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LINDENWOOD COLLEGE
ST. CHARLES, MISSOURI

A REPORT PREPARED FOR A
FOCUSED VISIT

NORTH CENTRAL ASSOCIATION
COMMISSION ON INSTITUTIONS OF
HIGHER EDUCATION

NOVEMBER 1995
Lindenwood College
St. Charles, Missouri

Focused Visit Report
November 1995
Background to the Focused Visit

Lindenwood College received a regular North Central evaluation by a visiting team in February, 1994. That visiting team found much to commend in the progress that Lindenwood had made in recent years and expressed some concerns as well. On the basis of the very real progress of the College, the team recommended to the North Central Commission that accreditation be extended for a full ten years. It also recommended a focused visit during the 1995-1996 academic year to focus on three issues:

1. Principles of Good Practice
2. Faculty Governance
3. Implementation of the Assessment Plan

Lindenwood College accepted the conclusions of the visiting team and did not appeal the report. The Commission accepted the report as well and implemented the team's recommendations. This is the background for the focused visit.

It is in preparation for the focused visit, scheduled for November 6-7, 1995, that this report is being prepared. We are confident that, as a result of this focused visit, the concerns expressed by the visiting team in 1994 may be relieved, and the continued progress of the College in the two years since the visit may be confirmed.

We also wish to request that the Commission amend the Statement of Affiliation Status recommended by the last visiting team and confirmed by the Commission in 1994 to eliminate the restrictions on new programs and site locations. The reasons for the amendment will be become clear as we continue through this Report.

Progress of Lindenwood College

In the two years completed since the last visiting team looked at Lindenwood, the College has continued to make extraordinary progress. Every year in the last several years Lindenwood has set a new record in almost every category--enrollment, classes offered, budget levels, faculty size, endowment growth. While some of these categories will level off soon because of size constraints, the very real growth of the institution cannot be denied. Lindenwood College is both bigger and healthier than at any time in its very long history.

Some numbers will illustrate the continued progress. In the 1993-1994 calendar year, Lindenwood served a total of 4,727 students. These represent unduplicated student enrollments in the various programs and calendars the College uses. Of that total, 3,072 were undergraduate students, and 1,655 were enrolled in graduate programs.
In 1993-1994, Lindenwood had students from 25 states (with the large majority, however, coming from Missouri and Illinois), including one from Alaska. We had seventy international students from twenty countries. We graduated 753 students at the end of the year, more than Lindenwood’s total enrollment just a few years ago.

But the numbers are not just numbers. The quality of our students has steadily risen as well. In Fall 1994, twenty “Bright Flight” students began studies at Lindenwood. Most of our applicants take the ACT test. Our average score for entering students is now over 22, and it has been rising slowly but steadily over the past several years. This above-average score represents a recruitment of new students with the capacity to succeed. Over 500 students made the full-time students’ Dean’s List (with at least a 3.5 GPA).

We have had outstanding success in placing our graduates in recent years. The Talent Transcript program has meant that our students make a very good impression on prospective employers. At the conclusion of the 1993-1994 academic year, all students who included their resumes in the Talent Transcript book were placed in appropriate jobs within three months of graduation. We are approaching the same level of success this fall with the 1994-1995 graduating class. This is a measure of the success of our program, and its reputation in the eyes of the St. Louis Metropolitan Area.

For the first time in over fifty years, 1993-1994 saw the elimination of all bank debt for the College. Three College buildings, Young Science Hall, the Butler Library addition, and the Harmon Fine Arts building were paid off from debt early. The only indebtedness that remains is a small mortgage for Parker Residence Hall which carries such a small interest rate that it is not good practice to pay it early.

Lindenwood College awarded over $9 million dollars in institutional financial aid in that year. This aid is a sum larger than the total College budget just five years before.

Especially significant and heartening for Lindenwood was the re-acquisition of fifty acres of land on the back campus that the College had sold off during the eighties when budget deficits seemed to require it. The College not only bought the land back but did so at a price lower than the selling price ten years ago. This has allowed plans to proceed for using some of the land for new athletic facilities (now in use) and utilization of the remainder for future expansion and as an arboretum.

So, the same year in which the last comprehensive North Central visit occurred was a record year in many ways for Lindenwood College. The College came very close to closing just a few years ago, and it has now come back from the brink and every year represents new records.

During 1994-1995, the total enrollment number rose to 5,383, with 3,134 undergraduates and 2,249 graduates. In the spring of 1995, we graduated another record class: 839.

At the beginning of 1994-1995, nine new faculty members joined (five were new positions), raising the total number of faculty to 102. We are encouraged that for the past several years, each time a faculty member has been added, we have been able to attract our first choice. The
turn-over rate for existing faculty is very low; it is, in fact, rare for a faculty member to leave Lindenwood except in unusual circumstances.

The level of institutional financial aid rose another million dollars to reach $10 million in 1994-1995.

