burdensome the applications are. There seems to be enough parking for faculty at every level, or many live near the campus. The bookstore, and the library appear adequate, both in relatively new buildings

The salary scales seem to be more equal between men and women than at many American universities, especially at the Professor level where females are higher paid on average than males (p.69). The only other comparative salary data presented are for the University of Maryland Baltimore County; except at the level of male Professors the salaries are comparable at UMBC. Approximately 47% of the faculty make less than $40,001, while 9% make over $100,000. The largest number (109) earn between $56,000

and $70,000.   There was no mention in any reports of unions for faculty. Large urban universities quite often do unionize, for a variety of reasons.

No mention is made of competition from "for profit" universities. Is Morgan State concerned about University of Phoenix and Strayer, and similar institutions? If there is starting to be increased competition for black students among other Maryland public institutions (as stated in the Self-Study Report) then "for profit" schools may well become competitors.

Suggestions

Make every effort to reduce the teaching load of regular faculty.

Provide incentives and recognition for faculty research and scholarship.

Standard 11: Educational Offerings

The institution's educational offerings display academic content, rigor, and coherence appropriate to its higher education mission. The institution identifies student learning goals and objectives, including knowledge and skills, for its educational offerings.

The institution meets this standard.

Summary of Evidence and Findings

Morgan State University offers forty-one (41) bachelor's degrees, one post-baccalaureate degree certificate, thirty (30) master's degrees and fourteen (14) doctorates. As indicated in the self-study report, the Institution has added twenty-four new degree programs in the past ten years. Eighteen (75%) of the new degree programs are post-baccalaureate degrees: ten (41.67%) are master's degree programs and eight (33.33%) are doctorates.

Nineteen professional accreditation and certification agencies have accredited Morgan State University undergraduate and graduate degree programs. With the addition of new degree programs at the doctoral level, the institution was reclassified in 2006 by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching from a Master's Comprehensive I institution to a Doctoral/Research institution.

The institution has built four new facilities and purchased two other buildings to meet the needs generated by this significant number of new programs.

The institution has recently opened the new Soper Library. Library resources are discussed in the catalog and in detail on the Institution's web page. The institution has a library collection that includes more than 400,000 volumes, access to the Maryland

Digital Library and one of the larger university collections of African-American materials in the country. The institution also has access through a borrowing agreement that makes the library resources of the University System of Maryland (USM) available to students, faculty, and staff. Morgan State University also participates in the Baltimore Academic Libraries Consortium (BALC) which makes students eligible for reciprocal borrowing privileges at fourteen BALC libraries. All members of the BALC network except Hopkins participates in BALC and have reciprocal borrowing privileges at all of them.

According to the Five-Year Strategic Plan for the Soper Library, 2008-2012, the library is organized into seven departments that fall under two divisions: the Public Services Division and the Technical Services Division. The current professional library staff includes the Director of Library Services, two associate division directors, an assistant director for information technology services, department heads, and eleven full-time and two part-time librarians. Support staff includes thirteen full-time positions, two part-time employees and student employees.

Based on a review of the self-study, selected accreditation and continuation of accreditation letters, institutional documents such as the graduate and undergraduate catalogs, a large sample of undergraduate syllabi, selected graduate syllabi, division and school annual reports and action plans, the library's strategic plan, and interviews with administrators, selected faculty and students, the team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard.

The new degree programs are directly related to mission goals since the programs meet the needs of the state and focus on areas and at degree levels where African Americans and other minorities are underrepresented. The number of accredited programs serves as evidence of the quality and rigor of many of Morgan State's professional undergraduate and graduate degree programs.

The accredited undergraduate and graduate degree programs and those programs seeking accreditation clearly meet key fundamental elements of the standard. Program goals are stated in terms of student learning outcomes and the programs are periodically evaluated. Course syllabi incorporate expected learning outcomes. Evaluation results serve as a basis for improving instruction and student development under the respective assessment requirements of the professional and certification accrediting agencies.

However, despite institution requirements and school initiatives, all academic programs at Morgan State University, most notably at the undergraduate level in the College of Liberal Arts, do not have clear goals, objectives and learning expectations. Numerous course syllabi also do not have published learning expectations. As a result, the institution has an inconsistent approach to program and course assessment.

An Ad Hoc Task force composed of faculty and administrators recently developed policies and procedures to implement periodic review of graduate and undergraduate programs to address this inconsistency. The procedures include the assessment of learning objectives and curricular effectiveness.

