NORTHWEST COMMISSION ON COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

A FULL-SCALE EVALUATION COMMITTEE REPORT

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY-IDAH0
REXBURG, IDAHO

APRIL 14-16, 2004

A Confidential Report Prepared for the Commission on Colleges that Represents the Views of the Evaluation Committee.
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INTRODUCTION

Brigham Young University–Idaho (BYU-Idaho) is a private four-year university owned and operated by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Until June 2000, the institution was operated as Ricks College, a two-year junior college. On June 21, 2000, the Board of Trustees directed officials at Ricks College to take the actions necessary to effect a transition from a two-year college to a four-year baccalaureate institution. This change was made to enable the institution to serve more students and also to capitalize on the name and reputation of Brigham Young University.

Several other changes were made as BYU-Idaho shifted focus towards baccalaureate degree programs while retaining a number of career-oriented associate degree programs. The University added students, expanded and improved its buildings and infrastructure and increased the number of faculty and staff. The University phased out intercollegiate athletics and shifted its emphasis to a year-round student activities program designed to involve more students and to meet the needs of a diverse student body.

The evaluation team arrived to conduct a full-scale evaluation of BYU-Idaho. The team wishes to express our sincere appreciation to all members of the community for their friendly and helpful assistance, openness and candor. It was a pleasure to meet with students, faculty, staff, administration and trustees and to visit the lovely campus. It is fair to say that for all of us, both campus folks and visitors, this was a learning experience.

THE SELF-STUDY

It is apparent that the preparation of the self-study was taken seriously by the University. It is a comprehensive study written in a consistent voice. The reports appear complete though the review of information re Policy 2-6 (Distance Delivery of Courses) was omitted and provided to the team on site. There could have been more critical analyses. Several examples of assessment information and the creative Dashboard information were included but there was little demonstration how the information will inform planning. It is to be remembered, however, that BYU-Idaho is still a “new” institution in its early stages of development.

There was good cross-referencing within the self-study but there could have been better cross-referencing to the standards.

The committee appreciated the work of those who participated in developing the self-study.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

BYU-Idaho meets all of the NWCCU Eligibility Requirements for accreditation. Recommendations and concerns of the Evaluation Committee are stated below in the discussion of the individual standards and policies.
STANDARD ONE – INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND GOALS, PLANNING AND EFFECTIVENESS

STANDARD 1.A – MISSION AND GOALS

The BYU-Idaho mission statement, adopted in 1987, is widely acknowledged and understood by all constituencies of the University. There is clarity in the statement and it is used in publications and can be found in several places on campus. More importantly, persons with whom we spoke often used parts of the statement in their discussions of policy and procedures.

When the move from two-year Ricks College to the four-year baccalaureate program took place, the mission statement and its corresponding goals were examined carefully and the mission remains unchanged. Several suggested that it serves the new entity well, and it is especially appropriate for BYU-Idaho.

In addition to the mission statement, President David Bednar developed a set of seven Guiding Principles, which are designed to motivate and inspire members of the community towards greater spirituality and effectiveness in their stewardship. These Guiding Principles are well understood by the community and are often quoted in discussions on the campus.

Though the mission statement remains the same with the transformation of the institution, a number of institutional goals and objectives have changed during the transition. These goals are to ensure that resources are well used and there is a framework for assessment and evaluation. In order to make assessment information more accessible to the members of the community, the Institutional Dashboard presents the results of a series of evaluations. Issues are color coded to assist in determining which goals are being met and which need further work. Analysis of the various goals and the state of achievement for each should assist in the overall assessment process.

A number of important indicators have already been assessed and the results are well documented. As with the assessment tools used by Ricks College, there are many which show high degrees of satisfaction among students and faculty. These areas will be discussed further under each of the Standards.

Progress in accomplishing the mission and goals is documented and made available to the community, both via reports and on the internal web site. Results are discussed internally and with the Board of Trustees. Goals and objectives are consistent for the University but it is too early in the life of a "new" institution to show clearly how the results of the analyses are used in the planning process. It appears that most institutional efforts have been focused on the transition from a two-year program to the four-year baccalaureate program.

