REPORT OF A VISIT TO
THE UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO AT DENVER
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I. INTRODUCTION

STRUCTURE AND SCOPE OF EVALUATION VISIT

This is the report of a comprehensive evaluation for continued accreditation of the University of Colorado at Denver (CU-Denver), conducted by an Evaluation Team organized by The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

The Team conducted the visit from March 5-7, 2001. During the visit, members of the Team met with and interviewed more than 100 administrators, faculty, and staff as well as with more than 20 students. These included the Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs and Research for the University of Colorado System, senior administrators from the CU-Denver campus, four members of the Board of Regents, Executive Vice President of the Auraria Higher Education Center and Vice President of the CU Foundation.

The Team also reviewed a broad array of documents in hard copy and web based ranging from the academic strategic plan for the institution and colleges to financial documents and public information publications. From the information in interviews and written materials, the Team believes that ample evidence was available to form a comprehensive view of the state of the University during this brief visit.

ACCREDITATION HISTORY

The University of Colorado at Denver, located in the heart of downtown Denver is the only comprehensive public university in the state's capital city. As one of four campuses in the University of Colorado system, CU-Denver has been continuously accredited as a separate and autonomous branch of the system since 1972. The last comprehensive visit was conducted in October 1990 with subsequent focused visits in 1994 and 1995 for approval of international programs in Moscow, Russia, and Beijing, China, respectively.

CU-Denver's campus is part of an innovative concept established by the State Legislature in 1973 to provide a cost-efficient campus for three public higher education institutions in the city of Denver. Operating as autonomous independent institutions, The University of Colorado at Denver, Metropolitan State College of Denver, and the Community College of Denver share the 126-acre Auraria campus that is managed by a separate administrative entity. The shared facilities on the Auraria campus include the Auraria Library and Media Center (administered by CU-Denver), administrative and classroom buildings, a child care center and development center, recreation facilities, parking lots, and services buildings.

While still a complex system, coordination of the Auraria Higher Education Center (AHEC) has been improved significantly since the last accreditation visit in 1990. The two new facilities recently added to the Auraria campus, the King Performing Arts Center and the 1866 Tivoli Brewery Building converted into a student union and bookstore are excellent additions for all three institutions.

The addition of the executive committee consisting of the Executive Vice President of AHEC and the three chief executive officers gives CU-Denver more input on the management of campus facilities and auxiliaries. Another element of complexity in the governance of CU-Denver is the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE). The Commission acts as a central policy and coordinating body for public higher education in the state of Colorado.

EVALUATION OF SELF STUDY PROCESS AND REPORT

The University of Colorado at Denver self-study is a well-organized, focused, succinct and credible document. The report reflects a comprehensive study conducted by a broad range of individuals in the University. A sound strategic planning process underlies the premise of the self-study report. This report represents an examination of the materials presented in the self-study.
REQUESTED CHANGE IN SAS
In addition to the self-study, upon arrival on campus the Chancellor presented the Team with a written request to remove the Ph.D. stipulation from the institutional SAS.

ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT
Findings concerning the General Institutional Requirements, The Criteria for Accreditation and a response to the request to change the SAS are presented in Section II of this report. The institutional Strengths and Challenges identified during the analyses are cited in Section III. Advice and Suggestions are outlined in section IV. In Section V, the Team's rationale and recommendations conclude the report.

The Team members wish to express appreciation to the administrators, staff, faculty, Regents and students for their hospitality and cordiality during the visit.

II. EVALUATION FOR AFFILIATION

GENERAL INSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS
The University adequately addresses the General Institutional Requirements (GIR) in the self-study report. In the process of evaluating the criteria for accreditation, the Team found sufficient evidence that the GIR have been satisfied.

MISSION
The institutional mission is clearly stated and consistently represented in University publications and annual reports. There is clear evidence that the process for developing the mission and subsequent Academic Strategic Plan was inclusive, collaborative, and reflects a development of shared purpose among the faculty and administration.

CU-Denver has explicitly stated four formal institutional purposes. These purposes relate to learning, generation of knowledge, application of knowledge, and institutional culture. The CU-Denver Academic Strategic Plan consistently relates the purposes to the institutional mission. CU-Denver's emphasis on applied research addresses the purposes of generation of knowledge and learning while fostering an institutional culture that addresses the needs for economic development, cultural enhancement, and educational access in the Denver metropolitan area. The Team found ample evidence of consistency between CU-Denver's mission and purposes.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT
Understanding of the financial condition of the University of Colorado at Denver requires awareness of the unique factors that shape funding of higher education in Colorado. The passage of the Taxpayer's Bill of Rights Amendment (Tabor) in 1992, the general decline in state support of higher education and the growing demands for higher education in Colorado combine to present the institution with significant challenges. The University has charted a course of diversification of revenue sources, careful budget planning and monitoring and more aggressive fund raising to maintain the resource bas necessary to achieve its mission.

The passage of the TABOR Amendment put all tuition rate increases in the hands of the legislature, limiting the institution’s ability to use tuition to meet increased costs. During the five years prior to TABOR, tuition increases averaged 8.1%, while after TABOR tuition increases averaged 3.6%. At the same time, population growth in Colorado has increased demand for higher education. The institution faces these pressures in a period ion which nearly all public institutions find smaller proportions of their budgets supported by state funds. Over the past 10 years, the proportion of revenue for university support from state tax funds has gone from 47% to 42%.

Given this context, the University has had to aggressively pursue alternative sources of revenue and areas of revenue growth. Auxiliary and self-funded activities increased from $5.3 M to $14.8 M over the last 10 years, much of this generated by the Division of Extended Studies. Over this same period, fund raising activities have resulted in nearly a 500% increase in gifts, and sponsored research increased by over 100%. Restricted funding for student financial aid increased by 83% over 10 years. These funding sources have helped to compensate for the relative reduction in state support. The University has also increased its attention to increasing freshmen enrollment in view of regional demographic growth and the state incentive program that brings approximately $4400 per student FTE.
CU-Denver has an enrollment of nearly 11,000 students, offering 31 undergraduate, 42 masters, 2Eds and 6 Ph.D. degrees. Overall, enrollment has increased approximately 3% since 1990. The most notable increase has been in master’s degrees that have increased by 86% (from 818 to 1,517). Cu Denver produces more master’s degrees than all other campuses in the University of Colorado system combined. While there is recognition of the need for a tuition differential for graduate programs, the Regents and CU-Denver acknowledge the limitations of TABOR. The budget process is very open and consultative, involving deans, faculty and other administrators. The faculty has a very active role in the budgeting process through the work of a very informed and committed faculty Budget Priorities Council. The Team meeting with members of this council confirmed that their role was substantive and that they were confident that their voices were heard. One of the current projects of the Council is the preparation of a budget reallocation model that is hoped to bring greater rationality to academic budget allocation among colleges based on average costs combined with revenue generation. While the debate about the model continues, the process has generated considerable insight for those involved and will eventually contribute to reducing perceived funding inequities among the colleges.