But 1994-1995 also saw some significant improvements and additions in other respects as well. Lindenwood committed the funds necessary to install a state-of-the-art Macintosh computer lab, especially useful for classes in graphic arts. The IBM-compatible laboratories were also enhanced in both hardware and software so that students and faculty have first-class facilities available. The on-campus machines are networked, and the entire network is connected to the World Wide Web.

In addition, the historic Sibley Chapel has been completely renovated and returned to service as a facility for religious services, concerts, lectures, and theatrical performances.

Work was also begun on a large gymnasium/performance arena which will be finished sometime next year. This facility will provide an on-campus home for basketball, volleyball, and some other sports, but it will also serve for larger performances in music and drama. It includes a section of luxury boxes which have been purchased by St. Louis-area businesses, helping to finance the building. What makes this building project so memorable is that it has been funded in advance from grants, contributions, and pledges so that no debt will be incurred. Lindenwood has needed such a facility for many years, but never more so than now, when some five hundred of our students are members of our various sports teams.

Over the last two years, Lindenwood has been acquiring adjacent property for immediate expansion. Each of the past two years, Lindenwood has acquired a small trailer court on the edge of the campus, providing both immediate housing for some students in the trailers acquired, but also land for permanent buildings in the future. This expansion also opens the possibility of expanding all the way to First Capitol Drive-West Clay. Preliminary discussions have opened the prospect of a public-private partnership, joining the City of St. Charles, St. Joseph Health Center (part of the SSM health corporation), and Lindenwood in acquiring land and building a complex of buildings that would serve the College, the City (both in terms of a community center and a storm-drainage control program), and the Hospital (with a clinic and wellness center). These discussions are still preliminary, but they are on-going and look favorable. One by-product would be to renovate the First Capitol-West Clay area which has become shabby. The College has an obvious interest in its neighborhood.

The College has acquired two other parcels in its neighborhood as well. A residence across Kingshighway in front of the campus was acquired last year and used for student housing. It will be occupied this year by some College offices that need more space. Also, a large structure on First Capitol Drive around the corner from the College was bought last year for additional art studio space. (There is a mention of this in the section of this Report dealing with Faculty Governance as well)
The Board of Directors also lifted the Statement of Financial Exigency which had been in effect for the past six years. The financial progress of the College no longer made such a declaration necessary.

Throughout the past several years, the College has continued to make progress on dealing with the accumulated neglect of the “deferred maintenance” of the previous decade or more when the College was failing. Some $7,818,600 has been committed in the past six years to such essential renovations to physical plant, many of which are not immediately visible and obvious to the campus community. In addition, some $4,549,549 has been expended acquiring land, much of which had been alienated earlier by the College in its lean years.

In all of these changes, some trauma has resulted. Colleges do not change easily. The changes which were needed first for survival and then expansion meant that some procedures were changed and decision-making streamlined. This shifted, not the spirit, but some of the process by which decision-making is shared in the College. Much, but perhaps not all, of that trauma is behind us. We are confident that the section on Faculty Participation in Governance will reassure the Commission that Lindenwood College meets the spirit as well as the letter of the North Central guidelines.

For example, when the great changeover of Lindenwood College began six years ago, the system of tenure was abolished. Lindenwood College does not grant tenure or recognize, in the strict sense, the tenure of those who were tenured at the time of the abolition. Lindenwood College substituted for tenure a merit-based employment system. But, in addition, the College Faculty Handbook contains a provision (Article XI) for extended employment. Faculty members with ten years of service and a meritorious record may be granted “extended employment” contracts which commit the College both to a continuous relationship with the faculty member and a one-year notice of any separation. No faculty member has had any such one-year separation notice, since there has been no need, but the Handbook provides a process for this. Faculty members eligible for this extended-employment status have received written notification of their selection. Fifteen faculty members have been notified. This provision in the handbook in fact provides the same protection as a normal tenure system for long-service faculty. No tenure system provides any more real protection than due process and a one-year notification of termination for whatever reason.

The Lindenwood College Board of Directors has recently renewed its membership in the Association of Governing Boards. An article and interview in the Summer, 1995 issue of Priorities, the newsletter of the Association reviews the remarkable recovery of the College in the past six years.

Lindenwood College has come back from the brink of closing and has achieved a remarkable success in the past six years. There are 1210 students in residence in this Fall Semester of 1995, far more than the total enrollment of the College in most past years. While such remarkable growth cannot continue indefinitely, it is a record unmatched in this area by any institution of higher education. We continue on a sound financial footing, and the academic program is flourishing.
Good Practices

The 1994 North Central visiting team commented on good practices at Lindenwood College, particularly in the area of internal disputes. The College is committed to the principles of good practice, and we feel that appropriate procedures are now in place to ensure fairness to the various college constituencies as well as fairness to the institution.

Good Practice procedures apply across the board at Lindenwood, relating to faculty, students, and staff. All these procedures were reviewed in the aftermath of the 1994 visit, and changes have been made where the need was acknowledged.