There are several areas of concern that are evaluated, and other assessment tools are being developed.
BYU-Idaho understands and supports the concept that all planning and decision-making is a function of the institutional mission and its associated goals. All activities are to be evaluated against these statements. When the transition was underway, programs were evaluated to determine if they should remain at the AA level, become baccalaureate programs or be eliminated. In the early planning, the Board of Trustees suggested 10 programs at the baccalaureate level, the administration proposed the number at 25, but the faculty wanted about 50 majors. They agreed to support the larger number. The University needs to carefully evaluate the multiple programs they currently offer, and consider offering fewer programs which would have greater sustainability. Decisions of this nature can only be made following a program of assessment and evaluation.

The University personnel have developed a large number of assessment tools and procedures. Flow charts define the route of decision-making and the necessary feedback loops. There are a total of 12 primary activities which will provide data for assessment. The activities are implemented throughout a five-year period and involve several student evaluation opportunities, as well as surveys of alumni and faculty, focus groups, and collection of a variety of institutional and outcomes data. Benchmarks have been established, and the process is extensive and comprehensive.

A stewardship review program occurs annually at all levels of the organization. These are designed to assess the performance of individual employees, departments and units, colleges and divisions and the institution itself. A stewardship review committee will review the reports which also provide the basis for budget requests and requests for additional or new resources. This process connects a departmental evaluation with the planning for the next year. Once every five years, each academic department will undergo an intensive review. Each unit of the University will develop goals and plans for the coming year.

The University has developed a large number of methods of collecting data. It appears that providing the data requires much time on the part of many personnel. Areas identified in the self-study include monitoring the management of the human resources, some of whom already feel stretched beyond reasonable limits.

As the University begins to mature, and moves beyond the transition stage, evidence of using the results of a large number of assessment tools in the planning process will be required. We believe the community knows and understands this next important step.

STANDARD TWO - EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND ITS EFFECTIVENESS

The transition from a two-year college to a four-year university has presented numerous academic opportunities and challenges. As Ricks College, the institution had appropriate resources for the two-year programs offered, with excellent facilities, an adequate complement of faculty, and sufficient support resources. In the transition to the four-year program, additional resources were infused, including: additional faculty lines (60 new faculty in place, 17 more hired for fall 2004, and 15-16 planned for the following year; a further 7-8 new positions, bringing the total to 100, will be held by the president to
respond to areas of need), expansion of library holdings, annual three credit-hour leaves offered to faculty for development of new courses and other professional development, an enhanced sabbatical program (one semester after every five years), new and remodeled facilities, and new equipment.

Other adjustments have been made to accommodate the four-year program. A three-track registration system for students allows larger total enrollments within existing facilities by making fuller use of facilities during the summer term. Continuing faculty were offered the option of accepting 11-month schedules or continuing on the traditional 9-month basis with optional summer courses. The majority of faculty accepted 11-month employment; once the choice was made they could not alter that decision. All new faculty are hired on the 11–month basis. Internships and an on-line course are required. Some courses were recalculated up from two to three units, reducing the number of preparations in a 15-hour load. The development of the Advising Center helps the University and its faculty handle significantly increased advising loads.

In the move to a four-year institution, the University retained the junior college teaching load of 30 hours for 9-month faculty, and established a 37-hour load for 11-month faculty. For most faculty who teach in baccalaureate programs, this has resulted in an increased number of preparations. Faculty report a significant increase in course preparation time because they must now keep up in more areas, and teaching and staying current in upper-division courses is more demanding. Several faculty report teaching upper-division courses outside their areas of specific preparation in graduate studies, a factor that increases the stress of new courses. Some faculty report using several strategies for coping with the additional work load: giving fewer or shorter written assignments, more frequent use of multiple choice exams rather than essay exams, and changing their practices in student advising. Some students report that faculty do not grade papers as thoroughly as in the past, and sometimes apologize for not having the time to do so. There was optimism among some that additional faculty may mitigate the workload.

Not all departments have felt the impact of change as increased workloads. Religious Education, for example, does not offer a degree and the course content is largely unchanged, though reconfigured in some cases.