Considerable effort over the past few years has been committed to conversion of the financial systems by People Soft. This conversion, while stressful and challenging for many staff members, is viewed as being successful. A second major challenge has been the consolidation of procurement and payroll systems at the Colorado System level. As noted in a KPMG audit report, more work is needed to clarify the roles and responsibilities of both campus level and system level offices and positions.

Reporting to the Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration, several offices are responsible for the wide variety of services required to operate the campus. These include: Student Administrative Services, Financial Aid, and Computing and Network Services, Real Estate and Facilities, Human Resources, Voice Communication, Budget and Fiscal Planning, and Institutional Research. The Team found that these offices appeared to be functioning effectively within their resource constraints.

A few concerns were brought to the Team's attention. A major concern expressed by senior administrators is the cost of supporting the exploding uses of technology. While one-time funding is having high impact for classrooms and other IT capabilities, long term maintenance and support of this increased infrastructure will create financial pressures that have no immediate solution. Also noted were the constraints on enrollment and growth as a consequence of sharing a campus with two institutions and perceived increasing oversight by the CCHE. While faced with ongoing budget constraints, the institution continues to demonstrate that it has the financial resources necessary to accomplish its purposes.

**FACULTY**

The faculty Assembly works with administration in a collegial and respectful manner. This body reviews major program changes and is active and knowledgeable in setting budget priorities for the University. Faculty who met with the Team demonstrated a high regard for the student body and was focused on serving the needs of the metropolitan area.

There are 480 full-time faculty and 439 part-time faculty. Of the full-time faculty, 61% are male and 39% are female belonging to the ethnic minority and 85% are white. In the past 2 years, 6 minority faculty have been hired into tenure track lines indicating continuing efforts to expand the diversity of the faculty. Sixty-nine percent of the faculty are tenured or tenure-track with 53% tenured. Of the tenure track faculty, 93% hold terminal degrees and 79% hold doctoral degrees. The standard teaching load is 5 courses a year and 4 per year in business and the sciences. Student faculty ratios of 14.6 are relatively low for a doctoral/research institution. Slightly over one third of undergraduate instruction (34.3%) and a majority of graduate instruction (58.3%) is delivered by tenured/tenure-track faculty.

Faculty submit annual professional plans which are discussed with colleagues. Annual Scholarly reports are used for determining merit pay.
Several faculty indicated discontent with the functioning of the Auraria model of facilities management and expressed a need for clearer boundaries regarding authority and responsibility. Other concerns included the lack of capital equipment budgets in science department, the need for a plan to maintain SMART classrooms and to establish long range budgetary support of information technology.

A number of faculty development opportunities are available at the CU-Denver. The dedication of faculty and administrators who are responsible for these programs is inspiring. Over $380,000 in funding is available for various programs in addition to support for faculty sabbaticals.

The Office of Teaching Effectiveness and Faculty Development sponsors a Summer Boot Camp for Professionals to enhance teaching effectiveness. Every year focuses on a different theme and faculty are supported in a week-long seminar and workshop. The Office has also developed an innovative approach to increasing awareness of teaching and learning. Pilot results indicate that student learning in classes where faculty use this approach is twice that of classes where faculty have not received this training. Workshops are provided throughout the year to assist faculty in using new technologies in the classroom. A number of programs provide funds to faculty for professional travel, research, teaching awards, advising and assessment activities.

Every year; a new faculty orientation is conducted to support faculty success. A published guide that details the tenure and promotion process, Strategies for Success is provided. Another program that provides mentoring and support to pre-tenure faculty is YUMPS (young, upwardly mobile professionals).

Although a post-tenure review process is ongoing using a 5 year period, a need for more effective support was identified. In response to that need, recent funding to develop a new post-tenure development program was provided and the creation of such a program is in progress.

For next year, 2001-2002, 55 faculty are eligible for sabbatical leaves. Of that 55, 34 applied for leaves and 33 have been approved. Consequently, the support for this important area of faculty renewal is strong.

While considerable attention has been paid to improving the status of honorarium (non-tenure track) faculty in recent years, discontent was expressed about the level of compensation and benefits received by honorarium faculty. The Team was informed of an objective by some honorarium faculty to bring their compensation up to a level equivalent to 80% of the level of compensation of honorarium faculty at the University of Colorado Boulder campus.

STUDENT LIFE
The students with whom the Team met exhibited a high degree of motivation, enthusiasm and passion about the University and the quality of education offered. Staff who work in the various Student Affairs offices are knowledgeable and committed to working across departmental boundaries to ensure that student needs are met. The University has made significant strides in increasing the ethnic diversity of the student body. In fall 2000, minority students represented 21.3% of the total enrollment (27.6% for undergraduates and 12.5% for graduate students).

Acquisition of the Tivoli Building has provided the University with a critical anchor around which it can build and sustain a vibrant student life program to meet the co-curricular interests and affective needs of students. Establishment of the Integrated Advising System and the Student Service Center represent two excellent examples of the University's efforts to respond more effectively to the needs of students. Creation of the Integrated Advising System is an outgrowth of decisions made at the Chancellor's annual retreat.

The Chancellor's Scholar and Leaders Program represent a unique opportunity for the institution to attract and retain a cadre of academically talented and socially active students whose leadership is having a positive impact on the campus. The group is spearheading efforts to establish an honor code for the campus.
CU-Denver offers an impressive array of programs and services designed to increase the educational awareness, aspiration, and preparation of minority and first generation students as a means of ensuring their enrollment and success in college. The Academic Enrichment Center serves as a critical tool for helping to enhance student persistence and academic progression through graduation.

The newly combined Career Center represents recognition of the importance of experiential education and the great advantage CU-Denver's location has for excellent internship opportunities in business and professional areas.

A significant number of CU-Denver undergraduates are transfer students. There is an effort underway to attract more traditional aged entering first year students direct from high school, The Team observed that there seems to be no clearly articulated enrollment planning program. While CU-Denver has made significant new investments in marketing and communications, there may be value in considering the development of a comprehensive enrollment management plan wherein enrollment goals, timelines and financial aid plans are clearly articulated. A comprehensive plan would include the enrollment of new first year, transfer, continuing, and minority students as well as enrollment targets based on instructional resources. Given the demographic profile of Denver Public High School graduates, increasing the availability of incentive grants and scholarships may be a fundraising necessity.

The evidence seems to belie the idea that commuter students leave campus after attending classes. There are 60 recognized student organizations at CU-Denver, and staff report that the most successful student activity programs recently were held during the day rather than in the evenings. The "Total Learning Environment" theme provides CU-Denver with an overarching framework around which to develop and implement a comprehensive student life programs to address the needs and interests of the growing population of traditional college-bound students.

STAFF
It is not unusual to talk with staff members who have been employed at CU-Denver for more than 10 years and who continue to be enthusiastic about their work. Staff indicated tools are readily available to accomplish their work, and they value opportunities to discuss potential changes that affect them. Staff like the human resources education benefit, but they were less certain about the new pay for performance system citing the unnecessary burden caused by uncertainty of criteria required to achieve peak performance. Staff value a career ladder concept with clear criteria for advancement. Staff expressed interest in the University Staff Council and believed participation to be beneficial. There was uncertainty among staff as to whether they could attend meetings during working hours.

