

## Criterion 1

**The organization operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, the administration, faculty, staff, and students.**

### *Introduction*

*We stand in a position of incalculable responsibility to the great wave of population overspreading the valley of the Mississippi. Destiny seems to point out this valley as the depository of the great heart of the nation. From this center mighty pulsations for good or evil must in future flow which shall not only affect the fortunes of the Republic but reach in their influence other and distant nations of the earth.* Founders Gate Inscription, December, 1850.

These words which highlight the introductory page of the University catalog encapsulate many of the key values to which the University has adhered throughout its history. The Founders Gate inscription establishes prima facie evidence that the University was created for the purpose of educating future leaders who in understanding the nature of their social responsibilities would use their education to better their country and their world. We see the same sentiments reflected in contemporary language within the three principal documents that speak to the university's purpose, its Mission Statement, Vision Statement, and Strategic Plan (<http://www.iwu.edu/aboutiwu/ma.shtml>; [http://www.iwu.edu/president/Strategic/vision\\_statement.shtml](http://www.iwu.edu/president/Strategic/vision_statement.shtml)). Constructed in response to challenges enumerated during the previous Self-Study, the University Mission documents are living, breathing entities that find an organic presence within the university community. But in a sense, this has always been the case.

By admitting students of color, women and Japanese immigrants to the university during the late 1800s, in an age when racism, sexism and nativist xenophobia were widely sanctioned rather than openly contested, the University forcefully articulated a clear sense of social justice that spoke to its core mission. Although never completely immune to the racism and sexism that has marked this nation's history, the commitment to work toward social justice remains to this day as does the recognition of the importance of experiential and active learning, as evidenced by the John Wesley Powell expedition conducted with IWU students one hundred and thirty-five years ago. Similarly, the creativity, critical thinking and communicative skill that has inspired noted alumni such as academy award nominee Richard Jenkins, actors Christina Moore, Alison LaPlaca, and Frankie Faison, or soprano Dawn Upshaw to achieve international acclaim, is in evidence on the campus on a regular basis. It is present when so many of our students continually demonstrate excellence in theatrical and musical performance, in public exhibitions of their artistic work, in their scholarly achievements and in their civic engagement efforts. The institutional values, as expressed within the University's Mission documents therefore represent a shared formal discourse that contributes to their foundational and elastic character, whereby they are continually reaffirmed and reinterpreted by those succeeding generations that are associated with the institution. In the following discussion of criterion 1, a discussion of this process will be extended and further clarified.

1a. The organization's mission documents are clear and articulate publicly the organization's commitments.

Three core statements constitute the University Mission documents. The University Mission Statement is designed to communicate, in clear and concise fashion, the basic values the Illinois Wesleyan University community shares. The University Vision Statement has been constructed to elaborate upon those values with a greater degree of specificity, as befits a document whose purpose is to speak with clarity about the ways in which the University's current and future aspirations should be defined. And, the University Strategic Plan has been designed to create the bridge between words and actions, offering a framework through which those values can and should be expressed in relevant and exciting ways. Taken together, the University Mission Statements reflect a deep set of commitments to the pursuit of liberal inquiry and critical thinking, lifelong learning, social justice, diversity, global citizenship and environmental sustainability. Key terms of the University Mission Statement, for example, stress the importance of "preparing students for democratic citizenship and life in a global society." They also associate the importance of strength in character with critical thinking and a spirit of inquiry. The University Vision Statement further states, "the University will stimulate a passion for lifelong learning, seeking to help its community members make connections among ideas, values, and experiences so that they may understand and act more effectively in the world." And, the second goal of the University Strategic Plan specifically calls for increased effort to "enhance the campus environment so as to foster students' intellectual, social, ethical, and personal development." In all of these cases, the importance of delivering a liberal education is grounded in its capacity to facilitate social improvement conceived in the broadest of terms.

Other elements of the University Mission Statement also find their voice within the Vision and Strategic Planning statements. While the Mission Statement speaks of the importance of fostering a commitment to diversity, social justice and environmental sustainability, the Vision Statement states specifically that

the curriculum and co-curriculum will promote a strong sense of Illinois Wesleyan's place in the local and in an interconnected global community, and the University will demonstrate a meaningful commitment to social justice and environmental sustainability. To secure the compelling educational and social benefits of diversity and to counter the particular legacy of discrimination in our society, the University will strive to attract and retain students, faculty, staff, and trustees from a wide range of experiences, viewpoints, cultures, and backgrounds, with special emphasis on racial and ethnic diversity. In this setting, all members of the University community—students, faculty, staff, parents, alumni, Trustees, and friends—will be valued contributors to campus life.

The Strategic Plan also talks in clear terms about the importance of promoting greater diversity and a commitment to sustainability on the campus. The fact that these documents reinforce a common set of shared values is not surprising, for their

interconnectedness is intentional and their evolution reflects the changing nature of the institution. The current documents that express the University's core values were revised and constructed in concert with one another. The Mission Statement, historically subject to periodic revision, was approved in 1989, modified slightly in 1991-92 and again in 1993, was then revised in 2002-2003, whereupon it was approved by the faculty and Board of Trustees in the fall of 2003. This coincided with a Strategic Planning process that was initiated before the last comprehensive evaluation visit team conducted its site visit in February, 2003. The Vision Statement was approved by the Board of Trustees and endorsed by the Strategic Planning Steering Committee in 2004. That committee also laid some of the initial groundwork for the University Strategic Plan, enacted by its successor, the Strategic Planning and Budgeting Committee and formally approved by the Board of Trustees in February 2006. The fact that the mission documents began to be revised and constructed *prior* to the completion of the most recent evaluation team visit suggests that members of the University community themselves knew that renewed efforts regarding an accurate representation of the changing nature of the institution was appropriate, so that needed strategic planning could be initiated. The fact that these statements were constructed with broad University community participation further speaks to a shared recognition of their importance. A brief examination as to how the Mission Statement was revised is instructive in this vein.

When comparing the mission statement of 1993 with that of 2003, three differences are noteworthy. The 2003 document specifically highlights the University's commitment to social justice and sustainability. It highlights the importance of interdisciplinary study and off-campus learning, and it defines what a liberal education entails by explaining how it "deepens the specialized knowledge of a discipline with a comprehensive world view." Such changes honestly reflect transitions that were occurring within the University, including the increasing popularity of an Environmental Studies curricular program, the growth of International Studies as another important interdisciplinary major on campus accompanied by a significant increase in the number of students studying abroad, the institutionalization of an elaborate general education program, and a recognition that a prerequisite for preparing students for democratic citizenship was ensuring their understanding of what social justice entails, in normative and empirical terms. Thus it is fair to conclude that both the impetus to create and revise mission documents and the actual changes in language that were adopted were neither cosmetic nor superficial, but reflected definite ways in which the University had transformed itself from the 1990s to through the first decade of the millennium. They give evidence to the contention that vibrant learning communities periodically seek ways to clarify their values and in so doing rededicate their efforts.