Policies are in effect in the following areas:

Students

1. Admissions
The College endorses and uses the Statement of Principles of Good Practice of the National Association of College Admissions Counselors. The guidelines of the NACAC are followed in the recruiting and admissions process.

In addition, the College accepts the statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities of the NACAC as well.

2. Refunds
College policy on student refunds of fees and tuition is published in the Campus Life Handbook (p. 29) as well as in the Lindenwood College Undergraduate Catalog (pp. 6-7). An appeals process is outlined in the Undergraduate Catalog on page 12.

3. Discipline Practices/Appeals
Lindenwood College is, admittedly, a traditional institution in respect to student life. The residence halls are single-sex and rules are established for visitation and campus functions. The policy of Lindenwood College is that the campus is drug- and alcohol-free. Students are aware of this atmosphere from the time of application. The campus standards are published in the Campus Life Handbook (pp. 22-24, 24-26, 33). For the larger Lindenwood Community, campus standards are published in the Undergraduate Catalog (p. 12) as well as in two published
statements: Drug-Free Campus Guide and Student Right to Know and Campus Security Report. This latter statement is, of course, updated and published each year in accordance with federal law.

4. Sexual Harassment
   The policy concerning student sexual harassment is contained in the Campus Life Handbook on page 19. Any reports of such harassment are taken seriously and there are several staff members charged with investigation and reporting responsibilities.

5. Housing
   The College policies on housing are contained in the Campus Life Handbook on page 28.

6. Handicapped Access
   As is true of any old campus, Lindenwood's campus was not built for easy handicapped access. We are doing what we can to make the campus accessible. For years, arrangements have been made on a case-by-case basis for making the programs accessible. Classes have been moved and other accommodations have been made, and the record would indicate that this has been successful. The policy on handicapped access is contained in the Campus Life Handbook on page 28. Accommodations have been made for students with permanent disabilities, but such changes have been made frequently, for students with temporary disabilities, such as crutches, wheelchairs, and the like. The Compliance Officer is also the Director of Undergraduate Admissions, so students with special needs can be identified from the beginning. A brochure outlining the policy and the process for dealing with it is distributed to students and families.

7. Students with Disabilities Other Than Physical
   Lindenwood College, in common with other institutions of higher education, has been receiving an increasing number of students identified as having disabilities and other special needs. Arrangements are made regularly for such students who are admitted. There are some special courses instituted for students who need additional preparation for some higher-level college courses.

   Students with special needs in the regular classes are given appropriate services. We have some blind students who are supplied with readers and helpers as they need them. Some students take examinations under special circumstances in which they need extra time or need to have the examination read aloud. These special-needs students are accommodated on a case-by-case basis. We are confident that all such needs have been met.

8. Athletics
   College policy on athletics is contained in the Campus Life Handbook on page 20. In addition, the College endorses and follows the guidelines of the National
Association of Intercollegiate Athletics, of which the College is a member.

While we field a large number of intercollegiate teams and recruit student-athletes for them around the country, Lindenwood, in the strict sense, does not award "athletic scholarships." Students are given appropriate financial aid; it is never dependent on playing a sport or participating in an activity. A student who drops from a sports team or is injured and unable to compete never loses financial aid because of that. No student is required to play in order to receive aid.

9. Student Associations
The College recognizes and provides sponsorship for a large number of student associations, some of them social, others academic. The College policies on such associations, as well as a list of approved groups, is contained in the Campus Life Handbook on pages 16-17. The College does ask that all student groups that wish to advertise meetings and meet on campus apply for and receive recognition from the Campus Life Office. All such groups must be within the context of the College’s Mission Statement. Sponsors are recruited for such organizations from among the College faculty and staff.

10. Grade Disputes
If a student disagrees with a grade received from a faculty member, an appeals process is outlined in the Undergraduate Catalog on pages 12-13. Most such disputes are resolved by the faculty member involved; a much smaller number of cases are taken on to the Division Dean or the Dean of the College. A procedure for a grievance committee is in place, though disputes rarely reach that stage.

Faculty

1. Hiring
The hiring process at Lindenwood is very conventional. Vacancies are approved by the administration and advertising occurs, if time permits. The applicants are screened by the Vice President, the Division Dean and the faculty in the relevant discipline. A recommendation to the Vice-President is made by the appropriate Division Dean after consultation with faculty in the area. The Vice-President makes a recommendation to the President who actually issues the contract. On rare occasions, an emergency makes it necessary to by-pass the normal procedure so that a vacancy can be filled immediately. Such a situation occurs very seldom.

This process is outlined in the Faculty Handbook of page 2.

2. Renewals, Non-Renewals, and Appeals
This process is outlined in the 1995-1996 Faculty Handbook on pages 5 and 6. A recommendation to not renew a faculty member will ordinarily be made by the Division Dean to the Vice-President. A decision by the Vice-President not to renew a
faculty member's contract can be appealed to the President. For faculty members with some years of service, an appeal can be taken to the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors.