Staff appeared to be highly skilled and professionally oriented. CU-Denver is fortunate to have this group of campus and community advocates. CU-Denver is commended for its accomplished and dedicated professional and support staff who provide essential services to the institution. One area that staff expressed concerns about is the implementation of technology. They would like to have a formal mechanism to ensure an opportunity for staff input related to technology enhancements and end user needs.

CAMPUS FACILITIES
The Auraria Campus is a unique physical arrangement. There appears to have been a maturation of understanding of processes among the users of the space since 1990. The development of the Auraria Executive Council has helped in the maturation process. The development of the Tivoli Student Union and the King Performance Arts Center enhances the physical facilities for CU-Denver as well as for the other two institutions.

Growth of CU-Denver programs present a continuing challenge for the campus. Research laboratory space and specific IT needs that are not generic in nature are becoming an ever increasing concern for CU-Denver. For example, the need for a new building for the College of Architecture and Planning is a specialized need that does not necessarily translate in every aspect to general use. CU-Denver, however, has developed an arrangement through the CU-Foundation to acquire space through a purchase-lease arrangement with AHEC that may be a reasonable way to address specialized needs in the future.

While there is some discontent voiced among some faculty about the inconvenience of the administrative procedures of AHEC, there appears to be a maturity of understanding of the reality of the unique arrangement.
LIBRARY
The Auraria Library and Media Center administered by CU-Denver, serves CU-Denver, Metropolitan State College of Denver, and the Community College of Denver. In the year 2000, 33,000 students were served by the library. In addition, the library also serves the community. The library employs 113 full-time employees, including 27 professional librarians. Of the 27 librarians, 6 are tenured or tenure-track at CU-Denver.

Funding for the library includes a base budget of $6.3M with another $1.4M for the media center, representing 6% of the university's total operating budget. In addition, supplemental funding is routinely provided. In 2000-2001, approximately $1.8 million was provided. Increases in base funding come from all three institutions as determined by a formula that is enrollment driven.

A unified catalog includes the holding of Auraria, CU-Boulder, and the University of Denver. Periodicals from the Boulder Library may be obtained within 24 hours. The library has inverted in full-text databases to provide greater periodical access. The combination of electronic access and rapid retrieval from Boulder provide reasonable availability of serials to faculty and students.

As new doctoral programs are developed, the need for adequate library resources will need to be addressed in a responsive manner.

DEVELOPMENT
CU-Denver has made significant advances in fundraising since 1990. Midway through a Total Learning Environment Campaign, the Foundation has achieved 64% of its goal of $32.5M in gifts and pledges. There are 76 endowments at CU-Denver. The endowment corpus has increased from $1.48M in 1990-91 to $10.3M in FY 1999-00 and revenues increased 500% during that same period. CU-Denver is on track to reach or exceed its FY 00-01 goal of $4.5M in revenue.

The most recent gift was $3.7M from the Starz Encore Group and the Sie Foundation to create the Starz Encore Film center. This was a path-breaking gift because it came to the new College of Arts & Media that has been in existence for only 3 years. The College, however, has become exceptionally entrepreneurial in an area where there is considerable competition by other more established programs. The Arts & Media efforts represent a more creative and aggressive fundraising posture taken by several units and their increasing competitiveness within the Denver community. The College of Business and the College of Engineering and Applied Science have also excelled in fundraising. Business holds a highly visible event in the community each year that bring high profile exposure to the College and nets nearly $300,000.

Given CU-Denver’s location and focus on applied research, it is notable that 81% of gifts came from corporations and foundations. Fund-raisers have yet to build alumni giving into a viable enterprise, but see that as a future goal. In FY 1999-00, current giving by alumni was $236,800 and endowment giving was $174,544. While these are modest numbers, they represent a clear improvement over figures submitted since 1990. Fundraising success among alumni has been limited by an absence of campus-wide alumni publications and of overall efforts to raise CU-Denver's visibility in the surrounding community.

While fund raising on the CU-Denver campus is a relatively new enterprise, it operates under the umbrella of the University of Colorado Foundation that is in the middle of a $630M campaign and raised $113M last year. The CU Foundation serves as the conduit for all major gifts for the 4 campuses and provides central support for fundraising, runs the annual campaign, and handles all accounting and investment. The development officer at CU-Denver, a Vice President of the CU Foundation, reports to the President of the Foundation in Boulder with a separate "dotted" reporting line to the CU-Denver Chancellor. This relationship has worked particularly well on the CU-Denver campus. Fundraising on the CU-Denver campus is decentralized with development officers assigned full or part-time to most of the Colleges.
The success of fundraising on campus depends on the Chancellor, Vice Chancellors, the CU-Foundation Vice President, and deans with a commitment to this activity. The campus has benefited from some entrepreneurial deans with fairly long tenure who are fully engaged in the process. The commitment, enthusiasm, and vision of the campus development officer have also been major success factors. There appears to be a clear commitment to development on campus and a steady pattern of growth. A major challenge for the Foundation is keeping college-level development officers in a city with a vibrant economy.

**COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE & PLANNING**

The College of Architecture and Planning was created from a merger of the CU-Boulder College of Environmental Design and the CU-Denver School of Architecture and Planning. The undergraduate program is located at CU-Boulder and graduate programs at CU-Denver. Graduate programs include the Professional Master's Programs (Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Urban Design and Urban and Regional Planning) and a multidisciplinary Ph.D. Program in Design and Planning. The National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB), the Landscape Architecture Board (LAAB), and the Planning Accreditation Board (PAB) have accredited graduate programs at CU-Denver. The College has a strategic plan which is being carried out through interdisciplinary programs and projects. The College has one Dean with approximately 1100 students and 43 full time faculty members (not counting the Dean). Of these 43 positions, the Associate Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs/Dean of the Graduate School holds one and seven other faculty members have administrative duties. The Planning and Design Department and the Architecture Department share responsibility for staffing the Bachelor of Environmental Design degree offered at CU-Boulder. CU-Denver receives a portion of the tuition generated from undergraduate enrollment. Without the undergraduate program, the College could not retain its diversity and size, and would experience a substantial loss of College resources. The Ph.D. program operates at Boulder and Denver with 30 students in the program. The program director maintains an office and has regular office hours at both sites. Of the eighteen Ph.D. program faculty, 18% teach primarily in Boulder, 37% teach primarily in Denver, and 45% split their teaching responsibilities between both sites. Ph.D. students play a role in the delivery of the undergraduate curriculum in Boulder, teaching approximately 12 courses and serving as teaching assistants in approximately 13 courses. Part-time faculty are assigned teaching responsibilities for approximately 47% of the courses in the college. While it was acknowledged that over reliance on part-time faculty potentially compromises undergraduate and graduate programs, given current financial realities, significant change cannot be expected in the near future. The strategic plan includes a faculty hiring plan to address this concern.