### *Shared Concern for the Needs of Students*

The one word that is common to all of the quotes cited above and the term that most consistently appears within all of the documents from which they come is the word "student." Illinois Wesleyan University's longevity is directly tied to its success in liberally educating students, and it is not an exaggeration to note that it is concern for the intellectual development of its students through exposure to liberal education that not only is the institution's lasting legacy, but is the core value that allows it to successfully

function not simply as an organization, but as a community. The term community is explicitly defined within the University Vision Statement to include students, faculty, staff, parents, alumni, trustees, and friends because all of these constituencies play a vital role in helping to ensure that the educational experiences the institution provides are meaningful and have lifelong consequence. But it is their concern for students' intellectual and personal development through exposure to liberal education that transforms the concerns that individuals within these various groups may express into an institutional imperative that is collectively embraced and supported. It should further be noted that students play an important role in the ways through which the values embedded in the Mission documents are actualized. In addition to having participated in the construction of these documents, they continue to sit on important governance committees and their participation in campus-wide ceremonies where reference to mission document values is stated publicly and explicitly, is not only encouraged but it is expected,

Indeed, the Illinois Wesleyan University remains a consistent source of collective pride and institutional strength. Befitting an institution where the student body has been and continues to be extremely capable, demonstrating a degree of proficiency and aptitude at the high school level that give it the capacity to take advantage of the caliber of education the University offers. As the campus catalog states,

Illinois Wesleyan University welcomes applications from students who seek a challenging collegiate education founded on the liberal arts. Students who wish to pursue liberal arts fields within a setting where professional studies and fine arts are available, as well as students with professional and fine arts interests who want a firm foundation in liberal studies, will find Illinois Wesleyan especially appealing.

It is thus appropriate that the mission documents express goals for student learning that are commensurate with students' abilities and those goals are deservedly quite ambitious. Goals such as fostering creativity, critical thinking, effective communication, strength of character, and a spirit of inquiry" (Mission Statement), graduating individuals who are "socially aware, environmentally informed, ethical and engaged citizens," (Vision Statement), affording them "the greatest possibilities for realizing individual potential..." (Mission Statement) assume that the student body for whom they are intended can successfully achieve them, and that the entire campus community can facilitate in making their success possible. In order to make this occur, the education of our students is indeed a joint effort. As the Vision Statement says,

All students will have opportunities to work closely, and often collaboratively with faculty and staff, and all will be challenged to engage in multicultural interactions of national and international dimension. Students will be encouraged to develop their capacities, cultivate their individual talents, and pursue multiple interests, in a manner that fosters self-confidence coupled with humility.

As important as words may be though, if they are hidden or sheltered from the University community or from the external environment, their power and usefulness is marginalized.

Thus, the mission documents which we have discussed are located in spaces that are easily accessible to public viewing: within printed materials such as the University catalog and on the University's public website. Suffice it to conclude that the University is naturally proud of the values expressed in these documents and publicizes them regularly during opportune moments.

**1b. In its mission documents, the organization recognizes the diversity of its learners, other constituencies, and the greater society it serves.**

Illinois Wesleyan University's commitment to recognizing the diversity of its learners is evident in its mission documents. The Strategic Plan is instructive in this case, as it devotes one of its goals explicitly to the importance of increasing and sustaining campus diversity among students, faculty, staff, administrators, and trustees. Indeed, the history of the strategic planning process, as described below, is noteworthy because its importance was closely tied to the need to create a more diverse community at Illinois Wesleyan.

Parallel to the process by which the first language in the Vision Statement was being developed, the BOT [Board of Trustees] formally resolved in February 2004 that work should begin immediately on a strategic goal that the entire Illinois Wesleyan community agreed should be the University's first priority- Creating a More Diverse Community. Intensive work by the SPSC [Strategic Planning Steering Committee] in Spring 2004 allowed Acting President McNew to present a Diversity goal statement and strategies to the BOT approval at its May 2004 meeting. President Wilson presented the first progress report on achieving that goal at the May 2005 BOT meeting. ... (Background and history of the Strategic Plan).

*Today, Diversity is listed as one of the six goals within the University Strategic Plan. The goal, in its full text, states that the university is committed to: Increase and sustain diversity among students, faculty, staff, administrators, and trustees; with a special focus on attaining 'critical masses' from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups, create a welcoming, inclusive, multicultural campus where all community members appreciate and respect the diversity of the nation and the world."* In addition five strategies are listed in support of the goal and they include:

- *Developing a campus-wide commitment to diversity as an institutional priority and foster the sustained community will to achieve the University's diversity goals.*
- *Use strong, persistent, and culturally specific practices to recruit and retain a diverse student body, with emphasis on racial and ethnic diversity.*
- *Recruit and retain a diverse faculty, Cabinet, and staff, with emphasis on racial and ethnic diversity.*
- *Develop and sustain a campus climate that welcomes diversity and multiculturalism and stresses their essential role in maintaining the quality of IWU' educational programs*
- *Promote and strengthen the involvement of diverse groups of alumni, friends, and community leaders in the life of the university. (Strategic Plan).*

In point of fact, the University concern for enhancing diversity on the campus has been a source of consistent discussion since the previous accreditation review. In the spring of

2003, for example, an external consultant prepared a report detailing the state of multiculturalism on the campus (Yvonne C. Jones, "Illinois Wesleyan University Multicultural Report.") Some of the findings from the report emphasized the need to create greater multicultural representation within major governance structures, developing a more specific job description for the Office of Multicultural Affairs and a more centralized focus for the Multicultural Center, and enhancing recruitment strategies for minority faculty, staff, and students. Upon Board of Trustee endorsement of the goal to create a more diverse community, the Board itself established a Diversity Initiatives Committee, to monitor progress in meeting the goal, and that group has met regularly subsequent to its formation. In May, 2005, at the same time that the President was reporting about initial progress in meeting the diversity goal, the University sponsored a campus wide workshop exploring diversity issues organized by the National Coalition Building Institute, whereby communicative strategies for supporting tolerance were discussed. ("Welcoming Diversity: Building Effective Relationships: A Program of the National Coalition Building Institute, presented by the NCBI Illinois).

Upon the hiring of a new provost in 2006, a number of organizational models were discussed with reference to implementing the Diversity Goal in support of the strategic planning process. The current organizational structure, created in 2009, is the University Council on Diversity (UCD), whose work is summarized at length in the discussion of criterion 2. What is particularly significant in the Diversity Strategic Planning goal as well as in the work of the UCD is that diversity is defined in terms more expansive than those that denote numerical benchmarks. The phrase within the text of the goal, "create a welcoming, inclusive, multicultural campus where all community members appreciate and respect the diversity of the nation and the world," is thus instructive for its use of the words 'inclusive,' 'appreciate,' and 'respect.' The UCD specifically has adopted AACU language regarding the importance of 'inclusive excellence' as a supplemental mandate for its work, and both the Provost Office and the Human Resources Office have agreed to use such language in their recruiting materials.

Diversity at Illinois Wesleyan is thus conceived of as much as a disposition as it is a category. As a result, diversity is tied not merely to an acknowledgement of the fact that peoples in the U.S. and the world are different from one another for the purpose of informing the University community of that empirical fact. Nor is the goal one of attempting to simply representing external demographic diversity in more realistic terms. Similarly, the purpose of recognizing the existence of diversity is not confined to generating a simple tolerance for difference, placating the fears that accompany encounters with those with whom one is unfamiliar. Although all of the above rationales have their merit, one is reminded that the history of the institution and the comments made earlier with regard to important elements of the Mission and Vision statements suggest that diversity at Illinois Wesleyan is tied more directly to a commitment to work toward social justice. As the Strategic Plan notes, it is not simply different racial and ethnic groups who should be the subject of targeted recruitment to the University community but those who are "under-represented." The Vision Statement is even more emphatic in stating that such recruitment is important so as "To secure the compelling educational and social benefits of diversity and to counter the particular legacy of discrimination in our society..."

## *Diversity and Tolerance*

At the same time, the University's commitment to diversity is one that implies that the importance of actively engaging and interacting with those who are different from us is intrinsically related to the more general values of liberal inquiry the institution espouses. A commitment to diversity at Illinois Wesleyan demands that one value the unique gifts others bring to the community to better appreciate one's own special abilities and limitations, and the University views such interaction as crucial if exposure to a liberal education is to be effective. Indeed, the campus emphasis upon curricular diversity with regard to core liberal arts and professional program options further speaks to a shared understanding of the importance of exposing oneself to a variety of experiences as an essential component of the learning process. The University's commitment to diversity is thus not only an ethical imperative but it enhances support for liberal inquiry in broader terms, complementing the curricular philosophy of the institution.