At the time of the 1994 visit, Lindenwood College did not have a Vice-President and the President was involved in the original decision to not renew. With the addition of the Vice-President to the administrative structure, the appeals process is more orderly. The possibility of an appeal to the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors was added at the suggestion of a senior faculty member. With the more articulated administrative structure now in place, we are convinced that the appeals process is fair and constructive. Any faculty member with ten or more years of meritorious service may receive a one-year terminal contract upon non-renewal.

3. Academic Freedom and Accountability

The basic statement guaranteeing normal academic freedom with normal academic accountability is contained in the Faculty Handbook on pages 1-2. As the 1994 visiting team noted, there have been no allegations of administrative infringements on academic freedom. In fact, there have been none for at least thirty-five years. While academic freedom is a traditional right that must be guaranteed and respected for an institution of higher education to exist, it has not been an issue at Lindenwood College.

4. Sexual Harassment

The Faculty Handbook statement concerning various aspects of sexual harassment is found on pages 8 and 9. The College would take any such allegations very seriously and investigate them rigorously. No such allegations have been made in recent years, but the process is in place if needed.

5. Faculty Corporate Responsibilities

The list of corporate responsibilities for the faculty of Lindenwood College found on page 4 of the Faculty Handbook clearly indicates the significant involvement with the academic program entrusted to the faculty. There is no doubt that the responsibilities and their exercise fall well within the guidelines of the North Central Association. This past year, every faculty member of Lindenwood College made suggestions that filtered into divisional and college planning. This is a significant accomplishment in creating a model of faculty participation. The pattern of faculty involvement that has evolved at Lindenwood College over the past five years is working.

Staff

The role and responsibilities of staff people at Lindenwood College may be less broad than those of the faculty, but they are no less important. Within the realm of good practices, there are two areas that are particularly important.

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1. Employment/Termination
   Practices involved in hiring and termination of staff people are found in the Staff Handbook on page 1. They are less elaborate than those involved in faculty hiring and dismissal, but they are regularly followed, even though there is not a great deal of staff turnover.

2. Sexual Harassment
   The Staff Handbook also outlines the policies and procedures involving allegations of sexual harassment of staff people. Such allegations would be investigated promptly and thoroughly and handled with despatch. During the past year, one allegation of harassment was made involving a staff person. Upon investigation under the process, the allegation was withdrawn.

General

There are some institution-wide good practices that are in place at Lindenwood College.

1. Public Disclosure
   There are several avenues of public disclosure which the College follows. The President of the College normally issues an Annual Report detailing the College’s progress and achievements through the past year. These reports are mailed to College supporters and are available to anyone who asks.

   The College issues other public statements of its policies, in such formats as the Undergraduate and Graduate catalogs, which indicate fees, courses, and other policies.

   The College issues an annual Student Right to Know and Campus Security Report as required by law, detailing information from our own security people and all reports relating to the College received by law enforcement agencies in the area.

   The finances of the College are a matter of audit each year. Lindenwood College uses the services of Peat Marwick to conduct an audit which is reported to the Board of Directors. This audit is accompanied by a management letter and comments to allow the maximum benefit to the Board and to the Administration in using the audit. The College also receives a Performance Audit comparing various aspects of Lindenwood’s finances and fundraising with peer institutions around the country. Faculty normally receive a copy of the balance sheet at the beginning of each semester.

   The College also files annual reports with North Central Association as well as the normal statistical reports required by the Department of Education at both the state and federal levels (such as IPEDs).

2. Software Compliance
   This is a relatively new aspect of good practice, but it is important nonetheless. The College has adopted an explicit policy banning pirated software or any
software on College machines without proper licensing. Illegal copying is prohibited. Such policy is posted in the computer labs. Orientation sessions to the computer labs for classes and individuals always detail the policy.

3. Copyright Compliance
The College follows the rules laid down in the United States Code, Title 17 relating to copyright infringement. Such a notice is posted above the Butler Library copy machine. The entire title of the code is available in the Library to any student or townsperson who wishes to see it. Since Butler Library is a limited government depository, it is open to the public. Care is taken in interlibrary loan and other library activities to respect copyright conventions. All freshmen English classes receive a routine orientation to the library, and this information is always contained within the orientation.

Lindenwood College is convinced that its procedures are explicit, fair, and enforced. We have good practices policies in place for all normal contingencies.

The first of these involvements is through faculty involved in each discipline. Lindenwood does not have formal departments, but each subject-matter faculty group has an identity. Faculty members in their discipline regularly meet and debate issues relating to their particular coursework. In practice, almost all majors offered at Lindenwood are the product of such subject-matter faculty groups. The faculty involved in each subject-matter groups determine the structure and pattern of courses. Lindenwood has not added any majors to our curriculum in recent times, since our Statement of Affiliation States restricts us to majors currently offered. This restriction will severely hamper Lindenwood in the coming period when competition in our area becomes more severe. But majors are the product of the various disciplines. Subject-matter groups of faculty determine courses and requirements. They make recommendations to the appropriate division. To all intents and purposes, these disciplinary groups act as departments would in more conventional academic institutions.