Learning resources, facilities, instructional equipment, library services, and professional library staff appear to be adequate to support the institution's educational programs based on the new library and planning documents and consortiums. In the Five-Year Strategic Plan for the Library, the institution acknowledges that three librarian positions have been cut "during periods of fiscal exigency." The institution also noted challenges faced by the library administration such as the necessity for longer hours and the creation of an information literacy program.

As part of the Library's Five-Year Strategic Plan, the institution's library staff, faculty, and administration will collaborate during the next academic year to assess the current library instruction program and determine courses and programs offered through distance education arrangements.

The institution has clearly published and implemented policies and procedures regarding transfer credit posted on its web page and in the catalog.

The institution's self-study provided specific evidence of the development of research and independent thinking that characterize graduate curricula. Faculty and administrators noted the positive impact of graduate programs on the qualifications and research orientation of new faculty and on the institution. However, the relatively heavy teaching load for faculty at the institution may have an adverse impact on the ability of the institution to develop research initiatives.

Suggestion

The institution should develop and implement a uniform assessment program for all of its educational offerings which includes an assessment of student learning and program outcomes relative to the goals and objectives of degree programs and the use of the results to improve student learning and program effectiveness.

Recommendation

The institution should implement its periodic review of graduate and undergraduate programs using the policies and procedures developed by the Ad Hoc Task Force on the Periodic Review of Programs.

Standard 12: General Education

The institution's curricula are designed so that students acquire and demonstrate college-level proficiency in general education and essential skills, including at least oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, and technological competency.

The institution meets this standard.

Summary of Evidence and Findings

Morgan State University has a well-established exemplary General Education Program "based on the principle that General Education is one of the most significant components of undergraduate education." (Catalog, page 72). The institution's General Education Program is characterized as "a broad network of courses, tests and extra-curricular experiences aimed at ensuring a common core of liberal arts knowledge, skills and collegiate experiences for all Morgan students." (Page 72) The institution's general education courses have "seventeen discreet objectives" and "thirteen goals." (Pages 72-73)

Morgan State University students are required to take forty-six (46) credits of General Education courses. The requirements include twenty-two (22) credits of competency-based courses: six credits of freshman writing (including research); three credits of critical thinking; eight credits of biological and physical sciences; three or four credits of mathematics; and two credits of computer literacy. Students must successfully complete twenty-four (24) credits from knowledge-based courses: six credits of interdisciplinary, multicultural humanities; six credits of world or United States history; three credits of Africana studies; three credits of an arts and humanities elective; three credits of a social and behavioral sciences elective; two credits of healthful living; and one credit of physical education.

Department-generated exit examinations for each of the general education courses are used to assess the individual student learning. Students also must pass a sophomore-level Speech Proficiency Examination or course equivalency and a junior-level Writing Proficiency Examination or course equivalency.

The institution's General Education Program essentially has three tracks using special sections of general education courses designed to address the needs of "students whose SAT and placement test scores suggest that they might benefit from studying at a different pace" and honors students, and the students that fall between these groups.

Based on a review of the self-study, institutional documents such as the undergraduate catalog, a sample of general education course syllabi, college and school annual reports and action plans, and interviews with Coordinator for General Education, the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts, administrators, selected faculty and students, the team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard.

The institution has aligned six of its General Education Program objectives with the fundamental elements of this standard.

The implementation of the General Education Program corresponds with the institution's mission and clearly incorporates the study of values, ethics, and diverse perspectives.

The institution, however, has not explicitly assessed how the skills and abilities developed in general education are applied in the major or concentration.

The speech and writing proficiency exams are institutional requirements designed to assess whether students are proficient in oral and written communication. Course exit exams are used to assure that students are proficient in scientific and quantitative reasoning, and technological competency appropriate to the relevant discipline. The institution also participates in the *Collegiate Learning Assessment* and the *National Survey of Student Engagement* to assess its general education program. Currently, the institution does not conduct a General Education Program assessment. The institution assigns the responsibility to assess specific general education courses to the appropriate departments.

The Coordinator for General Education and the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts also are conducting internal assessments of general education course syllabi and general education course grade distributions in preparation for the upcoming institutional review of the General Education Program. The Coordinator and the Dean expect to develop and implement a comprehensive General Education Program assessment plan. General education course requirements are clearly and accurately described in the catalog and on the website. However, the general education program's objectives and goals are discussed under the College of Liberal Arts rather than with the course requirements.