The University Vision Statement notes, "All members of the University community—students, faculty, staff, parents, alumni, Trustees, and friends—will be valued contributors to campus life." How then, in fact, does this happen? In part, one's value is tied to the sense of community the campus creates and one's role in supporting the shared values of the mission documents. But, as the Vision Statement assumes, one's affiliation with the University is more than that of association but requires contribution. In seeking and calling for the creation of a more diverse University community, the mission documents implicitly assume that individuals from diverse backgrounds have the capacity to make the University community stronger, not simply by expressing their own individuality, but by also enriching and deepening a shared view as to what a liberal education should entail. In order to feel comfortable entering this dialogue though, one has to feel that one's views will be respected, that statements applauding the virtues of diversity are more than platitudes, and that members of the University community are open and supportive of differing perspectives, whether they come from students, staff, faculty, or administrators. There is considerable evidence, detailed in the discussion of criterion 2, as to how the University has consciously worked to be a more inclusive and transparent organization with regard to decision-making of all types. Suffice it to state here that there is a balancing act that encourages individual free expression as a basis for promoting diverse perspectives and experiences, with the sense that as part of the University, all campus members share similar values with regard to the importance of promoting liberal education. This is articulated clearly within the Strategic Plan and its

The Student Development Goal within the Strategic Plan, for example, argues that the campus environment should be enhanced so as to foster students' intellectual, social, ethical, and personal development. Strategy B in support of that goal lists achieving holistic student wellness as an important objective, by "establishing a comprehensive program that provides opportunities for students to learn about and practice physical, emotional, vocational, spiritual, intellectual and social wellness." In a similar vein, Goal III within the Strategic Plan argues that the University should "Strengthen support for faculty and staff in their respective roles and create a community in which *all* are valued and encouraged to reach their potential." Strategy E in support of the goal argues that

faculty and staff wellness can be promoted by strengthening “proactive wellness programs and identifying and responding to evolving wellness needs of faculty and staff across campus.” In all of these cases, a respect for the health and wellness of the individual is expressed in categorical terms, thus asserting that the relationship between the health of the University community and its individual members is seamless.

In assessing how individuals are respected and their diverse perspectives are welcomed, it is instructive to comment upon what doesn't exist in University mission documents. First, the absence of any reference to a specific religious deity or denomination in any of these documents is worth emphasizing. One's religious affiliation is not assessed in determining one's qualifications for becoming a part of and participating in the University community. In addition, there are no codes of conduct or oaths of faith that are required of University members. To do so would violate the spirit and essence of a liberal education as Illinois Wesleyan has defined the term over the past century and a half.

To the extent that the Strategic Plan emphasizes the importance of attaining racial and ethnic diversity explicitly, while other aspects of diversity are mentioned in more implicit terms, it would be useful to revisit this part of the Strategic Plan and include language that recognizes disability, gender, sexual orientation, social class, and geographical background and as areas deserving of the specific attention an inclusive commitment to diversity would suggest. In practical terms, such a definition is already operational. However, it would be useful to construct language within the mission documents, particularly the Strategic Plan that reflects this reality.

### **1c. Understanding of and support for the mission pervade the organization.**

Upholding the values espoused in the mission documents does not simply occur as a result of personal good will, but depends upon organizational structures that are rational in their delineation of responsibility and flexible as befitting a community the size of a small liberal arts University. Indeed, the ease with which strategic planning has been linked to mission statement values is not accidental. There was a short time frame when the Mission statement was revised, the Vision Statement created, and the Strategic Plan developed. The *Transforming Lives* campaign began to be planned shortly afterwards and its goals clearly reflect priorities expressed within the Strategic Plan, as they particularly relate to the needs of students, faculty, and staff in their efforts to implement liberal education ideals. As a result, as is noted in the discussion of criterion 2, there is historical precedent for linking strategic planning and budgeting to the University mission. It is equally important to note that the campus wide structures that evolved as a result of this planning process, such as the Strategic Planning and Budgeting Committee and the University Council on Diversity, were designed from the start to include representation from the major campus constituencies, the SPBC including staff, student, trustee, faculty, and administration representatives, the UCD including staff, student, faculty and administration representation. So, not only have budgeting and planning processes been historically linked to mission documents, but those structures designed to facilitate their implementation, have included the comprehensive representation necessary to further the communication of Mission Statement values. In addition, the Board of Trustees regularly invites Student Senate leaders, Staff Council and faculty representatives, and members of the administration, as a matter of course, to attend committee and sub-committee sessions



during their regularly scheduled meetings. But bringing people together of course does not ensure that they walk away from their encounters with a shared understanding of the topics subject to discussion, as the more significant question involves the degree to which mission document ideals are consistently and effectively articulated. Although the importance of communicating certain features of the mission documents has been noted, a larger issue involves the degree to which *all* of the values within the mission documents are clearly understood by members of the University community. It thus makes sense to identify the ways in which students, faculty, and staff support the values of the Mission documents and perceive them as being implemented on a regular basis.

### *Students*

Student understanding and support for the University's mission may be observed through recent evidence yielded from the 2007 Lawlor Group Identity Assessment<sup>1</sup>, a research project designed to better understand IWU's institutional culture and identity. Approximately 36% of IWU's students participated in the assessment. In response to the question "Do you feel that Illinois Wesleyan is living its Mission the best it can?" over 70% of the student participants responded in the affirmative. A sample of reasons given included:

- I have seen, experienced, or heard about everything in the mission statement occurring on campus.
- What is stated in the mission statement is restated in almost every class and university gathering.
- Everything in the University mission statement is one hundred percent true. I have seen many schools (and even attended a few) where the mission statement and the actual school don't match up at all. Here, that is simply not the case.
- I do feel like the classes that I have taken have fostered a spirit of inquiry and curiosity about the world in me.

The fall administration of the 2010 SSSC Student Survey,<sup>2</sup> which was designed to assess students' level of agreement with the HLC accreditation criteria components as exercised by IWU, also provided strong positive evidence concerning understanding and support for the University's mission. Approximately 23% of the student body participated in the 2010 SSSC Student Survey. Students were asked, "To what extent do you agree with the following statements concerning Illinois Wesleyan University?" As noted in the table below, the mean scores for the majority of the items specific to Criterion 1 yielded moderate to strong agreement by the students.

---

<sup>1</sup> IWU Student SPSS Data.sav

<sup>2</sup> sssc\_std\_means.pdf

### 2010 SSSC Student Survey

Criterion 1	N	Mean
IWU's mission is clear.	470	3.96
IWU's mission recognizes the diversity of learners, constituencies, and society.	473	4.05
IWU promotes participation and collaboration among students and faculty.	473	4.30
IWU promotes effective leadership.	475	4.09
IWU upholds and protects its integrity as an institution.	474	4.19

Scale: Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Neither Agree nor Disagree (3), Disagree (2), Strongly Disagree (1).