Graduate faculty, in addition to teaching, oversee all recruitment, admissions, advising, graduation certification, and career advisement. Given this workload, it is not surprising to find funding from grants and contracts substantially lower than could be expected for a College with the apparent advantages of CU-Denver (location in downtown Denver which is a vibrant growing community with major redevelopment initiatives, etc.) There is an effort to increase funded research within the College to create additional positions: An annual faculty competition has been instituted to award a class release for a faculty member to develop a competitive grant proposal. Discussions with faculty indicated competition for available grants frequently exist between the College and the Colorado Center for Community Development. The faculty stressed the importance of realigning this Center with the College since the purpose of the Colorado Center for Community Development is similar to the mission of the College.

Despite resource challenges, the architecture and planning graduate programs at CU-Denver are considered to be of high quality and meet the important needs of the Denver metropolitan professional community. Each program has an expressed purpose that coincides with the broad goals in the College Strategic Plan, the New Urban University initiative, and Total Learning Environment (TLE).

Educational objectives for each program are clearly stated and assessment measures are listed. It was not clear, however, how program outcomes were made known to students, what were the parameters of the data collection process, or how outcomes were used to revise and strengthen programs? It appears that assessment is primarily included within the broader structure of regular program review. Faculty cited portfolio projects as primary evidence of student academic achievement. Numerous examples of student accomplishment were mentioned, such as work with the City of Denver Business Development Authority, completion of a master plan for conversion of the Elitch Gardens site to a community housing area, urban playground project, Fitzsimmons/Health Science Center redesign and the Prague Summer Urban Design Institute.
Physical space has been a significant issue for the College. The Chancellor has designated the College as CU-Denver's first priority for a new facility, and the College is the fourth priority for the Auraria campus. The Dean is committed to raising $1M for a nucleus fund for the new facility and has secured pledges nearly reaching the goal from external sources. The campus is identifying new funds to cover annual operating expenses.

**COLLEGE OF ARTS AND MEDIA**

The College of Arts and Media is an innovative new college formed in 1998 that focuses on combining a traditional arts foundation with practical/professional training in the latest media. The College consists of 3 departments: Theater, film and video production; Music and entertainment industry studies; Visual and multimedia arts. Rapidly growing enrollments will require new resources and the current strategy to fund this growth involves providing additional resources in the first year, an instructor in the second year and a new tenure track line in the third year.

The Bachelor of Science in Music is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM). Planning is underway for an application to the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) for arts accreditation. The college plans to pursue specialized accreditation for the theater program. A new degree, Master of Science in Recording Arts, is in the initial planning stages with the preparation of a concept paper.

The new King Performing Arts Center that opened in the Fall of 2000 provides a modern facility for future growth and innovation. The center features a 350-seat courtyard theater, a 550-seat concert hall, a 200-seat recital hall, performance support space, 29 classrooms, 7 computer-enhanced classrooms and faculty offices. Private fund raising is underway to secure resources to fully equip the facility. The proposed Starz Encore Film Center in the new Tivoli Student Union should be a significant asset for the film program.

Overall, the units have thrived since they were aggregated into a new college 3 years ago. Innovative, visionary leadership has taken a traditional fine arts program and turned it into a nimble college that is responsive to the impact technology is having on the arts and is targeting niche programs such as multimedia and recording engineering that are in high demand locally and nationally. This college could be a prototype for how CU-Denver can transform itself into a "New Urban University."

**COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATION**

As one of the of the largest colleges on campus, the College of Business and Administration also leads all institutions in the state in the production of MBA and MS business degrees. The College is home to approximately 2500 students 55% of whom are at the graduate level. Undergraduates are typically transfer students from area institutions and many are non-traditional. The College is home to the Graduate School of Business Administration, which offers seven MS degree options, three MBA options, a collaborative Executive MBA, Executive MBA in Health Care Administration, and four dual degree options. While its 11-month full-time MBA program is designed for full-time students, most graduate students are part-time students who are fully employed in the region.

The approximately 61 full-time faculty are broadly recognized as productive researchers, bringing the College a rank of fourth in the nation among business schools without doctoral programs. The expectations for publication for faculty are high, and the college averages over 100 scholarly articles each year. For example, the college is rated fifth in the nation in accounting research and publications. The college has also earned distinction in international business by having its International Business Institute being designated as 1 of 27 Centers of Excellence by the U.S. Department of Education. The faculty also includes many who have had significant experience in business.

The College embodies much of the University Mission as a New Urban University and is committed to serving the Denver business community. The most visible expressions of this facet of the mission are the active centers for Health Care Administration, Information Technology Innovation, and the Bard Center for Entrepreneurship Development. Each of these centers has an active advisory board that links the college to a specific business constituency. Each center also sponsors programs and activities that engage students in a variety of field learning experiences that are linked to individual classes or programs. Additional programs that involve the regional business community are the annual Colorado Business Forum and the Economic forum each fall. The College recently received a gift that will
support a new research seminar series that will create the rare opportunity for dialogue with business leaders and faculty around research topics. Finally, the business community is incessant in its requests to have individual students or student groups take on real problems and projects as part of their educational experience. Opportunity for such student experiences are among the competitive advantages for urban business schools, and this College is taking full advantage of its location.

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
The School of Education offers graduate level teacher licensure programs in K-12 education, 7 master's degrees in the areas of administration, curriculum and instruction, early childhood education, special education, technology, counseling, and educational psychology, the Educational Specialist's degree in school psychology, and Ph.D. in educational leadership and innovation. The School of Education programs are accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education and the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs.

There are stable School of Education and urban public school partnerships. The required 800 hours of teacher education internship are spent in the partnership schools. Full time faculty who are involved with the partnerships spend one full day per week at the school site.

There are numerous additional partnership activities including the Board of Collaborative Services (BOCES), which works with 20 school districts in metropolitan Denver. The BOCES involves representatives of the school districts, community, and CU-Denver faculty in shared decision making regarding professional renewal.

Public school laboratories are an integral part of the doctoral program and have enhanced applied research centers and grant activity. The Center of Collaborative Leadership was established in 1994 within the School of Education provide the infrastructure for grant development. The School of Education leads the University in number of research awards received in 1999-2000 with a total of $6,813,098 in awards.

Due to changes in teacher licensure at the state level, the teacher education licensure programs were redesigned during 2000. Subsequently, there was program reorganization within the unit to integrate special education within the regular education program. Because of the ongoing political pressures and accountability issues in K-12 education, the faculty is required to spend considerable time on program development, which may detract from other faculty roles and responsibilities.

As accrediting agencies have required performance based education programs over the last several years, CU-Denver has followed suit with a performance based system. Each program has developed well defined outcomes and performance indicators. During the summer of 2000, teacher education faculty designed 9 performance based assessments used from program entry to exit in the initial teacher licensure program. Students are assessed in such areas as writing, technology, literacy, mathematics, subject matter content, academic classroom performance, and classroom management.

The School of Education has several fundraising initiatives underway including a gala event being planned with Bill Cosby. The "Thank a Teacher" tribute will honor teachers and raise money for scholarships.