The second major faculty involvement is through the divisional structure. There are, currently, five divisions within the faculty: Humanities (English, Communications, History, Modern Languages, Religion, Philosophy), Sciences (Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Earth Science, Psychology, Sociology/Anthropology, Gerontology, Professional and School Counseling), Fine and Performing Arts (Art, Music, Dance, Theatre), Management (Business Administration, Accounting, Retail Marketing, Management Information Systems, Marketing, Political Science), and Education (Elementary, Secondary, Administration, Physical Education, Human Service Agency Management). Faculty members are distributed among the divisions according to their disciplinary responsibilities. Faculty members who teach in the Lindenwood College for Individualized Education (formerly a separate division) are distributed among the various divisions according to the academic specialty of each LCIE faculty member. Each division has a dean who is also a teaching member of the faculty. Each division has regular meetings to consider business coming from individual faculty members, disciplinary groups, or coming from the administration.
Faculty Participation in Governance

The process of faculty involvement in governance and the academic program at Lindenwood College is, admittedly, not a traditional one. Nonetheless, the involvement is deep and effective; it merely follows a different path than is true in many institutions. We are convinced that it is well within the guidelines of the North Central Association which indicate that the oversight of the academic program is typically lodged with the faculty. So it is at Lindenwood College.

There are several main avenues of faculty involvement in the academic program and in governance at Lindenwood College.

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Divisions are the heart of faculty involvement at Lindenwood. It is in the division meeting that academic issues are thrashed through in debate. New courses are considered; changes in existing curricula or courses are considered. Once the sense of the division is determined, the divisional dean is responsible for taking the matter to the Deans’ Council.

Each division also meets with the Vice-President and the President (separately) to express concerns, indicate plans, and improve communications. Each division meets with the Vice-President and the President at least once a year.

A fourth involvement is the Deans’ Council. The Dean’s Council is responsible for considering proposals from all of the divisions and making a recommendation to the Vice-President and President. Each dean within the council presents the issues relating to his or her division. Each of the division deans is a regular teaching member of the faculty. The Vice-President was, until recently, a division dean as well (Education), though he has given up that position to another member of the Education Division faculty. The Vice-President teaches regularly, though not full-time.

It is still true to say, however, that a meeting of the Deans’ Council is a meeting of faculty members whose primary focus is the classroom. They bring to the Council the attitudes and decisions of their respective divisions. It is a truism of the academic world that administrators lose touch with the real business of teaching and learning; that has not happened at Lindenwood, where Deans’ Council meetings have to be juggled around teaching schedules. The Deans’ Council deliberates recommendations from the divisions. It is in the Deans’ Council that the implications and ramifications of divisional proposals are seen and discussed. After such discussion, the Council makes a recommendation to the Vice-President who will make a decision or, sometimes, refer a matter to the President for final action. The final responsibility is that of the President of the College in any case.

One concern expressed by the last visiting team was a fear that the core faculty would not have quality control over off-campus offerings. In fact, the academic organization of the College has been restructured to make such control more overt and constant. All academic offerings within a given academic area are the responsibility of a division and its dean. This includes every offering of Lindenwood College. The LCIE faculty members are, as we saw above, distributed among the divisions so that the regular academic organization applies to them. All course offerings are reviewed and monitored by the divisions and their deans. This includes all offerings given on the main campus as well as any off-campus sites where Lindenwood teaching is done. The Westport center and the Olin program are reviewed in this way as well as the center in Marshall, Missouri, at Missouri Valley College.

Off-campus (as well as on-campus) offerings done within the LCIE context are supported administratively by a project team chaired by the Provost that arranges for rooms, textbooks, and the like. The academic oversight is done by the divisions and division deans in the normal way.

The Marshall center offers coursework only in Management (MBA courses) and Human Services.
Agency Management. The Dean of the College supervises the administrative arrangements for this center, and the academic oversight is provided in the normal way by the appropriate Division Deans (in this case, Management and Education).

The concern that the core faculty would not be involved in the quality control of off-campus offerings is not, in practice, well-founded. We have structured the administration of the academic program so that such oversight is built into the system and operates throughout the institution.

A fifth major involvement of the faculty in the program and governance of the College is through their Individual Development Plans. Each faculty member prepares an annual prospectus detailing both teaching and non-teaching responsibilities for the coming year. Contained within these IDPs are suggestions for both individual or collective action for the coming year. Faculty members suggest ways in which they can grow in their individual efforts and/or ways in which the College should proceed on a wide variety of matters.