Despite the strong evidence concerning IWU students and their support for the University's mission, both of the aforementioned survey assessments provided examples for institutional improvement, including the following:

- We need to increase drastically our commitment to environmental sustainability, so that IWU is an example for the entire nation.
- It is not possible that every aspect of the mission can be achieved at its highest level. There is always more room for improvement.
- I don't think Illinois Wesleyan is ethnically diverse AT ALL. Nor is it socioeconomically diverse. The vast majority of students are white, Christian, upper or upper-middle class, and politically conservative. I don't feel that Illinois Wesleyan is supporting the participation in a global community as best it could.
- Though IWU strives to achieve diversity on campus, a greater amount of financial backgrounds and geographical backgrounds could benefit discussions in classes and interactions outside of it.<sup>3</sup>

#### *Faculty & Staff*

Forty-nine percent of IWU faculty and staff participated in a similar survey as part of the 2007 Lawlor Group Identity Assessment. They were posed the same question concerning the University living its mission. Approximately 55% of the faculty and staff participants responded in the affirmative.<sup>4</sup> A sample of reasons given included:

- I feel that in our courses, we try to foster all the statements in the mission. Our student body, I feel, is prepared to meet the goals in the mission statement. And students definitely have easy access to the faculty, with much opportunity for help in their personal and intellectual development.
- One can see our mission statement in action from the day to day activities of the students, staff and faculty.
- I believe there is always room for increased growth in achieving the mission, but I do think the University constituents try to actively strive to take the mission into consideration in daily activities.

There were also a number of statements that illustrated faculty and staff disagreement that the University is living its mission. They included the following:

<sup>3</sup> SSSC Student Survey – University Strengths and Weaknesses (sssc\_std\_110210.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> IWU FacultyStaff SPSS Data.sav

- There is always "one step further" when it comes to pursuing goals. There are always improvements to be made.
- The university isn't pursuing diversity as actively as they could.
- I think we can improve our performance in the areas of diversity, social justice and environmental issues. I also think we can challenge our students to interact with the community more.

Over the summer and fall of 2010, the SSSC also administered a survey for faculty and staff. The instrument was designed to yield personal perceptions concerning the overall strengths and weaknesses of the University, as well as thoughts concerning the role departments, programs or units play in the operation of IWU within the context of the accreditation criteria. Twenty-seven percent of the faculty and staff participated. Two questions specific to Criterion 1 were asked - 1) How does your department/program/unit promote awareness of the values and goals of the University's mission statement? 2) Which of the University mission goals does your department/program/unit strive to embody or meet? Over 80% of the faculty and staff comments provided a number of explicit and implicit examples of promoting mission-driven values and goals.<sup>5</sup> Three examples are enclosed below:

In informational meetings we discuss the goals of a Spanish major which overlap with some of the mission goals/values; in classes for the major/minor faculty foster effective communication, spirit of inquiry, critical thinking, creativity and strength of character in different ways; we require a semester abroad which contributes to our students realization of their individual potential and preparation as a citizen in a global society; we offer specifically a class on social justice that also includes hands on field work for the students; we support extra curricular programming for students to exercise their mind beyond the classroom.

As a part of Academic Affairs, we promote awareness of the University mission through faculty orientations, publications, workshops, and the general education and May Term programs. I personally promote awareness through peer education, mentoring, campus volunteerism, and in my supervisory interaction with my student assistants.

In the Office of Residential Life within the Division of Student Affairs, many of our programs and interactions with students are geared towards mission-aligned priorities, such as promoting diversity and sustainability, and preparing students for citizenship and a participatory democracy. This is done largely through engaging students in participatory experiences, such as interactive activities that provide information about the environment or about difference, or in our staff support of the Alternative Spring Break program.

---

<sup>5</sup> crit1\_staff\_edit.doc, crit1\_fac\_edit.doc

## *Alumni*

As part of the 2007 Lawlor Group Identity Assessment, over 6,700 alumni were invited to complete an alumni survey, which yielded a 19% response rate. When asked about whether the University was living its mission, 69% of the respondents indicated that it was.<sup>6</sup> A sample of reasons given by alumni included:

- Wesleyan has always been a leader in moving the school forward toward a global commitment to education and responsibility.
- Wesleyan is a mission-driven school and pays close attention to both its liberal arts roots and the realities of modern-day life.
- It actively recruits a diverse student body whose common thread is the desire for an intellectually stimulating college experience. It fosters community and responsibility.
  1. Being a participant on the alumni board I recognize the efforts the university is placing on creating a global, racially, and ethnically diverse and cohesive environment.

The 2010 SSSC Alumni Survey was administered to the Classes of 2003 through 2010 and yielded a 20% response rate. The instrument was primarily based on alumni satisfaction with academics, services, facilities, and campus climate. In addition, alumni were also asked to identify essential features of their IWU education that contributed to their personal and professional development. Many of these essential features identified items listed in the University's mission. Examples included the following:

- The fostering of critical thinking skills, the questioning of the status quo, the introduction that objectivity is uncertain and impossible... these were very important in my development.
- The small campus where everyone feels that Titan pride. Professors, staff, and students make a community together which is fun and academically challenging.
- The critical thinking skills. The curiosity for the world embodied in each professor. The confidence to ask questions and seek out answers.
- Critical thinking and analytical skills. Civic responsibility. Passion for learning and the desire to continuously seek out knowledge
- Small, friendly atmosphere. Environment that fostered creativity and openness. Beautiful campus. Sense of history. Nearly unlimited access to faculty.
- Rigorous academic environment which encouraged self-discovery and self-motivated learning.

Alumni were also asked to identify important aspects missing from their IWU education that could have contributed to their personal and professional development. One mission-related theme that emerged in the alumni comments was diversity in a number of forms including race/ethnicity, socioeconomic, geographic, and life experiences.

---

<sup>6</sup> IWU Alumni SPSS Data.sav

An understanding of the meaning of the mission documents is most powerfully evident in the explicit actions of various University community members. The Mission Statement emphasis on social justice, for example, is apparent when one is reminded of the national recognition given to the IWU/Illinois State University joint chapter of Habitat for Humanity, or for the volunteer activities that staff, faculty, and students collectively pursue during their Alternative Spring Break. A commitment to “make connections among ideas, values, and experiences so that they may understand and act more effectively in the world” (Vision Statement) is in evidence through the extensive Study Abroad and May Term travel course opportunities that students pursue, or the frequent international conferences in which faculty participate. One sees an appreciation for the fostering of “critical thinking and creativity” (Mission Statement) when one attends the campus wide John Wesley Powell conference where student research and artistic performance is prominently displayed to the public. Diversity initiatives offered by the Office of Multicultural Affairs, the Admissions office, and other campus entities speaks directly to those areas of concern outlined in the mission documents. And, landscaping efforts on the part of physical plant staff around the Ames library premises that led to their receipt of a beautification award from the local Bloomington community, illustrates how they helped to solidify town/gown relationships while demonstrating an institutional concern for the needs of University neighbors. Certainly, University efforts in support of sustainability initiatives that are analyzed at length in the discussion of criterion 2, speak to the ways in which the entire campus has embraced the institution’s commitment to environmental sustainability as articulated within the Mission Statement. All of these examples show that through their deeds, University constituencies understand the meaning of mission statement documents, that such meaning grounds their professional work, and that their professional success has further strengthened institutional commitments to the ideals of the mission documents in practical ways. The assertion that these documents generally represent the lived experiences of many if not most of the members of the University community is thus easily affirmed.

As has been noted, it is significant that the mission documents that are currently operational were revised and formulated with the support and approval of the University Board of Trustees, and were crafted by members of the faculty, administration, alumni, students and staff, representing their specific constituencies. And, as has also been mentioned, the crafting of these documents was closely tied to the initiation of a focused effort to expedite strategic planning. During the previous self-study process, faculty, staff, and student discussions coalesced around a shared set of understandings regarding the nature of the University and its institutional purpose. Those findings suggested that there was broad agreement

- That IWU is a residential college and that living on campus is part of an IWU student’s educational experience.
- That a shared goal of IWU faculty, staff, trustees and alumni is to foster a sense of belonging on campus that encourages students to feel part of the community and in turn to feel responsible for contributing to that community.
- That IWU faculty and students not only strive to acquire and transmit knowledge and wisdom but also to create new scholarly and artistic works. (December 12, 2002 memo

from Mona Gardner to the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council on University Programs and Policy).