Significant Accomplishments

The institution is commended for its program of general education and its ability to accommodate the variety of students enrolled at the institution, consistent with its mission.

Suggestion
The institution should publish General Education course requirements with General Education objectives and goals.

Standard 13: Related Educational Activities

The institution's programs or activities that are characterized by particular content, focus, location, mode of delivery, or sponsorship meet appropriate standards.

The institution meets this standard.

<u>Summary of Evidence and Findings</u>

Students who are under-prepared constitute a substantial segment of the student body at Morgan State. Large public urban universities usually face this problem because public urban secondary schools rarely prepare their students very well for higher education. When they are offered, pre-college level courses, taken prior to or concurrent with enrollment in degree credit courses, can prepare students for success in achieving educational goals. At this point Morgan State has 6 students in non-credit vocational continuing education courses.

Systematic procedures for identifying admitted students who are not fully prepared for college level study are followed by referral to relevant courses and support services for under-prepared students. Additionally, remedial or pre-collegiate courses that carry no academic degree credit are conducted through the Pre-college Studies and Access/Success programs. Morgan State, in their Self-Study Report, describes a number of their strategic goals. One of them is to serve as a catalyst for the improvement of the surrounding community and the City of Baltimore. Given their limited resources, Morgan has a long-standing practice of working with the local public schools and is always looking for additional opportunities to provide support and services to the school system

Experiential learning may be important, particularly with under-prepared students. An institution's policies and procedures should provide appropriate consideration, consistent with sound educational practice, for the student who has gained college level learning from other sources. College-level learning must be defined, and it should be stated clearly by the institution that credit is awarded for demonstrated learning, and not simply for life experience.

Morgan State does not yet have branch campuses or other instructional sites, and the University has not become involved in distance learning. There are online courses, but no online programs; there do not appear to be concrete plans for these kinds of outreach programs. The closest part of the University to a branch campus is the Estuarine Research Center on Chesapeake Bay, which is devoted to marine studies. This Center was turned over to the University by the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia, who found that they could no longer support and staff it.

An Academic Development Center provides mentoring and a diversity initiative, and is concerned with helping students with the transition to college from secondary schools that are often inadequate. Minimum SAT scores (Verbal plus Quantitative) must be 850, with a GPA of at least 2.5. The Office of Student Retention reports that students leave most frequently for financial reasons, followed by personal difficulties, and then grade issues. Faculty are frequently involved in keeping students at Morgan State. The percentage of students who return after leaving varies from 69% to 82%.

The Honors Program is less concerned with fostering academic excellence than with making sure that scholarships reach the appropriate students. Ten million dollars are

earmarked annually for scholarship aid to undergraduate students, of which seven million dollars goes to Honors students. Graduate student aid amounts to two million more. About one in ten undergraduate students receive scholarships. For their first two years at Morgan, Honors students are in separate courses just for them, after which they are merged into the regular courses, where the faculty can no longer identify them as Honors students.

Upward Bound is a feeder program for high school students in Baltimore. The students come to the Morgan State campus where they begin to gain an appreciation for college-level work. Alumni are also a source of students from around the country.

The University Transfer Center also attempts to increase the number of students who enter after their first two years at community colleges in the Baltimore area, and from other regions of Maryland and surrounding states. Several of these "feeder schools" contribute as many as 30 students/year. There is serious competition for these transfers from the University of Maryland in College Park, the University of Maryland Baltimore County, and from Towson University.

The Writing Center on campus does not have a good reputation for success among students or faculty. Individual advising is provided at an Advising Center staffed by professionals and informally assisted by regular faculty who volunteer their time, something that faculty members around the country frequently do. Pre-College advising is also provided, particularly for engineering students who may be insufficiently prepared in science and math. Morgan State is one of the top ten universities nationally who are graduating African-American doctorates. They must be doing something right.

Significant Accomplishment

The University is quite successful in attracting and retaining students who might otherwise not receive a college education.

Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning

Assessment of student learning demonstrates that, at graduation, or other appropriate points, the institution's students have knowledge, skills, and competencies consistent with institutional and appropriate higher education goals.

The institution meets this standard.

Summary of Evidence and Findings

Institutional-Level Assessment, Including General Education

The University has a Comprehensive Assessment Plan (CAP) for Student Learning and Institutional Effectiveness in which it states, among other things, that an assessment of student learning will be a major component of its CAP and assessment of all other areas will reflect a commitment to learning. It goes on to say that assessment of student learning will benefit from the "value added" approach when measuring the level of student achievement against where they are when they complete academic programs.