Faculty report that the availability of three-hour leaves has sometimes been limited by the unavailability of adjunct faculty to fill in or by the press of departmental demands or desires. In some departments no one has taken a leave, while in other departments all faculty have done so. Some faculty note similar variance in implementation of the five-year sabbatical plan. On the other hand, some department chairs report having to urge faculty to apply for release time.

Many faculty teach overloads, sometimes two per semester, resulting in teaching loads that sometimes exceed 20 hour per semester. Some do so for the extra income; others do so out of a sense of obligation to the institution, the students, and LDS culture, as well as because of recognition of the difficulty of finding sufficient adjunct faculty. Many faculty report an increase in class sizes with the expansion in enrollment, though data on average student-faculty ratio do not show significant change. However, as more students reach upper-division status, it is safe to assume that there will be pressure on average class size at that level. It is clear that the mandate to keep average class sizes at 25:1 is resulting in
many increasingly larger classes to compensate for small classes that cannot be made larger because of limited demand or facilities.

A fear of faculty burnout was expressed by a significant number of faculty and some chairs. This issue came up frequently, eloquently and passionately, and was expressed with great concern and respect for student learning, faculty colleagues, and the university and church that they value and love.

The administration is monitoring the same issues. Administrators observed that some of the workload pressure is a result of offering degrees in more fields than was envisioned in the mandate for the four-year university. Some future mitigation may come if faculty decide that the number of majors should be reduced.

The administration is taking steps to limit the number of overloads. The academic vice president is in discussion with the Academic Council about changing the authority for approving overloads. He is also working to staff on-line courses with adjunct faculty rather than full-time faculty and to increase the number of one-year hires, expanding the available pool of faculty.

The new sabbatical policy (one semester every five years) is understood by the administration as balancing the workload over the course of time. In the administration’s interpretation, the semester sabbatical with the 15-15-7 course load results in the same total credits taught as a 12-12-6 with no sabbatical. The administration strongly supports the concept of concentrated sabbatical time for more effective professional development. However, this does little to address the demands of preparation, teaching, and grading five or more courses.

Educational quality is being monitored by administrators, paying attention to questions of class rigor, writing assignments, and other significant indicators. They are also keeping watch on patterns of faculty use of sabbaticals and three-hour professional leaves. Faculty noted that the average of student evaluations has dropped by 0.2 recently and, while this drop may not be statistically significant, the evaluation team urges that this trend be monitored.

The 2003-2004 BYU-Idaho catalog lists associate degrees in 18 fields and 70 bachelor’s degree programs in 49 fields. Members of the team visited each of the academic departments and each of the schools and colleges. There are consistent templates for all degrees, including General Education, University Requirements (Religious Education and requirement for on-line learning), and, for bachelor degrees, courses for the major and either minor or clusters. An exception is the A.A.S., which has a Basic Education component in place of General Education. The desire for a uniform, consistent design for all baccalaureate programs, both B.A. and B.S., creates a challenge for some majors to fit within the template. This is particularly true for the natural sciences. Because the integrated program template requires a minor or clusters in addition to the General Education and University Requirements, the B.S. degrees in the natural sciences have less depth than is typically associated with that degree designation.

The three-track program allows for optimal use of resources, but causes difficulty in some programs. Some learning experiences in the agriculture and life sciences are seasonal and
only available during a specific term. Programs that draw their students from farm and ranch families report that families must have their students home at certain times of the year to help with the family business.

Many associate degree programs have been converted into four-year programs by adding a minor or two clusters and General Education to the courses for the associate degree. Faculty members report that in the past, when only the associate degree was offered at BYU-Idaho, their students needed to transfer to another institution, frequently losing credits and time toward completing a bachelor’s degree. The new four-year degree was constructed with a smooth articulation from the associate to bachelor’s degree. For example, the English Department demonstrated an understanding of the professionalism necessary for an effective baccalaureate program. Overall evaluation plans are in place and assessment is taking place in multiple practices. One practice involves a long standing BYU-Idaho English Academic Society. The students in English courses as well as in independent competitions have produced nationally accepted work for the last 19 years. Faculty and students have attended the National Undergraduate Literature Conference during this time, with students presenting juried writings including papers and poetry. This year 25 students were accepted to present on a diverse selection of topics.