The School of Education is a vibrant unit with dynamic leadership and highly motivated faculty. Their community partnerships are noteworthy as a singularly important part of the mission of the urban university. Future plans for the School of Education include capacity building in technology assisted instruction, implementation of assessment driven programs, and creation of a doctoral program in Family Psychology.

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND APPLIED SCIENCE
The vision for the CU-Denver College of Engineering and Applied Science is to be the college of choice for engineering education and research in the Denver metropolitan area. The College offers 4 baccalaureate and 8 master's degrees, and a coordinated Doctor of Philosophy in Civil Engineering with CU-Boulder. Several research centers and laboratories provide valuable assistance to the region.
A review of faculty vita indicate that the faculty credentials are appropriate for the degrees that are offered. Faculty are effective in carrying out the urban mission of CU-Denver. Students benefit from a learning environment that includes faculty members who are actively engaged in the profession, including a number of practicing engineers among the honorarium faculty. In contrast to some other units, the College has been successful in hiring qualified faculty with 6-7 hires in the recent years including 2 departmental chairs.

Programs in Mechanical, Civil, and Electrical Engineering received Accreditation Board for Engineer Technology (ABET) re-accreditation in 2000. The computer Science and Engineering Department is positioning itself for future ABET/CSAB accreditation.

Student enrollment in the College has remained stable over the last 10 years. The College hopes to improve enrollments by adding morning classes and increasing the number of scholarships. An outreach program to sixth grade minority students has potential for increasing minority student enrollment. In the last 2 years, the number of Hispanic students has increased by 52% and the number of women students by 24%.

Fundraising efforts for the College have shown steady improvement. The Engineering 2000 campaign goal of $2M has been exceeded with $3.7M raised to date. External funding has increased three-fold in the last 10 years.

The College has been active in outcomes assessment for undergraduate education. Students must complete a collaborative senior design project and all graduating seniors take the Fundamentals of Engineering (FE) Exam. Feedback results from the FE exam have been used to make curricular changes in the program. More work is needed in the assessment of graduate education.

Honorarium faculty who teach in the graduate program must be appointed to the CU-Denver graduate faculty and are review each semester by a four-person faculty committee. Appointment of tenure-track faculty to the CU-Denver graduate faculty is automatic and there is no review of the appointment. The College goal of developing 2 additional Ph.D. programs should proceed with caution. Care must be taken to guarantee that there are sufficient resources (faculty, library, research laboratories, scholarships, etc.) to support additional Ph.D. programs.

GRADUATE SCHOOL
Prior to 1998, the graduate school was a system-wide structure that provided oversight of graduate programs and faculty across all four institutions of the University of Colorado. In 1998, the authority over graduate programs was transferred to individual campuses, and each campus developed its own policies and administrative structures. A CU-Denver Graduate School was implemented in 1999. The position of Dean of the Graduate School was established along with a Graduate Council, consisting of faculty representatives from each school and college, one Library faculty, and one student representative. The Graduate Council reviews and recommends approval of new graduate programs, hears appeals regarding procedural violations of graduate policies/procedures at the school or college level, and provides a voice of graduate education in the University planning process. The Graduate Dean chairs the Graduate Council.

Although the Institutional Self Study refers to a system-wide Graduate School that establishes policies, standards and requirements for graduate education, a high degree of control over specific graduate programs resides with individual colleges and schools at CU-Denver.

Much of the responsibility for ensuring quality in graduate programs resides with individual programs because of a highly decentralized model of graduate oversight. While a decentralized system of graduate oversight is viable, institutional policies that require processes to guarantee quality standards by individual programs are needed. University admission standards for graduate students are moderately low, i.e., 2.5 GPA and other performance measures such as standardized tests, portfolio, or references. More rigorous standards are employed by individual graduate programs. Nevertheless, there is no systematic institutional check on adherence to admission standards. Individual college and school deans are responsible for certification of students’ successful completion of the graduate program of study. Each dean's certification represents the highest level of institutional oversight.
While Architecture, GSPA, and Planning and Business conduct final degree audits, the Graduate School oversees the final check in other graduate programs. The final check tends to consist of requiring a 3.00 minimum GPA, recent graduate coursework, courses taught by graduate faculty, no more than 12 hours of undergraduate courses counted toward the degree, and an advisor signature.

Relatively modest support for graduate students is provided by external grants and college or school funds. Currently, there are 96 headcount graduate/teaching assistants (19.6 FTE) and $339,947 for tuition scholarships.

Additionally, there appear to be no institutional policies or procedures to ensure maintenance of quality among faculty who teach graduate courses and supervise graduate students. Some individual graduate programs have periodic reviews of faculty for graduate status, but there appears to be no institutional requirement or process for periodic review.

An extensive statewide process for initial program approval ensures that new programs are unique and needed. Although there appears to be no systematic program review of graduate programs by the institution, state-mandated program reviews utilizing external reviewers are conducted every 5-7 years. Practically, the result of this review focuses on the number of graduates within a 10 year period as the major criteria. Due to a high degree of control by primary units, the Graduate Dean maintains that his office does not have the authority to institute a graduate program review process. Assessment of learning outcomes in graduate programs is not uniform across the many programs. As the university adds doctoral programs, the adequacy of library resources will need to be addressed.

RESEARCH AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY
The Research Group is a new configuration under the Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs and Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance. The new arrangement is designed to streamline and deliver one-stop service to faculty with grants. In conversations, faculty expressed satisfaction with the new Research Group and believe external funding will be increased for research projects. Twenty percent of indirect costs need to be reinvested as seed funding for new projects. Considerably more success is needed to support expanded doctoral research.

The Research and Creative Activity Group is active in many training grants for veterans and projects for the Latino community. This group made an impressive presentation of their successful activities. It seems like a continuous story for successful teamwork, particularly for the International Training and Education and Research Academy (ITERA) and the National Veteran’s Training Institute (NVTI). They have secured more than $21 M during the past six years generating $4M in indirect costs revenue. CU-Denver may gain by combining the Research Group and the Research and Creative Activities Group under one leader.

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES
The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is the largest college at CU-Denver, with approximately 3,800 undergraduate students and 500 graduate students enrolled in 22 baccalaureate, 16 master's, and 2 doctoral programs. In addition to its own majors, the college teaches the majority of the core curriculum required of all majors at the University, as well as a broad array of service course offerings for the professional school students. The College serves as the academic heart of the Institution providing the broad educational foundation that enables students to begin or change careers in mid-life, to pursue advanced study in a discipline, to prepare for a professional career, and in general to lead a rewarding and productive life.

The College enjoys strong collegiate leadership and dedicated department chairs. The College and each unit have developed Academic Strategic Plans. All these documents present realistic and workable plans for enhancing the teaching and research activities of the various units within the context of College and Institutional Mission. It is noteworthy that the College does not plan to develop new doctoral programs, but instead to build on the strengths of current bachelor's and master's offerings.
Some units have attained a level of national reputation, and the College plans to leverage existing strengths in biology and psychology to increase the number of nationally prominent programs. In light of current constraints with laboratories, equipment, and operating support this will not be easy to do, but the entrepreneurial spirit in these units, and in the college generally, is a major enabling factor. Other goals are spelled out that seem to fit well with the College's mission. There appears to be a sound plan to enhance research activities in selected disciplines and to involve students more heavily in the research enterprise. This will presumably build upon initiatives already in place on the campus, and involving Arts and Sciences faculty to a considerable extent.