During the 1994-1995 academic year, when IDPs were prepared for the 1995-1996 year, at least one hundred suggestions were put forward in IDPs. These are beyond the totally individual suggestions for professional growth. They include suggestions that would relate to student services, improvements in the instructional program, community services, and administrative services. They also include suggestions for changes or improvements in facilities.

These IDP suggestions are not idle talk. They lead to action. The 1994 visiting team suggested that faculty members could do little beyond their teaching loads, but experience in recent years indicates otherwise. For example, a year ago, one IDP called attention to a serious lack of studio art space and called for action. Within five weeks, a vacant commercial building not far from campus was located and purchased. It was put to immediate use, though it is still in the process of renovation. Some suggestions, in other words, envision long-term projects; others are matters that can be accomplished quickly. During the 1994-1995 academic year, some thirty-nine IDP initiative suggestions were implemented. These ranged from activities involving a new course or program revision all the way to proposed plans for the renovation of Young Science Hall. In other words, the IDP suggestions vary in scope, but they all represent genuine participation by faculty members in the governance process.

Some of the IDP suggestions and many initiatives and ideas from the divisions find their way into another, sixth, significant area of faculty involvement, the College Strategic Plan. Each division is asked to suggest long-term (five-year) goals together with the steps needed to implement them. These suggestions are incorporated into the on-going Strategic Plan at the level of the Deans’ Council and the Vice-President. The Strategic Plan is structured to consider issues and plans that are five years down the road, but it also considers, in more detail, the next year and is geared to actions that can be taken to realize the one-year goals and work toward the longer-term goals. The Plan is revised each year, and every faculty member is involved in the planning process, as an individual and as a division member. It would be true to say that the process does not allow individual faculty members to duce involvement in this planning process. The College Strategic Plan is ultimately approved by the Board of Directors for implementation.
Such planning is taken seriously at Lindenwood. Given the climate of education in general and in the St. Louis/St. Charles Metropolitan Area in particular, planning is needed to stay ahead of the game. We face very stiff competition from educational institutions from around the country and from within the metropolitan area who see our growing population as an opportunity for an extension of their own programs. This is true of both private and public institutions.

Lindenwood College cannot rest on its laurels. We have made spectacular gains in recent years in budget and enrollment. It would be easy for the College to be content with the status quo, but it cannot be done. We need to be alert to opportunities; otherwise, we will wither along with some other private institutions.

A seventh major involvement of faculty in the governance/academic process is through ad hoc task forces formed for specific purposes. These task forces serve many of the same purposes that standing faculty committees serve in many institutions.

During the 1994-1995 academic year, six task forces were active, and five more were in the process of formation. Other task forces have accomplished goals in past years and disbanded. Others will emerge in the coming year. These task forces vary greatly in content and purpose. One concerned itself with faculty/staff social events. Others had a more direct academic purpose.

One on-going task force is concerned with an Honors Program. This task force has been in existence for several years planning an honors program. It implemented the first of its suggestions during the 1994-1995 year and continues to flesh out its plans for a full-blown honors program implemented over time.

Another task group was involved with the ever-thorny problem of freshman advising. It has produced an Advising Handbook and finished its work during the summer of 1995.

Another, with wider and more long-term ramifications, is concerned with international programs. This involves both recruiting of international students but the eventual implementation of travel courses abroad together with an international studies program on campus.

During the 1995-1996 academic year, eight task forces are functioning.

These task forces form an important process by which faculty members can be involved in specific projects that interest them. Many of the task forces have finite time limits, so a lifetime commitment is not involved.

There are, in addition, two standing committees of the faculty, one on General Education, the other on Educational Policies. These committees form yet another venue for faculty involvement at Lindenwood. The General Education Committee has been in place for several years and is very active. It concerns itself with recommendations from disciplines and divisions on courses to meet general education requirements as well as long-term planning for the future of general education at Lindenwood. This committee also supervises the general education assessment process each year. The General Education Committee makes recommendations to the Deans'
Council and to the Vice-President on matters relevant to general education.

The Educational Policies Committee has formed more recently. It is intended to fulfill the traditional expectations of an educational policy committee, surveying the academic program and making recommendations for modifications and improvements.

In each case, the members of the committees are nominated by the divisions and appointed by the President.

Faculty meetings at Lindenwood College serve, for the most part, as avenues of communication. The President and Vice-President regularly report to the faculty, along with task forces and the standing committees as needed. There are some matters that receive full faculty votes, such as recommendations for the graduating class and admission to Emeritus status for retiring faculty members. But, for the most part, faculty meetings are not business sessions but rather communications devices. The real business of the faculty is done at the Divisional and Deans’ Council level.

In a growing and busy institution such as Lindenwood College, it can be easy for some faculty individuals to lose touch with the larger issues of the College and be unaware of many of its initiatives and activities. The last visiting team called attention to this problem. Every effort has been made to keep everyone informed and involved. Regular issues of an internal newsletter, *Communique*, are distributed to everyone across campus and contain updates on activities and meetings and discussions. The President and the Vice-President regularly issue letters to faculty and staff informing them of pertinent matters that affect the College. The President and the Vice-President use their meetings with each division to brief faculty members and respond to questions and comments raised by members of the division.

