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### **Overall accreditation preparations underway**

Case Western Reserve University soon will have the opportunity to present its powerful learning environment to the organization that provides overall institutional accreditation.

Every 10 years, the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association (NCA) evaluates the university for continued accreditation. Case was last accredited in 1994-1995 and has begun to prepare for its next evaluation visit in 2005.

Rather than treating accreditation as a compliance activity, Case is planning to use its extensive preparations for re-accreditation to help advance the university's vision.

The university has customized the self-study portion of its continued institutional accreditation process to focus on "The Transformational Learning Environment." The introspection will emphasize four areas of special interest: interdivisional collaborations and partnerships; faculty engagement, motivation and commitment; undergraduate student development; and graduate and professional student development.

"The fruits of the university's preparation are expected to extend beyond satisfaction of accreditation criteria," said Donald Feke, interim deputy provost and vice president for academic programs. "We are transforming a standard accreditation process into an exercise that will help advance the university and its vision."

After Case completes its self-study, the Higher Learning Commission is expected to conduct a site visit April 11-13, 2005, and to release results of the complete assessment a few months later.

The Higher Learning Commission's accreditation process for all universities includes evaluations of activities and accomplishments in five general areas. Since it will be visited in the 2004-2005 academic year, Case will be one of the first to be evaluated under a new set of accreditation criteria adopted by the commission. These new criteria focus on the mission of the university, planning and resources to pursue the mission, learning and teaching, research and service and community interaction.

In addition to the four special emphasis areas of its self-study, Case's preparations include an examination of progress since the previous accreditation report. The outcome of the 1995 accreditation visit was very positive, but the commission did ask the university to pay attention to three specific areas: Case had no centralized, formalized outcome assessment program at that time, and undergraduate minority student recruitment and the number of doctoral students in the social sciences and humanities both had declined slightly between 1984-1985 and 1994-1995.

A steering committee has been appointed to lead the re-accreditation preparations and coordinate the overall process. An outcome assessment executive committee, which exists independently of the accreditation process, will help support the application. In addition, four special emphasis subcommittees will conduct the customized studies.

The steering committee consists of Feke, Richard Baznik, Molly Berger, Richard Boyatzis, Matthew Cross, Cleve Gilmore, Lawrence Greksa, Jean Gubbins, Wilbur Leatherberry, Frank Merat, Edward Powley, Marsha Pyle, Robert Savinell, Lynn Singer, C. Kent Smith and May Wykle.

Feke, Boyatzis and Pyle also are members of the outcome assessment executive committee. They are joined by Richard Aach, James McGuffin-Cawley, Hiram Chodosh,

Elizabeth Damato, Wallace Gingerich, James Henson, David Hutter and Jill Korbin.

The subcommittee on interdivisional collaborations and partnerships consists of Patrick Crago (chair), Louise McKinney (vice chair), Daniel Anker, Baznik, Paul DiCorleto, Susan Eagan, James Lalumandier, Gail McCain, Mehran Mehregany, Casey Porto, Quentin Quereau, J.B. Silvers and Wykle.

The subcommittee on faculty engagement, motivation and commitment includes Stuart Youngner (chair), Claudia Coulton (vice chair), Randy Beer, Diana Bilimoria, Gilmore, Leatherberry, Andre Mickel, Dorothy Miller, Shirley Moore, Mano Singham and Eric Youngstrom.

Members of the subcommittee on undergraduate student development are Alan Rocke (chair), Jes Sellers (vice chair), Berger, Mayo Bulloch, Emily Donovan, Jonathan Glicoes, Joyce Jentoft, Marilyn Lotas, Merat, Susan Nickel-Schindewolf, Sandy Kristin Piderit, Joseph Prah and Jasmine Rowan.

The subcommittee on graduate and professional student development includes Wallace Gingerich (chair), Thomas Csordas (vice chair), Boyatzis, Alison Hall, Kim Hyde, Lewis Katz, Thomas Kicher, Lenore Kola, Pyle, Beverly Roberts and Kenneth Singer. The subcommittee expects to add one more student to represent the professional schools.

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