The College faces considerable challenges in balancing its large teaching responsibilities, and its research activities and aspirations within the framework of a very tight budget. Operating expense allocations across the College are extremely tight with resultant implications for faculty travel, office expenses and infrastructure needs. Space appears to be very problematic in some units - particularly laboratory space in the sciences. Faculty and administration are currently meeting these challenges in very creative ways, but it is clearly a stretch.

Advising in the College involves faculty in the departments, and a central advising office staffed by professionals. It is viewed as a serious responsibility and seems to be effectively managed. Limited staffing in the College advising office limits the ability to meet student demand, particularly at certain times of the year. However, the walk-in system that is employed appears to work well. A notable feature of advising in the College is the "Academic Success Workshop" - a program designed to help the student who encounters academic difficulties to develop a strategy for the return to good standing.

There is a heavy reliance on non tenure track faculty to meet the teaching obligations of the College. Indeed, campus-wide, less than 42% of student credit hours are produced by tenure track faculty. This reflects a national trend, but the difference at CU-Denver appears to be that honoraria faculty, and not graduate teaching assistants, are heavily involved in lower division instruction. The College has been able to move many honoraria faculty to Instructor status and provide the attendant benefits package, and this has surely helped the situation - but the potential for low morale among a large portion of the teaching staff remains.

The self-study document outlines many significant accomplishments of the faculty and students in the College. The clear dedication of faculty to the provision of academic programs of excellence, the engagement of faculty in research and scholarly efforts, and the significant achievements of a dedicated and accomplished student body are particularly noteworthy. Strenuous efforts are made to secure grant funding, and this is commendable. Also, the very substantial contributions of the College to the Extended Studies program, CU Online, and the Office of International Education contribute fundamentally to the success of these units.

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is most effectively utilizing its human, financial and physical resources to accomplish its mission and purposes.

**GRADUATE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

The Graduate School of Public Affairs offers one of six Ph.D.'s in the institution and two master's programs. Since the last review, the School's M.P.A. program has been ranked in the top 15% (36 of 248) by *U.S. News and World Report*. Faculty have won several national awards and commendations. New faculty recruits have been strong, and the faculty is now more diverse, reflecting the community in which it works. The School maintains an impressive network of research and consulting centers and has the University's only endowed chair.

Public Affairs, with its natural focus civic engagement and public outreach, has eagerly embraced the University's urban mission. The faculty are heavily involved in the community, both individually and collectively, and their various centers are targeted to vital public policy issues. With only 15 full-time faculty, the School has had an impact on the community far beyond its size.
Despite its impressive academic, research, and service record, the School faces challenges within the University from faculty who believe that it is over funded. Public Affairs faculty respond that they have bought in fully to the University’s mission, are taking the opportunity risks to further that mission, and are funded poorly compared to their peer institutions. They believe that there should be a clear reward system for those units that are at the vanguard of the University’s stated mission and produce the most striking results.

The Dean is intent on taking the unit to the next level. The School aspires to be a top 10 program nationally in Public Affairs. New programs focusing on domestic violence and criminal justice offer great promise. More out-of-state students are being sought along with the resources to fund them. More emphasis on team-based large research projects is expected that can make a broader and deeper impact on the urban community they serve. Thus, the Graduate School of Public Affairs is well positioned for the future, building on its already strong academic record and seeking an even more ambitious role in the community.

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS
The Office of International Education staff report that the office is understaffed. Nevertheless, they appear to be doing a remarkable job delivering services to international students, and providing short-term and traditional study abroad experiences for CU-Denver students. They are well connected to the faculty and the university community in promoting understanding of the importance of international education, cross-cultural communication, and bringing people together. The CU-Denver administration is fully cognizant of the understaffing and has plans to address this issue creatively to ensure the adequate and efficient advising of students.

The International Colleges in Beijing, China, and Moscow, Russia, are exceptionally creative enterprises in providing access to CU-Denver education. The arrangements with local universities are sound. The innovative testing of students in English language proficiency (listening, speaking, and writing) is noteworthy as it is important to the CU-Denver faculty, faculty from the UK, Australia, Canada and the local faculty meeting the CU-Denver standards. The appointment of on-site program directors assures efficient management of the programs. It is commendable that 70% of the program content is delivered by CU-Denver faculty to ensure quality of education. The programs seem well managed and successful in achieving the CU-Denver mission as reflected by the number of graduates. The new ventures in Katmandu, Nepal, and Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, promise potential for similar success. The graduates of the programs have experienced enhanced employability, and acceptance into graduate programs, both in their country and overseas. The Office of International Education may benefit from creation of a faculty advisory committee drawn from across the University in developing future program direction, student advisement, and enhancing visibility.

CENTERS
The work of the numerous Centers at CU-Denver helps to connect the University with the community and region. Currently, CU-Denver Centers are closely aligned with faculty research and creative work, are generally externally funded, and appear to be relatively self-contained entities. The Team found a wide variety of Centers (physical and virtual) with Center staff ranging from .5 to 45 positions.

The majority of Centers report to Collegiate Deans, the exception being the Colorado Center for Community Development, which reports to the Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs. While it is clear from a review of Center projects and activities, the works of the Centers comprise value-added enterprises for CU-Denver, criteria for Center development were less clear to the Team. Faculty, Center Directors, and administrative responses about the criteria for the development of a Center were as varied as the number of individuals asked, however, most did indicate that the process starts with a concept paper.

The Team noted that some Centers operate with a business plan, while others appear to follow the some other process, often unique to that particular Center. With the apparent interest in proliferating Centers and the relative isolation of each Center, it would appear that duplication of effort could easily occur. Currently, there is no formal mechanism for convening Center Directors for purposes of planning, sharing expertise or to determine whether collaborative ventures may make sense. Center Directors are in agreement that Center activities fulfill an outreach function for CU-Denver.
OFF CAMPUS PROGRAMMING AND DISTANCE LEARNING

CU-Denver has a number of different programming initiatives (Extended Studies, CU Online, International College) that extend access for working adults and place bound learners. The centralized Extended Studies office that was discussed in the 1990 visit made it difficult for colleges and schools to offer off-campus credit programs. Extended Studies revenues did not cover expenses, and colleges and schools paid such high administrative recharges that it was better to reduce or eliminate their credit programs. Additionally, it was difficult for a centralized staff to develop, market, and manage diverse programs profitably.

The decentralization of Extended Studies that took place in 1994 has enabled colleges and school to respond effectively to the educational need of Denver and Colorado. As a result, they have been able to expand programming and to support their on-campus programs. Revenue in the last 5 years has increased form $1.5M to over $7M, and colleges and schools have been able to retain most of that revenue. The result has been dramatic growth in courses offered, student enrollment, and profitable returns that have been invested in additional programming. The majority of faculty seem satisfied with the decentralized approach to Extended Studies.