Administratively the plan states there will be an Office of Assessment responsible directly to the President of the University and that it would work in collaboration with the various units, especially the Division of Planning and Information Technology, in collecting, processing, and reporting assessment data.

Although the University plans to have an Office of Assessment, this is not currently the case. Responsibility for assessment of student learning rests with an Assessment Committee with responsibility for data collection, summary and dissemination lying primarily with the Vice President for Planning and Information Technology. There is therefore no centralized coordination of assessment.

General Education Program

The CAP states that a study of assessment at Morgan State University revealed that "one of its glaring weaknesses" lies in the lack of an overall assessment of student learning and program effectiveness in the General Education Program at the University level. It further states that the University will use national standardized tests, specifically ETS's Measure of Academic Proficiency and Progress (MAPP) Tests of reading, mathematics, writing and critical thinking skills and/or other instruments tied more closely to general education content areas. These tests will be administered to students either at the end of the sophomore year or when they have completed the freshman- and sophomore-level general education courses.

Even prior to this the University has been submitting a "Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report" to the Maryland Higher Education Commission. The last one prior to the CAP was dated August 2, 2004. In the 2004 report the University clearly addresses and defines the five areas of competency, consistent with Standard 12. It further states that assessment of individual student learning is embedded in the courses, exit examinations, a university-wide Speech Proficiency Examination and Writing Proficiency Examination, and in program assessments. Both direct and indirect measures of competencies are defined. The June 2007 report discusses the CAP and also addresses university-wide assessment with nationally-normed instruments, specifically the Collegiate Learning Assessment and the National Survey of Student Engagement. The report also describes other assessments being conducted at the departmental level.

Other University Requirements

The CAP states that those which do not fall under the General Education Program have the same assessment requirements and follow the same assessment procedures. Special attention is given to students in developmental courses and writing and speech proficiency examinations.

Beyond the CAP and reports to the Maryland Higher Education Commission, a third report, "Using Assessment Tools at Morgan State University: A Proposal" was printed March 3, 2008 to follow the recommendations of the Student Learning Outcomes Committee, which was established in Fall 2007.

The University is doing a commendable job with assessment of student learning in the General Education Program. Since the development of the Comprehensive Assessment Plan there has been a progressive realignment of Institutional-Level Assessment to meet the requirements of Standard 14.

Program/College/Course-Level Assessment

Training in the disciplines will also follow a pattern of assessment similar to that outlined for the General Education Program, except where professional accreditation standards require otherwise. Each major academic unit is expected to have defined and published learning expectations and to use a wide range of instruments to assess student learning. Student learning assessment will for the most part take place at the course level.

To measure potential value added of General Education, the Student Learning Outcomes Committee has recommended a battery of tests to evaluate student learning and instructor effectiveness. The committee has recommended a workshop to inform the faculty at the August session of the CAP including the role of assessment, using test results at the individual, departmental, school and university levels.

Adjunct Faculty

Adjunct faculty teach roughly 38 percent of undergraduate courses. It is possible this has an impact on student learning. While not definitive, a study of the performance of students in general education found that those students were more likely to obtain an 'A' or 'B' in a general education course if this student had been taught by regular, rather than adjunct, faculty the previous semester.

Course Syllabi

The University Council, whose members include representation from all segments of the University community including two-thirds faculty, approves the Faculty Handbook. The most recent Handbook was published in August 2004, prior to creation of the CAP, and does not deal with course syllabi or assessment. The College of Liberal Arts has a separate Faculty Manual which was published Fall 2006 has a section on course syllabi policy and guidelines. While these guidelines discuss goals or measurable student behavior, they do not address learning objectives. A cursory examination of course syllabi showed that while some had clearly stated course objectives, expected outcomes, and methods of assessment, others did not. Additionally the College of Liberal Arts Faculty Manual includes templates for course evaluations, faculty evaluation of students, supervisor evaluation of faculty teaching, and student evaluation of faculty teaching.

Suggestions

The institution should follow through on its original plan to create an Office of Assessment. This Office should be empowered to integrate and systematize current assessment practices and use the results to improve student learning for the entire institution.

The institution should further research the impact of the use of adjunct and/or contractual faculty on student performance.

The University should revise the University Faculty Handbook and incorporate best assessment practices.