The Lindenwood Faculty Handbook outlines in specific detail (page 4) the faculty responsibilities. They include the following:

1. To review, in consultation with the Division Dean and the Council of Academic Deans, the academic curriculum and to make recommendations for changes as appropriate.

2. To recommend the requirements for earned degrees.

3. To establish the nature of the system to be used in evaluating students’ academic performance.

4. To recommend to the President and the Board of Directors candidates for earned and honorary degrees.

5. To recommend to the President changes on any other matters of educational policy.

6. To ensure access to all programs of the college on a nondiscriminatory basis.
7. To recommend to the President and the Board of Directors candidates for emeritus status.

Assessment

These are standard issues of faculty involvement in curricular direction and governance.

The third area of concern from the 1994 visiting team concerned our assessment process.

One criticism expressed by the team was that Lindenwood had begun the assessment process only in response to the North Central mandate. This would apply to all but a tiny number of institutions that have been involved in pioneering the process for some years. We certainly did begin the process as part of the North Central requirement. However, Lindenwood College responded aggressively to the requirement in good faith. The administration has given enthusiastic support to the program from the beginning, and they have made available whatever resources have been needed.

The original plan was the result of a cooperative effort by all members of the faculty. A regular, full-time teaching faculty member became the Assessment Officer and received some released-time to accomplish the goal. We were responding to the mandate from North Central Association that assessment was to be a faculty-owned project and aimed toward program improvement.

In the first instance, the Assessment Officer visited each division for a discussion of the process. Each subject-matter group, each major field faculty group, then began the process of identifying goals and objectives for their majors. While most of these goals and objectives had been implicit for years in the teaching process, this is the first time for most faculty people that they had been made explicit.

After that phase was accomplished, each group then selected methods of assessment. At that point in the process, we were literally moving on new ground. We had relatively little to go on. The Assessment Officer and some members of the administration attended one of the first of the North Central workshops on assessment and gleaned what we could. We have attended North Central meetings and workshops on assessment faithfully since that time as well. But translating the general notions of these workshops into actual assessment practice was not always obvious or easy. But faculty responsible for each major came up with initial methods of assessment.

It seems important to say that, during this process, the Assessment Officer received almost total cooperation from faculty. To say that faculty were all enthusiastic about taking on this additional task would be untrue, but all faculty members were convinced of the need for the program and cooperated fully. It is equally true that the administration gave total support to the program.

The first year that the program was in operation was in 1992-1993. The various majors all had their goals, objectives, and methods of assessment in place. Once the goals and objectives had been explicitly identified, they found their way into course syllabi and translated down the line into instructional goals. In fact, many faculty, perhaps to their surprise, found the actual identification of goals and objectives helpful in formulating their own instructional objectives. The first period of data-gathering came at the end of the 1992-1993 year, and a Final Report
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for that year was published. That was the only report available when the 1994 visiting team came to Lindenwood.

A second annual report was compiled at the end of the 1993-1994 academic year. By this time, some faculty groups had begun to question the methods that they had initially selected and some revisions were made. On the whole, any revisions to the plan came in methods, not in goals and objectives, which have tended to remain fairly constant through these last three years.

A third collection of data was made at the end of the 1994-1995 academic year. With three years of data in hand, we were ready for the second stage of assessment, the part that translates into program evaluation and improvement.

There were two possibilities that could show up at the end of three years, and we experienced both of them. The first possibility was that the method of assessment chosen would not deliver meaningful data over time. It was almost impossible to determine that until we had some years of data to analyze. But, with three years of results in hand, it was possible to see whether we could draw lessons from them that would allow us to implement improvements.

The second possibility was that the chosen methods would work, and that meaningful results could be obtained from the three years of data. Several areas of the College experienced this result.

The process, at this point, varied depending on which result was obtained. For those areas where the collected three-years data was not meaningful, it was necessary to revise the assessment process. We always knew that assessment methods might well change over time. We do not feel that the three years of effort here was wasted if we can use the experience to work toward a strengthening of our assessment process.

Several areas of the College felt that their results were not meaningful enough to support informed improvement efforts. For those areas, beginning with the Fall Faculty Workshops in August, 1995, the effort was to choose new methods of assessment. These new methods are being incorporated into the current version of the plan, from which data will be collected in the late spring of 1996. We are confident that most, if not all, of these areas will select new methods of assessment that will produce the results we want and need.

The largest component of the curriculum where we are dissatisfied with the assessment methods is in general education. The General Education Committee has spent a great deal of time over the past three years collecting and collating the data under the plan adopted at the beginning. It is their conviction, based on three years, that the method is not useful in evaluating the success of our general education program. They are currently hard at work to devise a new method. We are not yet sure what this will be. We are shamelessly examining the methods used in other institutions to see if we can benefit from their experience. We are exploring several options of our own. We do not yet know what the new method will be, and we will not, of course, know whether it will succeed until we try it for two years at least.