### *Communication of mission document values*

An analysis of the major documents created by various University administrative sub-units since 2003 gives further support for the contention that important elements of the University mission documents are re-emphasized but in language responsive to the audiences to whom those units directly serve. Thus, on the Admissions Office website, in addressing prospective students and their parents, it is noted that “Through intimate contact with faculty and heavy involvement in extracurricular activities, Illinois Wesleyan students develop into scholars, artists, leaders and citizens who have an impact on the world in a profound way,” echoing Mission Statement sentiments regarding democratic citizenship and a comprehensive world view. The *Transforming Lives* capital campaign literature refers to the importance of building the University endowment so as to continue to attract and retain quality students and faculty, mirroring the words of the Vision Statement that state that the University will build upon its achievements to provide an education of the highest quality. The Division of Student Affairs explicitly states on its website that its offices work directly with students “to enhance and complement the University Mission,” while The Library’s own Strategic Plan ([http://www.iwu.edu/library/information/Ames\\_Stragic\\_Bro.pdf](http://www.iwu.edu/library/information/Ames_Stragic_Bro.pdf)) also makes explicit mention of the Mission Statement. Finally, while not denigrating the considerable success IWU students have had in intercollegiate athletic endeavors, the Athletics department literature consistently emphasizes the importance of the first part of the student-athlete label, befitting an NCAA Division III institution where athletic scholarships are prohibited. “We are educators as well as coaches, and we labor to motivate our student-athletes toward success in the classroom as well as in their chosen sport. “ (Athletics website).

However, within academic departments and programs, it is fair to note that references to the values expressed within the University mission documents are more inconsistently represented. An analysis of department and program web pages, for example indicates that only 17 of the 34 departments and programs refer to the Institution’s liberal arts tradition, directly quote from the mission, or invoke specific elements of the mission. 38 of the 41 departments and programs that circulate brochures about their offerings and activities mention the liberal arts tradition or invoke specific Mission statements in their publications, but whether it be web page or brochure, direct mention of or quotation from the Mission statement is quite rare. (Munro chart). Suffice it to note that although the language used in supporting documents is by no means uniform, and that official references to the Mission Statement documents are inconsistently expressed, the University does make an honest effort to uphold the values enumerated within mission statement documents, even when this occurs through implicit rather than explicit ways.

Nonetheless, the challenge of articulating *all* of the values of the mission documents in clear terms is always present, and there are elements of the mission documents that require specific and continued attention. The Lawlor Group reported for example, that a significant number of those responding to its surveys associated the character of the

University with its name, assuming a religious orientation that simply doesn't exist. One would hope that as the University continues to make strides in clarifying the values within its mission documents to external audiences, its reputation would more realistically reflect those values. Another area whose importance needs to be continually re-emphasized to students and parents is their understanding of the importance of a broad education to balance one that is specialized through pursuit of the major discipline or program. To that end, during Parent Visitations and First Year Orientation programs, and within the Academic Advising system, due diligence is made to explain the reasons why a general education program has intrinsic importance to the pursuit of a liberal education. Linking the values of the University mission documents more closely to the General Education program, for example, would not only reiterate the importance of those values, but would more effectively communicate the importance of that program to the University community. However, in an age where students and some of their parents share strong professional and/or careerist aspirations, the task of communicating those reasons why a commitment to liberal inquiry is so important is one that is ongoing.

The diverse nature of subject matter offerings that characterizes the IWU curriculum has been a source of serious discussion among the faculty themselves, for the task of integrating the curricular expectations of professional programs with those of the liberal arts disciplines is perpetually challenging. However, although this was noted as a specific area of tension during the 2003 Evaluation Team visit, such tension has diminished during the past decade, in part because of the inclusive language of the mission documents that has given formal support to both curricular areas, and in part, because the financial resource challenges, summarized in the discussion addressing criterion 2, have affected both domains with an equal degree of impunity.

### *Communicating the Importance of Academic Freedom*

A liberal education not only invites but also demands that its sponsors protect and encourage an airing of different opinions and ideas, even those with which one disagrees. Indeed, the preservation of academic freedom is a necessary element in the furthering of democratic citizenship and is crucial to the success of all higher education institutions devoted to furthering learning, creativity, and intellectual engagement. Academic freedom takes many forms, and can include the sponsoring of speakers with unpopular views, the opening up of the campus to a discussion of controversial topics, and the use of due diligence to prevent unreasonable interference in the conduct of one's duties as a student, teacher, or scholar. The campus community to the credit of its faculty, staff, administration, trustees, and students, has not shied away from allowing those with controversial views to make their arguments on campus premises (e.g. the visit of William Ayers to the campus in 2010; the presentation of theatrical productions with explicit sexual content; the landing of a Black Hawk helicopter on campus grounds during 2010 Homecoming); it has steadfastly upheld the academic freedom of its faculty and students during the past decade. However, as is true of all higher education institutions, it needs to continually make the case to all internal as well as external constituencies as to why academic freedom values need to be upheld not only for the good of the academy, but for the good of society as well.

It should be stressed that the Board of Trustees and the University administration has always upheld the importance of tenure as a means of protecting the academic freedom of its faculty. Indeed, the fact that specific AAUP language has been adopted as a part of the Faculty Handbook gives testimony to this fact. However, in a national environment where the principle of tenure is increasingly coming under attack, it behooves faculty and administrators to continue to explain to all members of the campus community and those whom it touches externally why the preservation of tenure is important to the protection of academic freedom. Discussions regarding the meaning of academic freedom have regularly been held among the faculty, as part of the reading group program. Extending those discussions to other members of the campus community including staff and students would also be useful.

#### *Potential Improvement to the Dissemination of Information*

There are a number of areas where direct communication of the mission document ideals could be improved upon and they deserve extended comment. Although the formats for various pages within the University website have been standardized, the ways in which the values within the mission documents are actualized need to be highlighted. An electronic version of the staff handbook for non-exempt employees does not currently exist and no handbook of any kind exists for exempt staff. As these omissions are rectified, attention can be specifically paid to making prominent references to the mission documents within these formats. Additionally, implementation of the comprehensive New Employee Orientation Program by the Human Resources office would serve to formally communicate the University's mission to staff, along the lines of annual orientation sessions currently held for new faculty members. Drafted in 2008, this Program suggests a glossary of terms be distributed to University employees since the nomenclature associated with academic work can be quite specific to the professional academic community. For employees for whom English is their second language, the University should strongly consider translating relevant as necessary. In addition, the University should provide translators to employees who are in need of such assistance during benefit orientation sessions.

#### **1d. The organization's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the organization to fulfill its mission.**

The challenges that national liberal arts colleges confront in creating and sustaining effective leadership and organizational structures that help them to support their missions are significant, given the unique nature of the concept they embody. The liberal arts college is a quintessentially North American construction, borne, for the most part, during the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, before public education at the secondary level expanded, and prior to the growth of the land grant public university. The fact that the concept has endured for so many years is in part due to its singularity of focus, with a strong foundational emphasis upon teaching young adults, and its success in producing graduates who have indeed become successful leaders in all social venues, in far higher percentages than the number of students actually attending these institutions would suggest. The fact that these institutions have for the most part been residential and that



the size of their operation is comparatively modest, are organizational characteristics that have enhanced their capacity to provide undergraduate education of a comparatively high quality. However, quality and efficiency are not always synchronous, and in some ways, the non-bureaucratic nature of the small liberal arts institution creates challenges when one considers the efficiency of its operations. Unlike its larger counterparts, these institutions operate with limited economies of scale. At the same time, as higher education has become more specialized and professionalized, the demands to provide new services to students, faculty and staff are increasing, be they in the realms of technology, wellness, counseling services, student affairs, or newer areas of curricular specialization. To be sure, large and complex organizations such as the mass university fight against their own types of inefficiencies, be they due to redundancies, ambiguous institutional values, and differing funding sources that are not always equally or fairly distributed. But the degrees of freedom these institutions employ to function smoothly, including the ability to raise funds through external grant support or a reliance upon graduate student labor to transmit an educational product to a large number of clients, are simply not available to those who are responsible for overseeing and managing the small liberal arts institution.