The academic advising program has been enhanced recently by the creation of satellite advising offices in each college. Each office has a staff person and student workers. Students consult with faculty advisors before registering for classes each semester. Internship coordinators for each program help set up internships.

The BYU-Idaho Guiding Principles state, “The most effective teaching and learning experiences occur ‘one by one.’” Many academic programs have implemented this by making liberal use of practica through their curriculum. Most incorporate a hands-on capstone or internship experience as part of the degree program so that graduating students have that “one by one” experience with a professor or expert in the field. The responsibility for administration of internship programs is clearly defined. Programs have their own internship coordinator and the University has an internship office. The University’s Internship Policy states that there must be a syllabus for all internships, students must receive an orientation with outlined learning objectives, there must be a reporting mechanism in place, and there must be an ongoing process within the department to evaluate employers to make sure they are providing quality experiences. The notebook from the internship office indicates that 21 out of 43 internship programs do not have syllabi on file. However, 11 of those 21 do have course descriptions on file. Students indicated a high level of satisfaction with the availability and quality of internships. Direct connections with the industry and professional organizations ensure the currency of these academic programs.

STANDARD 2.G – CONTINUING EDUCATION AND SPECIAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES

BYU-Idaho has a well-developed Division of Continuing Education that provides credit, non-credit, travel study, and religious education programming that is consistent with the mission of the institution. The DCE serves between 45,000 to 50,000 learners each year through a variety of self-supporting courses and programs offered through Non-Credit Programs, Academic Programs, the Church Educational System, and the Badger Creek
Outdoor Learning Center. Review of the 2004 Self-Study, interviews with staff and faculty, and supporting documentation indicate that the initiatives underway by BYU-Idaho in continuing education and special learning activities are in compliance with the Standards.

The DCE at BYU-Idaho has recently undergone a reorganization that moved it from Community Service to Academic Affairs. This change has served to focus the expertise of the Division in handling logistics and special learning activities on supporting the initiatives of academic units in the institution. For example, the Urban Student Teaching Cohort is a joint initiative between the College of Education and the Division of Continuing Education that provides student teaching placements in urban environments in Las Vegas, Nevada, Tacoma, Washington, and Salt Lake City. The DCE has played an integral role in setting up the sites, recruiting supporting staff, and managing the logistics related to this initiative. The Urban Student Teaching Cohort initiative has resulted in student teachers from BYU-Idaho being exposed to significantly diverse environments for their student teaching experience.

Commendations

1. Academic Learning Tutors. Academic Learning employs more than 250 students. Approximately 100 are in the field of math, with 50 in writing and 100 in general areas. The student tutors are trained in a course and nationally certified to assist students. Student tutors report acceptable pay and outstanding working conditions. Students are encouraged on multiple levels to utilize the tutoring center, and reported it as a strength in their educational experience.

2. English Academic Society. Most English students belong to the English Academic Society, and many have produced nationally competitive work over the last 19 years.

3. The collaboration between the College of Education and the Division of Continuing Education is exemplary. Urban student teacher cohorts are placed in Nevada, Washington, and Arizona to provide a rich experience and to create additional placements for teacher candidates.

Concerns

1. Internships are not implemented equally with regard to syllabi, orientation and learning objectives, reporting mechanisms, and ongoing evaluations.

2. The classroom and laboratory facilities are generally excellent and reflective of a baccalaureate science and engineering program. Two obvious exceptions to this are the physics and chemistry laboratories. In the case of physics, both the laboratories and the use of laboratory experiences are inadequate for a baccalaureate degree in physics. For chemistry, the space and equipment will not support the major. These programs would fall short of meeting Standard 2.A.1.