For those areas where the chosen assessment methods seemed appropriate and workable, the
faculty have been analyzing the three years of data. They were asked, in the spring of 1995, to make this analysis. Using the results of that analysis, they were asked to identify two different aspects of their programs. The first comprised those areas where the results were positive and indicated success for the program. In these cases, obviously, the faculty would continue to follow the same program methods, confident that it was working. For those areas where the results were not as successful, faculty were asked to create an Action Plan that would translate into efforts to correct the deficiencies. Whether these efforts will work will not be known until the next collection of data in Spring, 1996. The Action Plans have been collected by the Assessment Officer as part of the Final Report of the Assessment Plan for 1994-1995. The Action Plan items were discussed by the faculty groups and the Assessment Officer during the Fall Faculty Workshops in August, 1995. They have been implemented for the current academic year. We are going to monitor them during the year to see how they seem to be working.

It is important to emphasize that Lindenwood College has been and remains committed to the assessment process. We do want our program to improve, and we are delighted with evidence of positive results. The import of the assessment plan is what we expected: we are doing a good job and trying to get even better. The administration has always given the requisite support to the effort. The Assessment Officer has always been a working faculty member in contact with real life, which we think is important. A senior member of the administration has always provided the administrative support the program needs. The College has provided whatever has been asked in the way of moral and financial support. We have regularly attended every available North Central workshop on assessment to get what guidance we can. These meetings have been helpful, but no one can do it for us. Any further insights from the Focused Visit team into assessment will be welcomed.
CONCLUSION

Lindenwood College feels that the concerns raised by the last visiting team have been addressed.

Faculty members at Lindenwood College are closely and constantly involved in academic program review, modification, and improvement through all these avenues we have reviewed. The involvement is close, effective, and constant. Curricula changes, regardless of their source of origin, filter up through the Divisional structure for formal approval. The main features of the Lindenwood program are all faculty generated. The structure may not be totally traditional, but it works, and it certainly is well within the general guidelines of the North Central Association.

Lindenwood College has in place all appropriate guidelines and requirements for Good Practice. In many areas, we have had no cases or disputes, but the machinery is in place when, and if, it is needed. All these Good Practice policies are published to the appropriate constituencies.

Finally, our assessment process is working to provide improvements to the program. We are using our collected data to implement changes and improvements as they seem indicated. We are convinced that the process is a good one and is accomplishing its purposes.
Request for Revision of Statement of Affiliation Status

In the aftermath of the last comprehensive visit, the team recommended and the Commission concurred in a restriction in our SAS which limits Lindenwood College to existing programs and existing sites without prior Commission approval. We now seek to have this restriction removed so that the College can offer new programs or majors, if any seem indicated, and can use other locations, if necessary.

There are two reasons for our request for the amendment to the Statement of Affiliation Status. The first is that the College has, in fact, evolved into a successful institution with a settled structure and system of governance. It has demonstrated its stability and responsibility. The restrictions are appropriate no longer.

The other area is one of practicality. Lindenwood College has succeeded because it has been able to serve students well and take advantage of opportunities to serve them even better. We now face an unprecedented level of competition from other institutions. Some of these are private institutions from outside St. Charles County who wish to enter a more lucrative area and have opened storefront operations in St. Charles county. The other institutions are public. The St. Charles County Community College has been expanding, and Lindenwood has a good relationship with it and receives students in transfer regularly. We have transfer agreements in place with them. A number of St. Charles county students attend the St. Louis Community College campuses, and we have transfer agreements with them. However, in the summer of 1995, the Missouri Coordinating Board of Higher Education granted the University of Missouri-St. Louis permission to open a residential center in St. Charles and other areas. UMSL has wanted an entree into St. Charles County for many years, and this will be their opportunity. While we do not disapprove of competition, per se, it is obviously more difficult for a private institution to compete with a tax-supported one. Lindenwood College must be able to operate in this competitive environment. This means that we want the site and program restrictions removed from our Statement of Affiliation Status so that we can compete on a more-or-less level field. The success that Lindenwood College has achieved thus far does not mean that we can rest on our laurels and expect that it will always be so. We need to continue to search for appropriate areas where we can provide good educational opportunities. Obviously, there are many educational areas which the University of Missouri-St. Louis can provide that we could not. Lindenwood College intends to remain a college within the liberal arts tradition. But, within those parameters, there may well be other fields of study and other sites that we could enter where those services could be delivered. We do not intend to proliferate endlessly and into inappropriate areas; we would not be successful if we did. But we must be able to respond to genuine opportunities that fall within our mission.

Therefore, we ask that the restrictions on program and site be removed from the Statement of Affiliation Status.

We are confident that the visiting team will find us as we say we are.