#### *The Board of Trustees and the Protection of Mission Values*

There are certainly pressures for redressing inefficiencies, although the danger of succumbing uncritically to these pressures involves compromising educational quality, as defined by the ethos of the small liberal arts ideal. Examining the performance of an institution's Board of Trustees and administrative leadership thus involves analyzing the degree to which efficiencies are promoted, but not to the detriment of educational quality. In this area, the Illinois Wesleyan University Board of Trustees has generally demonstrated an ability to successfully strike a balance between these competing imperatives. A narrative that finds voice in the discussion of criterion 2 involves an examination as to what has not occurred as a result of the severe fiscal pressures brought about by the recession of 2008, as well as what has occurred in the years since the last HLC review. Suffice it to note that in the aftermath of 2008, minimum class size as a prerequisite for a course to be taught has not changed, neither student residence requirements nor graduation requirements have been revised and off campus and study abroad experiences have not been restricted. Although a number of these strategies have been employed at other small liberal arts colleges, for the Illinois Wesleyan leadership, these alternatives would have been viewed as compromising the quality of the education the University provides, and so, they were never considered.

Such an adherence to the values of the institution's mission documents can occur only because of close communication among Board of Trustee members and leaders within the University administration. This communication has been enhanced by the fact that Board of Trustee meetings regularly include the President of the Student Senate, the chair of the Staff Council, and invited faculty visitors. It is instructive to note that in 2011, in response to a desire to further improve communication among BOT and faculty members, the Board agreed to allow a third faculty member to serve as an official visitor to Board meetings, so as to permit greater coverage of the activities of the various Board committees. Given the fact that the chair of the Council on University Programs and

Policy (CUPP) also attends BOT meetings, four faculty members now participate during these sessions in an official capacity. Others are often invited to give presentations when their efforts are deserving of recognition, comment and discussion. It can be parenthetically noted that board members regularly serve on search committees for Vice-Presidency and Provost positions, although their numbers are never weighted in their favor. The President ultimately makes these decisions on an independent basis, after committee recommendations are forwarded to his attention.

One result of the efforts to structure communication among the BOT and various University constituencies is that the boundaries that define constructive oversight and destructive micro-management are usually clearly understood on the part of all parties. For example, the Board of Trustees is charged with the responsibility of approving all tenure and promotion decisions, and sabbatical and junior faculty leaves. There is no history of any of these decisions having been overturned by the Board. Indeed, with regard to most administrative matters, the Board places trust in the administrative leadership of the University to manage the affairs of the institution effectively. This is not to imply that disagreement never occurs between Board members, the administration, faculty, staff, and students. Issues involving changes in retiree health care benefits, summarized at length in the discussion of criterion 2, give evidence in support of this contention. Nonetheless, Board members see themselves as providing guidance in line with their institutional responsibilities, and trust the upper levels of the administration and faculty leaders to work effectively on a day-to-day basis.

### *Organizational Structures*

As the organizational charts noting the structure of the University administration generally, and the Academic Affairs unit specifically indicate (see appendices \_\_\_\_\_), the professionalization of higher education is a trend that Illinois Wesleyan University has embraced so as to better address the needs of students, faculty, alumni and other University constituencies. Vertical lines of authority involve reporting mechanisms that, for the most part, lead to the Vice-Presidential level, where leaders manage their units with a noticeable degree of autonomy. At the same time, the Vice Presidents and the Provost and Dean of the Faculty report directly to the President and meet with him on a frequent basis as a group while they also constitute significant membership within the President's cabinet. The leaders of each administrative unit are responsible for submitting unit goals at the beginning of the year. They are then asked to assess their progress in meeting those goals at the end of the academic year, with their information summarized by the president in a report given to the Board of Trustees. The President's Cabinet further serves as a space whereby leaders from the various units share information with one another and offer advice on matters of collective importance to the institution when called upon to do so. It is noteworthy that the chair of the Council on University Programs and Policy, the chief faculty governance structure, attends cabinet meetings as well. These meetings occur on a bi-weekly basis throughout the academic year.

The Academic Affairs unit includes the Provost, the chief academic leader, the Associate Provost whose position is based upon a permanent appointment, and the Associate Deans of the Faculty and Curriculum, who serve in fixed term positions, where they are selected internally from among the faculty. The nature of these positions and the responsibilities that their occupants carry out continues to be a source of discussion among the faculty. Department chairs and school directors report directly to the Provost and Dean of the Faculty as do the Registrar, Director of Athletics, University Librarian, Chief Technology Officer and the Director of Advising. In addition to organizing themselves according to department or school program, faculty also meet on a divisional basis, in sessions convened by their CUPP representatives.

Effective academic administration relies upon the collective efforts of faculty members to share responsibility for decisions that most impact faculty work. To that end, the IWU faculty organizes itself around a number of standing and appointed committees that involve themselves with issues of mutual concern (Faculty Handbook, chapters I, II, and III). Most higher education institutions have major faculty committees similar to those at Illinois Wesleyan: the Promotion and Tenure Committee, the Hearing Committee, the Curriculum Council, and the Faculty Development Committee. What is significant for the IWU case is that when administrators serve on these committees, they do so on an ex officio basis and do not directly participate in the decision-making process. It is also noteworthy that members of these standing committees (as well as CUPP) serve two-year terms, allowing many faculty to participate in committee service, while highlighting the importance of service to faculty governance and the expectations that flow from that fact.

What is noteworthy about all of the organizational structures described above is the fact that they have been changed and revised so as to address differing institutional needs. Positions such as the Associate Dean of the Curriculum, Chief Technology Officer, Registrar, and Director of Advising did not exist in their current iteration a decade ago. The Strategic Planning and Budgeting Committee and the Advising Center also represent new initiatives created since the last self-study. Their creation speaks to the continuing efforts the University has made to address the changing ways in which students learn, faculty teach, and access to information has expanded. Similarly, as is noted in the discussion of criterion 2, the Assistant Vice President for Research, Planning and Evaluation, the Dean of Enrollment Management, and the Director of Government and Community Relations are relatively new positions.

It would be naïve to suggest that simply because some organizational structures exist that encourage administrators to share their experiences with one another, or other structures encourage faculty, trustees, staff, and students to meet with one another, or still other structures encourage faculty to make peer-reviewed decisions with limited influence on the part of administrators, that university governance operates in so smooth a fashion that conflicts never arise. Indeed, it would be incongruous to note the existence of certain communicative challenges in expressing the meaning of mission documents on the one hand, while asserting that university governance operates without any conflict whatsoever. Illinois Wesleyan University, in this regard, is no different from the norm. During difficult economic times, for example, conflicts have arisen regarding the preservation of autonomous decision-making within a particular unit on the one hand,

and the contradictory desire to make sure that information is shared regarding expenditures in units where one lacks a direct affiliation. During times of financial pressure, the belief that cost savings are available through targeting programs other than one's own can be particularly attractive. (CUPP minutes, October 9, 2009- November 11, 2009). Even though the sharing of budgetary information is more prevalent than has ever occurred in recent memory at IWU, in practical terms, such a commitment still has its limitations. This is particularly true because of the need to protect confidential information regarding individual salaries and related personnel matters, even though budgets are heavily influenced by personnel expenditures. At times, faculty, staff, students, and administrators have difficulty separating their own departmental, divisional, or unit affinities with a broader perspective regarding what would most encourage institutional health. However, such contrasting views don't compromise the efficacy of the administrative units from where they originate, nor do they rise to a level whereby the importance of the various administrative units has been seriously questioned in a sustained manner. Instead, when these views are expressed, they point to the need for greater communication within and among the various administrative units, rather than for their elimination or drastic reconfiguration.