POLICY 2.1 - GENERAL EDUCATION/RELATED INSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS

General Education at BYU-Idaho involves the major areas of knowledge including written and oral communication, mathematics, the humanities and fine arts, the natural sciences and social sciences. These requirements are clearly in place and transferable under the
community college model. General Education has changed with the advancement to university status. In some cases the changes allow students to take upper division courses that could fulfill both a major requirement as well as a General Education graduation requirement. Faculty should be cautious in adding more upper division courses to the General Education course list, as often these courses are sophisticated and specific, even if an interdisciplinary component is included.

The spirit of General Education is apparent in the “Unified Requirement Template” established in 1996. It is found in the current BYU-Idaho catalog. The rationale and plan for the requirements are clear and innovative and were developed by faculty and approved by administration and trustees. While clearly developed, it does not appear that the General Education is assessed comprehensively on an on-going basis. Evaluations are in place for most individual courses on the list; however, there is no overarching evaluation of General Education as a whole. A self-perception test was included in the Self-Study to demonstrate student understanding of the General Education requirement. There is no triangulation of these perceptions by other assessment techniques.

Concern

While General Education contains an assessment of perceptions, evaluation is not being done on a comprehensive basis.

POLICY 2.2 - EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT

The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities expects each institution and program to adopt an assessment plan responsible to its mission and needs. In so doing, the Commission urges the necessity of a continuing process of academic planning, the carrying out of those plans, the assessment of the outcomes, and the influencing of the planning process by the assessment activities.

BYU-Idaho has produced just one graduating class, and there are academic programs that have recently come on line. As a result, assessment of the baccalaureate programs is in an embryonic phase. The “Strategic Issues Report, 2004,” updated February 20, 2004, acknowledges this.


Therefore, there is no current, complete assessment of General Education. This mirrors a concern addressed in Recommendation 1 from the October 1999 accreditation evaluation report (page 9).

The Institutional Dashboard records that no formal assessment had been conducted in “achievement in major, post-graduation performance, advising and the activities program.” These are areas identified as “critical institutional goals.” (Self-Study, page 26)
The Self-Study also notes (page 35) that there are six reasons why institutional assessment has been ineffective. These include:

1. A concern over faculty workload and the resultant lack of “necessary human resources in planning and assessment”;
2. Lack of identified and delineated indicators for institutional goals;
3. Inability to conduct an Alumni Survey;
4. Non-implementation of Student Focus Groups;
5. Lack of adequate administrative unit and academic department assessment methods; and
6. A need for improvement of the technical aspects of data collection and analysis.

The concerns over the completeness of educational assessment overall and the assessment of General Education outcomes specifically are well documented and reported by the institution. An ongoing process of program outcomes assessment has produced measurable progress, although still uneven across the University. Activity in the College of Business, for example, presents a profile of accomplishment not always identifiable in other academic areas.

Guidelines for the College and for each department are presented supporting the goals stemming from the University Mission Statement. There are five areas listed for student’s learning objectives (knowledge, skills, values, experience and assessment) that will demonstrate “understanding, competency and achievement.” The faculty will work for continuous improvement in: course models; scholarship of teaching and learning; academic depth and advising.

Aims for the College and each department have been developed from the student and faculty Guidelines. Each year a Stewardship Report is submitted by the College and by each department to be reviewed by the Stewardship Committee and by the Academic Vice President. The report contains evidence that outcomes have been met. Discussions with the dean, faculty, students and staff within the College of Business and Communications verified the narrative and data in the Stewardship Reports.

There is evidence that changes have been made in the College curriculum and processes as a result of the Reports. These include: a change in the mathematics requirement for business majors; rescheduling the sequence of classes prior to an internship for more effective preparation of the student for the activity; moving statistics and economics to General Education to provide for additional program flexibility; establishment of the first satellite advising center as a model that resulted in nine such centers being developed across the campus with the result of freeing faculty from some more mundane advising tasks; hiring of an internship coordinator for the College of Business and Communication that consolidates certain phases of the program, provides commonality and consistency across departments and establishes a more central focus on assessment; introduction of Major Field Tests in Business and Economics as assessment tools; and the use of Exit Interviews as a measure of student perceptions of satisfaction while waiting for a critical mass of alumni to survey.