CU Online is a recognized leader in the development and implementation of online education. An Executive Director, reporting directly to the Vice Chancellor of Academic and Student Affairs, provides leadership for CU Denver Online. CU-Denver Online began offering web-based courses in 1996. As an incentive for the schools and colleges to provide distance-learning instruction, up to 70% of the tuition revenue is returned to the school or college where the tuition is generated. In the 1999-00 academic year, these courses generated $1,682,563 in tuition revenue, with $1,114,033 returned to the schools and colleges to be used for development of online courses and expenses associated with online instruction. The 2000-01 budget includes administration of the course fees collected for online courses strengthening the connection between costs and resource generation.

Transition from face-to-face teaching to online delivery is not always easy. CU-Denver has a faculty technology studio, funded by the Information Technology Initiative grant, that supports improvement in teaching and learning. The instructional technology services offered are both technology and design oriented and assists faculty to develop and maintain their online courses.

Faculty selected to develop and teach online courses, during the initial phases of CU-Denver Online, was based on faculty interest. Faculty compensation was based on the Extended Studies model (referred to as D2), and was recently changed to state support (referred to as D1 ). Faculty expressed concern regarding the transfer because the former arrangement provided incentives to faculty and departments, making them partners and stakeholders in the enterprise. Compensation and workload issues for CU-Denver faculty appear to be high on the list of challenges, to maintain faculty enthusiasm for the development and delivery of online courses.

An additional challenge is the assurance that the online version of the course is the same (content, rigor, outcomes) as the face-to-face course, and that assessment of student academic achievement is an ongoing process in distributed learning as well as face-to-face learning. While some faculty believe online course and/or program delivery negatively affect campus-based courses, the majority indicate there is no effect. When asked who determines what programs and/or courses are targeted for online development, administrators indicated it was faculty who made the decisions and faculty thought it was administrators who made the decisions about courses/programs conversion to the online format.

The Team was assured that guidelines were being developed to address issues of content ownership, use of copyrighted material, faculty workload, and library research, among others important to online course delivery. A recent initiative is to develop and pilot 50/50 (half on campus-half online) hybrid courses. The Team learned that one of the incentives for the development of hybrid courses is to address the classroom space issue on the Auraria campus. Hybrid courses will be taught using the CU-Denver smart classrooms.

OSCAR

The Office of Student Activities and Research (OSCAR) provides opportunity for undergraduate students to engage in research. The most extensive of the initiatives is the UROP (Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program), which provides a stipend for students to collaborate in research with a faculty member. An annual research day features
student research projects. Representative examples of student research projects included research in arts and media, bioengineering, air quality control, and treatments for a variety of human diseases. Most often students find out about UROP, through exposure to a faculty member with an existing research project. Some faculty expressed a need for greater student awareness about UROP and thought additional value could be achieved if students assumed the leadership role for determining fundable projects.

**ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING**

In 1985, the Colorado General Assembly established a higher education accountability measure that required the assessment and annual reporting of undergraduate students in "knowledge, capacity, and skills." In response to this mandate, CU-Denver established a Task Force on Outcomes Assessment. The charge from the Task Force was that all academic programs would develop 1) clear statements of educational goals, 2) comprehensive coverage of student progress and outcomes, 3) multiple evaluators and assessors, and 4) student performance-based measures for program effectiveness.

Through this initiative, an undergraduate core curriculum emerged which was endorsed by undergraduate program faculty and administrators in 1990. A Core Curriculum Oversight Committee was established to manage the core curriculum and assessment processes. It appears that the committee is no longer making progress toward implementation of assessments for the core curriculum. For instance, the English faculty developed a writing portfolio consisting of three writing samples that became part of the student's class grade. The mathematics faculty instituted common course finals.

In 1995, the state oversight of assessment of learner outcomes ended when new state mandates emerged. It appears that as University attention was focused in other directions, the assessment of learner outcomes became less pressing. Consequently, the Core Curriculum Oversight Committee took a less active role and the assessment cycle was not monitored or completed. There is no evidence to demonstrate systematic curricular improvement based on assessment measures across all areas of the core curriculum.

Assessment of learner outcomes of undergraduate majors and master's programs developed primarily at CU-Denver within the context of national accreditation program standards. Although student outcomes are articulated, there is wide variation across units regarding assessment measures and program improvement processes. There are no established University policies or procedures for the improvement of the educational experience through a coherent assessment program.

The program review cycle occurs within a 5 to 7 year timeframe. A major component of the process involves input from internal and external evaluators. Institutional data is generated on alumni perceptions, but how the information is used is not clear. The program review process appears to be independent of and not informed by assessment of student learning outcomes.

There appears to be a general lack of understanding regarding what constitutes a comprehensive assessment program. Discussion continues regarding possible effective and efficient assessment measures with no evidence of guidance or incentives to promote greater understanding and faculty involvement. Faculty appear to be reluctant to use standardized assessment measures of student performance with preference expressed for a more labor-intensive portfolio system.

Suggestions for improvement:

A) Establish an assessment committee with extensive faculty involvement to develop the vision and standard for a coherent assessment plan across undergraduate and graduate units. The committee would coordinate the effort and hold units accountable for meeting the established timelines and expectations for implementation of the assessment plan. A standardized format or template for organizing and presenting assessment data and patterns of growth would be helpful.
B) Create an assessment budget to support faculty involvement, development, and investigation of best practices in assessment.

C) Encourage even greater individual and unit involvement with the Office of Teaching Effectiveness. It is an exemplary program and an outstanding resource for formulating and implementing a comprehensive review of the college experience.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS
The question of positioning CU-Denver in the public eye will be critical during the coming decade. The campus is constrained by three major realities: (1) It is a relatively new campus destined to operate in the shadow of the state's flagship campus in Boulder; (2) There has been confusion about the University's location, mission, and identity growing out of its cohabitation on the Auraria campus with Metropolitan State and Community College of Denver; (3) The huge growth in Denver's population over the short life of the campus has made establishing an identity a challenging, ongoing process.

Within the past three years, CU-Denver has begun an initial effort to brand itself as "The New Urban University," a dynamic institution embracing change and making itself more relevant to its diverse constituencies. Towards that end, the administration, faculty, and staff have been working hard to establish relationships within the Denver community, focus research on areas of relevance to a growing metropolitan area, and involve more citizens in the life of the University. Realizing that any successful repositioning of an institution is dependent on substance, the administration has sought to establish a strong foundation of partnerships and programs before launching a full-scale image campaign.

Now that the University has focused its mission and accompanied it with substantive change, it faces the challenge of branding its identity and reinforcing that identity in the public eye. It is in this broad area of public relations and marketing that CU-Denver seems least prepared. That is devoted such a small amount of space in its self-study to the allied areas involved in this process indicates need for attention in this area. The importance of positioning the University successfully with its external publics resonated consistently across internal and external constituencies. As one Dean said, “A strategic public relations campaign to under grid the mission of the University is absolutely salient to the future of the institution.” Likewise, external advisory board members said external communication should be a major priority.