A good example of the above would be the Staff Council, a body created in 2005 after the 2003 external review team recommendations, for the purpose of giving staff a greater voice in university governance. While improvements could be made in the operation and effectiveness of the Staff Council (Report on the Human Resources Goal of the Strategic Plan provided to SPBC, April, 2011), there are few if any calls for its elimination. On the other hand, the current Director of Government and Community Relations, occupying a position also formally established in 2005, has had notable success in assisting in the planning with city officials in both Bloomington and Normal, the future of a major area ripe for redevelopment that is partially adjacent to the University, the Main Street corridor. He has chaired the University Green Network and in so doing has promoted campus wide sustainability issues to the community, has formed collaborative relationships that have offered support for community wide sustainability efforts, and has generally been successful in buttressing the University's reputation as a good community citizen. Together, these cases give evidence for the contention that the University is willing to pursue administrative change in support of the values encapsulated within its mission documents, and that it is willing to regularly make accommodations to solidify community relations. Initiating change is no guarantor of success, however. This is why administrative changes that are introduced occur with a measure of pragmatism, both with regard to an assessment of the reasons for their success and an evaluation of the limits of their success. The goal setting strategies enacted by the President help to fulfill this important evaluative role. Suffice it to conclude by noting the truism that shared governance while often messy, sometimes inefficient and almost always non-linear, is essential to the maintenance of a strong work place community, and the Illinois Wesleyan University case offers support for the contention.

### *Hiring and Evaluation of Personnel*

Even an elegant organizational structure, in support of an erudite and comprehensive set of mission documents, cannot function effectively without qualified personnel. For a

small liberal arts community such as Illinois Wesleyan, being able to attract and count on talented individuals to play their role in strengthening the institution is absolutely crucial if the University is to realize its promise. The hiring and evaluation processes relevant to faculty lines are described in the discussion of criterion 2. At this time, it is useful to comment upon the ways in which talented individuals are recruited for leadership positions within the University administration and among the staff. To that end, it is instructive to note that all senior administrative leaders at the Vice-Presidential level or above hold advanced degrees, that they participated in nationally advertised searches for their positions, and that they have accumulated a wealth of experience relevant to their job responsibilities. As has been noted, over the past decade there has been significant administrative turnover. However, such turnover has not been perpetual, and many cabinet members have held their positions for at least five years. Although there are some exceptions to the rule, the hiring process generally has been one of relying upon the external search in order to find the most qualified person. In addition, the number of senior level administrators who are Illinois Wesleyan graduates is comparatively small.

As staff vacancies at lower levels arise, advertisements are first posted within the University, and are then sent to the surrounding media. When staff members seek an upgrade or revision in their position description, the Position Review Committee, a group that includes administrators, exempt and non-exempt staff representatives, evaluates their case. But all new university employees, regardless of rank or position, are subject to a background check prior to the start of their employment. It is in these ways that a strong commitment to professionalism characterizes hiring processes. This being said, members of the Self-Study Steering Committee noted with a significant degree of concern, that there is no central mechanism for facilitating transcript or credential evaluation: this is performed by search committee members or by those assigned direct hiring responsibility. Therefore working to standardize the mechanisms by which credentials and transcripts are evaluated for their authenticity is a challenge that the University definitely needs to address. Suffice it to conclude that the University has put in place structures and policies that offer support for the values expressed within its mission documents, that there is a requisite degree of transparency necessary for effective decision-making to occur, and that the quality of the institution's human resources remain one of its greatest strengths. At the same time, as is true of most environments that rely upon collaborative efforts to insure their success, the University needs to continue to design and implement effective communication strategies among and between all members of the institution's various administrative units.

### **1e. The organization upholds and protects its integrity.**

Higher education institutions in North America are increasingly confronted with challenges that speak to the need to maintain public trust while effectively serving the needs of their own constituencies with fairness and evenhandedness. In an environment where social institutions of all types have been subjected to heightened scrutiny, this task is daunting. Forty years ago, for example, the public faith in the medical and legal professions was commensurate with the social prestige that they engendered. Today, not only has the public's trust in doctors and lawyers eroded, but its faith in the work of teachers, businesspersons and many other professionals has also subsided. What makes

this trend worrisome for those of us involved in higher education is that our work seems particularly ambiguous and vague to those who are unfamiliar with the workings of the academy. For the small, private, liberal arts residential institution such as Illinois Wesleyan, the association of the education it provides with elitism and privilege is one that merits continued rebuttal. That perception is so diametrically opposed to values of the mission documents that have been described, it can only be effectively contested by an acknowledgement of the institution's integrity. Given the fact that we as a society, differ as to how we define words such as "education" to begin with, the polymorphous nature of the activities we associate with liberal education make the challenge to demonstrate that our actions resonate from a strong sense of integrity even more overwhelming. This may even be truer for Illinois Wesleyan than for some of its peer institutions because of the professional/liberal arts blend that characterizes our curricular distinctiveness. In any event, integrity can be measured according to both internal and external dimensions. Internally, if an organization does not operate in a trustful manner while treating its members with respect, it can make no claim to members of external publics that it is indeed worthy of their trust. On the other hand, if it makes no effort to demonstrate responsiveness to the communities that reside outside of its immediate borders, it then risks becoming ignored as socially irrelevant. Finally, to the extent that higher education institutions operate within a shared social field, they have obligations to one another so as to cooperate and compete according to common understandings. It is the view of the Self-Study Steering Committee that the University operates with integrity within all of these areas.

#### *Enumeration of Rights and Responsibilities in Internal Documents*

Many of the rights, responsibilities, and protections offered members of the University community are enumerated within a series of handbooks, designed to address the needs of specific University groups. *The Student Handbook*, for example, includes regulations and policies affecting students that are currently in effect. It is available on-line to all students at <http://www.iwu.edu/judicial/handbook/index.shtml> and is available within the University course catalog. The policies and procedures that it documents address both the academic and social aspects of student life, as it includes policies involving harassment and intolerance, sexual harassment, students with dependents, anti-hazing, the course syllabus, attendance and grading, class meetings and final examinations, course loads, grades and standards, exceptions to academic requirements, grade appeals, student conduct and academic integrity, cheating, plagiarism, student records, student access, and Withdrawal from the University. As the Handbook makes clear, all students are required to abide by University regulations on campus, on University affiliated areas and at all University functions.

The Faculty Handbook ([http://www.iwu.edu/provost/2010-11\\_Faculty\\_Handbook.pdf](http://www.iwu.edu/provost/2010-11_Faculty_Handbook.pdf)) similarly contains policies and procedures regarding the conduct of the University faculty. These policies and procedures include general faculty meeting procedures, procedures and policies for standing committees, as well as faculty personnel policies (faculty appointments, tenure and advancement, post-tenure review, complaints and grievances, and separation from the university). Faculty responsibilities, resources and related policies are also outlined (including those involving teaching, academic advising,

and related activities, leaves, professional travel and grant opportunities). Other University statements that form a portion of the faculty handbook include the AAUP Statement on Professional Ethics, and policy statements concerning information technology, alcohol and drug use, sexual harassment, and statements regarding the conduct of research). Indeed, the University has received national AAUP recognition in its efforts to revise the faculty handbook so as to more closely align its text with AAUP Redbook language.