In summary, the institution and the undergraduate degree programs have produced one graduating class. It is simply too early in the University’s existence for anyone to provide
comparative and effective assessment data. The Office of Institutional Research produced the draft of an Assessment Plan this January. There exists a University Mission Statement clearly delineating the culture and spirit of BYU-Idaho. Academic and administrative units have developed Guidelines and Aims as outcomes assessed in Stewardship Reports that have produced influences in planning. However, due to a lack of the assessment of the outcomes of General Education and the embryonic and uneven assessment of academic programs, institutional assessment can only be defined as emerging. Elements of a successful assessment process are present. They simply have not yet come together in a documented, effective manner.

POLICY 2.4 - STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS

The study abroad program is small but well developed and is clearly related to the mission and goals of BYU-Idaho. The specific nature and purpose of the program has been defined by a hard working group of faculty who participate in the program in a voluntary basis rather than assigned as part of a course load. Student participation is strong as the programs provide educational experiences clearly related to disciplinary curricula. The programs are available to students who attain funding for the tours through loans, employment or family support. Extensive orientation is provided for the students prior to their departures, as well as upon their arrival. The resident directors for each tour are carefully selected based on competence and interest. The director of the program is a faculty member who has successfully moved the program forward.

It appears there has been mixed reaction to the tours because little administrative support is available for preparation. Faculty advertise, recruit and screen students, set up hotels, contract with busses, prepare students, set the itinerary and curriculum. The faculty involved in the program are spending excessive personal time for this important University program.

Commendation

The study abroad program is small, safe and well-developed by committed faculty.

Concern

There is concern with the administrative support of the program. More time should be awarded to faculty for preparation.

POLICY 2.6 - DISTANCE DELIVERY OF COURSES AND PROGRAMS

BYU-Idaho has a well-developed initiative for the distance delivery of instruction. Though the distance delivery capability has been developed primarily to serve the needs of the regularly-enrolled students of the BYU-Idaho campus in Rexburg, Idaho, the capability also serves BYU-Idaho students who are located off-campus. In addition, beginning in the fall 2000 semester, all BYU-Idaho students are required to take at least one online course to graduate. The online course requirement is explained in the BYU-Idaho General Bulletin. The Division of Continuing Education is also facilitating the online course initiative.
Currently there are 35 courses that have been converted for online delivery using the Blackboard instructional platform. The Department of Instruction and Technology is responsible for the oversight of the online initiative and reports the enrollment for the winter 2003 semester was 2136. The winter 2003 enrollments bring the total enrollment since the beginning of the initiative in 2000 to 7276.

Review of the online program at BYU-Idaho indicates that the program is in compliance with Policy 2.6 Distance Delivery of Courses, Certificates, and Degree Programs. It should be noted that the evaluation of the online program during this evaluation visit would have been facilitated by the inclusion of the online program in the 2004 Self-Study. In view of the increasing enrollment of the online program and future plans to expand the online course offerings, it is imperative that future communications with the Commission should include information about the online program when appropriate and as indicated in the Standards.

POLICY A.6 - CONTRACTUAL RELATIONS WITH ORGANIZATIONS NOT REGIONALLY ACCREDITED

Review of the 2004 Self-Study, exhibits, and interviews of campus personnel indicates that BYU-Idaho has no contractual relationships to be reviewed under Policy A.6. Through the process of the visit related to the 2004 Self-Study, appropriate administrative personnel have been informed of Policy A.6 and advised to keep it in mind as BYU-Idaho evolves.

STANDARD THREE-STUDENTS

STANDARD 3.A - PURPOSE AND ORGANIZATION

Good planning for and analysis of student needs support the transition from a two-year college to a four-year baccalaureate university. The execution of these plans is ongoing and must be monitored so as to meet objectives. Policies and procedures for student development are established and public.

The organization of student services is logical and conforms to the mission of the University. In several cases innovation has enabled the University to respond to student needs in unusual ways. Among these would be an activities program developed to replace intercollegiate athletics and an enriched advising program intended to guide students to the baccalaureate degree. Staff assignments are clear and an assessment program is in place, although the assessment program could be more closely aligned with stated departmental objectives. Managers must interpret the results of the assessments and develop practices that respond to them.