Although the need for a strategic communications strategy is evident, the external relations directorates of the University are not yet prepared for a coordinated initiative. Media relations, external relations and marketing, legislative and community relations, development, the alumni association, and admissions have no mechanism for regular contact and coordination. Nearly all report directly to the Chancellor, which makes it more difficult for this area to get sustained, targeted attention. Communication specialists are seen as members of a broader cabinet rather than as a strategic external relations team that could be mobilized in a coordinated way to position the University. In such a disconnected environment where there is little opportunity for synergy or coordinated planning, various colleges and departments have developed strategic communication initiatives. For example, the University has no slick alumni magazine, but one of the colleges does. Several units have hired external relations specialists full or part-time because their specific needs were not provided centrally. So important do the deans see this area that they willfully sacrificed $25,000 to help the Chancellor with marketing efforts during the current academic year.

Two years ago, the University created a Director of Marketing Communication position to create professional quality external publications and lead a marketing effort. Because the highest priority was to communicate with prospective students, that person has worked mostly to develop attractive view books and other recruiting materials. The enormity of this enrollment management challenge has left little time for more mainstream public relations and marketing efforts. A second staff member deals directly with the media and has been successful in placing a steady stream of articles in the local media and public service announcements on broadcast outlets. Fortunately, this person is well attuned to the growing Spanish language media market in the area, an important CU-Denver constituency. A resource book for media detailing faculty expertise is being prepared. There is no effort to achieve media exposure
beyond the Denver market. A third person, the assistant to the President, handles community and legislative relations. No one has taken a lead role in a broader external relations effort involving all six directorates with major external responsibilities. The Director of Marketing Communication has the most experience in charting strategic directions and has made great strides in focusing the University's recruiting effort.

Fortunately, the campus has access to a variety of public relations expertise aside from staff assigned to those areas. Some of the deans have an excellent strategic view of the institution and its communication needs and assets. The Chancellor also has talent in this area. Likewise, the campus has access to a number of marketing and public relations professionals locally whose advice could be invaluable.

There is a widely held feeling among the University's internal and external constituencies that the time has come for the administration to give external relations and marketing a higher priority during this critical time of repositioning and branding. There is also support for more coordination of current efforts so that allied areas can begin to work in concert. While external relations is a peripheral activity on many university campuses, it is a central concern on a campus in transition where, for the reasons stated above, there is a significant risk that others will define the University's image for them.

**PLANNING CRITERION**
The strategic planning process reveals the core principles for institutional advancement necessary for CU-Denver to continue to accomplish its purpose. Reorganization of programs such as Extended Studies and the College of Arts and Media strengthen the institution. The emphasis on applied research clearly demonstrates educational effectiveness in relation to the mission of CU-Denver.

**INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY**
The CU-Denver publications consistently reinforce the institution's purposes. An examination of University policies and procedures indicates internal consistency of understanding and application in educational and management affairs as well as in federal regulatory compliance. In relation to institutional practices, no third party comments were received by CU-Denver or the Team.

**III. STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES**

**STRENGTHS**
1. The University has an experienced and focused leadership team supported by competent and dedicated staff that has enhanced the stability of the institution.

2. The University utilizes a variety of creative approaches and programs to extend access to learning opportunities consistent with the institution's urban focus.

3. The CU-Denver faculty actively promote opportunities for students to engage in research and creative activities and international experiences.

4. The University has embarked upon an ambitious Information Technology (IT) plan to enhance the learning environment by creating approximately 200 smart classrooms and increased availability of IT resources for faculty.

5. The University has a dedicated faculty committed to enhancing learning for a highly motivated and talented student body.

6. The University enjoys a collegial sense of governance between the administration and the faculty as evidenced by faculty involvement in the budget development process.

7. The University supports a wide array of faculty development activities in support of instruction, enhancement and faculty success and renewal.

8. The University has an extensive network of community partnerships.
9. The University has made significant progress increasing the racial and ethnic diversity among the student-body.

CHALLENGES
1. Progress on developing student assessment plans and the use of assessment results varies widely among academic programs. There is not a clear pattern of evidence that assessment is used systematically and effectively to assure program improvement. Overall, assessment appears to be unsure and spotty with a few programs possibly demonstrating patterns of characteristics consistent with progress toward the early stages of Level Two.

2. There are insufficient institutional policies and procedures to ensure the quality of graduate programs.

3. There is insufficient availability of fellowships and assistantships for graduate students.

IV. ADVICE AND SUGGESTIONS

As consultant-evaluators, the Team would like to offer a discussion of observations made during the site visit with concomitant advice and suggestions.

1. Given the critical link between a university's effectiveness in attracting and retaining students of color and the presence of a critical mass of faculty and staff of color, CU-Denver should convene a campus-wide task force to evaluate what impediments exist to attracting minority faculty and to recommend incentives and strategies for achieving a higher level of diversity within the faculty. Because of the relative small number of minorities in some disciplines, CU-Denver should consider cluster hiring in those disciplines where minorities are more readily available, e.g. Education.

2. The decentralized structure of CU-Denver Centers seems to work well, but CU-Denver should enhance efficiency and effectiveness through some centralized oversight and increased collaboration among the Centers.

3. Given the reported length of the waiting list for day care services and the numbers of CU-Denver students needing childcare, CU-Denver should explore the feasibility of extending the capacity for the center or make alternative arrangements for service through private providers.

4. CU-Denver should establish a comprehensive strategic communications program with appropriate university leadership.
V. RECOMMENDATIONS AND RATIONALE

The Team's recommendations for action, including its recommendation to continue accreditation of the University of Colorado at Denver are shown on the attached Worksheet for the Statement of Affiliation Status. The Team's reasons for its recommendations are:

The Team recommends that accreditation be continued with the next comprehensive visit in ten years 2010-11 based on the findings of evidence that the University of Colorado at Denver meets the GIRs and satisfies the criteria for accreditation as articulated in Section II of this report.

With respect to the request to remove the Ph.D. stipulation from the Statement of Affiliation Status (SAS), the Team is in sympathy with the proposition that CU-Denver has achieved a modicum of institutional maturity. However, the request was not explicated in the self-study nor was there sufficient time during the site visit to fully explore all facets of the graduate programs. The Team found insufficient evidence to support the claim of institutional maturity sufficient to remove the Ph.D. stipulation from the SAS. The Team recommends a focused visit upon the institution's request for consideration to remove the stipulation.

Since progress on the development of the institutional assessment program has been curtailed, the Team recommends that CU-Denver file a progress report on the institution's program of assessment of educational outcomes. The progress report should be submitted after three years (March, 2004). The progress report should contain:

a. a statement of University policies and procedures for the improvement of the educational experience through coherent program of assessment of student learning.

b. a plan to support faculty involvement, development, and investigation of best practices in assessment.

c. a plan to involve faculty in the development of a vision and standards for a coherent assessment plan across undergraduate and graduate units.

d. a standardized format or template for organizing and presenting assessment data and patterns for growth.