Non-exempt staff are given a non-electronic version of their handbook that functions in a fashion similar to that of the Faculty Handbook, including documentation involving employment policies, hours, wages, employee benefits, safety issues, a code of conduct, general information, while also listing institutional policy statements. As has been noted, there currently is no handbook for exempt staff, an omission that deserves timely rectification. A whistleblower policy is in effect for all members of the University community and is publicly accessible on the University website (<http://www.iwu.edu/judicial/policy/WhistleBlowerPolicy.shtml>.) The fact that the policy includes Board members as well as students, faculty, and staff, and covers areas as divergent as employment, athletics rule violations, financial improprieties, safety and security, and student concerns is noteworthy, as is its clear delineation as to whom one should report an alleged violation, along with the language indicating a process for adjudicating complaints resulting from incident disclosure. A separate incident protocol report process is being developed at this time so as to compile general information regarding the frequency of campus discrimination incidents and the speed of their resolution.

#### *Compliance with Federal and External Regulations*

Of primary importance to a residential community is its ability to maintain security and safety. To this end, the Office of Security works closely and in harmony with the local police and non-police community service agencies and insures that the University is in compliance with The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act, the federal law that requires colleges and universities across the country to disclose information about crime on and around their campuses. A link to campus crime statistics on and around campus is accessible from Security office website. At the same time, the University Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) officer consults with departments around campus to assure that federal guidelines for safety in the workplace, including correct labeling and the disposal of chemicals and appropriate laboratory safety regulations, are being followed.

Prior to 2004, staff members were classified according to support, administrative and technical categories. Afterwards, their designations were changed into exempt and non-exempt categories, and in compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act, salary payments for non-exempt staff were changed from a monthly to a biweekly basis in 2006. The University also expressly recognizes the requirements of Title IX legislation and its Title IX coordinator, the Executive Assistant to the President, is in charge of handling Title IX complaints (<http://www.iwu.edu/judicial/handbook/>). Of course, issues involving safety

and discrimination are easier to address when federal mandates such as Title IX, OSHA, and the Clery Disclosure Act clearly stipulate how institutions should operate so as to protect the rights of the individuals with whom they are associated. But there are additional areas requiring federal compliance as well, and the University makes a good faith effort to follow the letter and spirit of such regulations too. For example, the University Librarian serves as Copyright Compliance Officer and library staff help the institution by investigating copyright clearances both for use in classes and for promoting faculty work in the public domain ([http://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/sw\\_gallery.html](http://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/sw_gallery.html)). In addition, faculty, administrators and an external community member serves on the Institutional Review Board, while the activities of the University animal facility are monitored by staff veterinarians from the community who work with the chair of the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee.

Finally, the University takes its obligations under the Family Education Rights to Privacy Act (FERPA) extremely seriously. Students and parents and faculty are apprised of the rights of students with respect to the protection of their confidentiality regarding the sharing of student records and information during orientation and public events sessions prior to the beginning of the academic year. When parents contact faculty or administrators with concerns involving their students, they are immediately informed as to the importance of maintaining confidentiality between the student and the University official, which in many cases restricts what can or cannot be shared with the parent.

The FERPA example is illustrative because it also demonstrates that in order to function in a way that institutional integrity is preserved, many elements of the campus community need to work together. Thus, the offices of the Vice-President and Dean of Student Affairs and Academic Affairs regularly share responsibilities in notifying faculty advisors and instructors when unexpected issues affecting a student's academic performance arise. More generally, in situations where a clear course of action is not always in evidence, IWU retains an outside University attorney, who provides available legal counsel. The use of an annual independent audit, performed by KPMG LLP, whose reports are regularly shared with the Board of Trustees, is an additional example of institutional reliance upon independent external expertise for the purpose of insuring the integrity of its internal policies and procedures.

The integrity of the University is not only monitored by governmental agencies and recognized by those in the surrounding community, but it is in evidence through inter-institutional and consortial relationships. Over the past six years, the University has participated in two Teagle Grant projects, assessing student writing and critical thinking, as well as labor saving high impact learning activities initiated by faculty. Faculty and administrators from other small liberal arts institutions have also participated in these projects. In addition, the University has been a founding member of the Scholars at Risk Network and has memberships in national and regional organizations including NITLE (the National Institute for Technology in Liberal Education), EDUCAUSE, the Midwest Faculty Seminar, and CARLI (Consortium for Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois). Blessed with an active AAUP chapter, its leader has worked with the national office to encourage new chapters to form and dormant ones to be revised, in part as a



result of the success experienced on the IWU campus. Indeed, the IWU campus hosted a statewide AAUP meeting in 2011.

Significant grant support from the Mellon Foundation, the Department of Education, and the Arthur V. Davis Foundation further demonstrate external recognition for the institution's quality. As noted in the discussions of criterion 2 and 3, International exchange agreements with Keio University and Technos College in Tokyo, Pembroke College (Oxford), and Al Akhawayn University in Morocco, further speak to the University's ability to work with international sister institutions in ways that are of mutual benefit.

### *Conclusion to Criterion 1*

Higher education institutions of all types are increasingly being called upon to justify their purpose and their operations. Although some of the external pressure demanding such accountability may emanate from sources with suspect motives, as there certainly are individuals who are inherently mistrustful of the dedication to intellectual engagement to which all higher education institutions are committed, it is important for higher education communities to explain to their own members and to wider external audiences why it is important for one's own institution to succeed. Illinois Wesleyan University is able to make that case in convincing fashion. It is blessed with a rich history and a curricular focus that is distinct for the small liberal arts undergraduate residential institution. Its members share the values embodied in its mission documents, even though the language within the documents could be communicated more clearly. Its leadership is dedicated to ensuring that the University expresses these values in its daily operations, and its faculty and staff work closely with students and parents to deliver educational and co-curricular experiences that are challenging but offer support for intellectual and personal growth. Its organizational structure represents a rational institutional response to the needs of students, faculty, staff, alumni and community members, needs that have grown in number and complexity over the past decade. In addition, policies have been implemented that preserve institutional integrity. The future challenges that the University must confront include the need for the members of all organizational units to communicate with one another more effectively so as to understand how their colleagues contribute to the actualization of mission values through their own individual work. They also involve a commitment to continually explain to students, parents, and the surrounding community what a liberal education demands and why specific University policies are put in place in support of that effort. Finally, a fuller appreciation of University operations as a whole would contribute to a stronger sense of community among its members.

### *Summary of Strengths and Challenges*

#### Strengths

- Mission documents demonstrate congruence with one another.

- The commitment to enhance campus diversity is a core and essential component of the mission documents.
- There is a general understanding of the values expressed within mission documents by members of the University community.
- The University complies with federal and legal mandates and operates with a strong sense of integrity.

#### Challenges

- Individual University web pages and handbooks should make more explicit references to the language used in mission documents when situations merit that connection, and a handbook for exempt staff, including mission document references, needs to be created.
- Staff Orientation programs should offer translation services to new employees who are non-native speakers, and an electronic version of the handbook for non-exempt staff should be developed.
- The Strategic Plan language regarding diversity needs to be revised so as to reflect a more inclusive definition of the term and relevant portions of handbooks and similar documents should be translated so as to accommodate the needs of University members who are non-native speakers of English.
- A University wide system for monitoring the authenticity of transcripts and credentials of new employees needs to be created.

Conclusion: Illinois Wesleyan University has successfully fulfilled the requirements of criterion 1 in support of the HLC accreditation process.