STANDARD 3.B – GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

In making the transition to a larger institution, as well as the shift from a two-year to a four-year program the University must continue its efforts toward improvement. These show in a dedicated staff who are working longer hours than normal to develop and manage effective programs, a catalog which is not completely accurate, and a lack of complete integration of student services.
The University has just completed a thorough review of the student services programs. This review, in part based on student surveys and also on departmental analyses, resulted in suggested program changes and budget implications. The needs analysis for additional staffing is clear but suggests most additional staffing has occurred. Given the expectations of the University, these plans should be reviewed annually.

The University actively assesses its student services programs. The Director of Institutional Research appears to be skilled in survey design and data collecting. As a result, the information generated is useful to student services staff as they go about program development.

Reviewing individual student programs, the Office of Services for Students with a Disability works with students who have identified a prescribed set of needed accommodations. The director summarizes these accommodations and communicates them to faculty. The director reports that the faculty are responsive and eager to assist students.

In governance, students are actively involved in the committee structure of the University. The Vice President for Student Life includes the student body president and another student on his Student Life Council. The Academic Council also includes students in its membership. The Honor Code Council depends on students for half of its membership. The Student Handbook clearly lays out the expected standards for conduct and details the procedures for handling violations. Within the context of these standards the procedures are fair and consistent.

A police department affiliated with the Rexburg police provides campus security. The University hires and pays these officers, but they are members of the local police department. Reported security incidents are low in comparison to similar-sized universities.

The institution publishes both in print and on the web a catalog that describes its mission and other appropriate information. Recent changes in curriculum have made it difficult to keep the print publications up to date, but the web-supported materials are up to date.

STANDARD 3.C – ACADEMIC CREDIT AND RECORDS

Student learning and achievement are based upon criteria listed in the syllabus for each course. Criteria are clearly stated and implemented. Academic records appear to be in good order and comprehensive. They are backed up with off-site storage. Security in the handling and maintaining of records is high on the list of objectives for the registrar. The registrar is aware of the inconsistencies in the printed catalog and has taken steps to correct these. The online catalog is accurate.

The registrar is aware of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) standards. Although an audit of the records process has not occurred, the registrar, who is relatively new to the position, plans an audit against AACRAO standards. A date for the completion of this audit should be set.
Two issues require the registrar’s attention. In line with AACRAO recommended practice, the University is moving away from using social security numbers for student identification and is refining a process for online transcript ordering to bring it in line with AACRAO standards. The registrar confirms that transfer-of-credit practices, policies for degree and non-degree credit, and student record security all comply with AACRAO standards.

STANDARD 3.D – STUDENT SERVICES

BYU-Idaho shares an admission application with the other three BYU campuses. Approximately 90% of the applications are submitted online. Those submitted on paper are scanned in Provo, UT and the information is electronically sent to the other campuses.

Admission criteria are set at Rexburg, offering the campus autonomy in its criteria. These criteria differ from those used to admit students to the BYU-Provo campus. At Rexburg, 60% of the admission decision is based on church and seminary activity, essays and extracurricular activities; 40% of the decision is based on the high school grade point average and standardized test scores. These criteria and the qualities implied in them are used in admission decision making. However, the percentages and their respective role in admission decision making are not described to the public.

Students are required to document their commitment to the Church. Within this obligation there is diversity in the student body but diversity, as it is known on many other college campuses is not the same diversity experienced at BYU-Idaho. The admission staff define diversity as geographic with some attention to enrolling ethnic minority students where other criteria are satisfied. The Personnel Services Office policies include a statement that advocates, “…encouraging a wider, more diversified group of applications for employment and enrollments….” (Equal Employment Opportunity Statement) This statement should be refined and included in a public statement of employment and admission criteria.

The Career and Academic Advising office has revised and upgraded its services to meet the needs of a four-year student body. Through the development of nine satellite advising offices, division-related advising is offered. The advising staff report that their role is often to work with freshman and sophomore students while the faculty in the division more often advise junior and senior students. The staff understand the difference between academic course planning and more general academic advising. They rely on external assessments to assist students as they seek to determine their best academic course.

With a low tuition level, eligibility for federal funding through the Pell Grant program and the Stafford Loan program and Church-based scholarships, it appears that students are well-funded. The BYU-Idaho financial aid program is atypical in that it does not offer campus based federal funding. The FAFSA is the document used to establish financial need, but need is not a criterion for the campus-based scholarship program. An aggressive scholarship program with graduated grade point thresholds enables students to receive between one-quarter and full tuition in scholarship dollars. Depending on the quality of the freshman class, between 35 and 40% of the students receive these scholarships. At the senior level 65% receive them, with the average at 53% over the entire University. Funding for these awards comes from the Church.
Financial aid records are electronic and well-kept. They are aggregated and monitored from term to term. Loan default rates are within the acceptable range and were at 1.3% last year.

A new student orientation program introduces new students and their parents to the campus. I-Teams of new students are organized under the leadership of currently enrolled students. A welcome assembly is followed by parents’ day workshops that introduce parents to many aspects of the University including funding, the Honor Code and internships.

Career counseling and placement responsibilities are divided between two offices. The Academic Advising Office handles career counseling. There is a separate Placement Office. A study of student satisfaction indicated that only 37% of the students who used the placement center were satisfied with the service. This, and the fact that 83% of the students surveyed had not used the placement center, indicates that it is not known and that when it is used the service is not satisfactory.

Students will have access to a new health center coming on line in June 2004. Center hours will be on weekdays 8am to 5pm. The Center is divided between physical and psychological health activities. Both will be well accommodated by the new building, which is large enough to meet the current needs of the University and is designed for expansion if this is required. Several physicians from Rexburg serve students.

The counseling center is staffed with an on-campus counseling staff and provides psychiatric attention when necessary through a psychiatrist from Idaho Falls. There is good protection of student confidentiality, yet there is communication between the student health center and the Dean of Students office where appropriate. Health insurance is provided through a Church insurer. Visits to the health center require a $6.00 co-payment, and prescriptions through the on-campus pharmacy are subsidized.

Student housing is based on a campus system that houses approximately 1,300 men and women. BYU-approved housing is available in the adjacent community. Measures for approval include safety and housing quality requirements. Approval standards can be found in the University catalog. Food service participation is required of students who live on campus and is available to those who do not. Housing and food costs are reasonable.

The co-curricular program is unusual and extensive. BYU-Idaho discontinued its intercollegiate athletics program and simultaneously developed a four-track system that divides student activities into the arts, enrichment, physical and social activities. Twenty-four students are employed each semester to manage these areas. The student body president is responsible for executing the entire program in conjunction with the Student Activities Director. The program, while a student service, is housed in the development area of the college administration. In line with the mission of the University, the activities program aspires to develop student leadership skills as well as to bring students together for a common co-curricular experience.

The physical activities are intended to replace the discontinued intercollegiate athletics program. Student participation in physical activity has increased many fold since this
decision was made. Facilities appear to be adequate but will be taxed if the enrollment of the University grows and participation continues to increase.

The bookstore is operated through the office of the Vice President for Student Life. It is responsive to students and faculty. The Vice President is service-oriented and seeks guidance from those who use the bookstore. Text prices are kept down and book buy-back prices are held at the maximum possible.

The student newspaper is managed out of the journalism program. Its funding comes through the academic department. The Vice President for Student Life meets with the editor of the paper weekly.

POLICY 3.1 – INSTITUTIONAL ADVERTISING, STUDENT RECRUITMENT, AND REPRESENTATION OF ACCREDITED STATUS

BYU-Idaho and the three other Church Educational System institutions engage in a collaborative recruitment effort. Professional admission officers from the BYU-Idaho campus are part of this effort. The representations of the BYU-Idaho campus are evident in printed materials which are true to the offerings available on the campus.

The current catalog citation of BYU-Idaho’s accreditation status should be revised to include the correct title of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. Licensure and employment opportunities are appropriately described. There is no evidence that the University attempts to overstate its ability to prepare students for licensing examinations or employment.

Concerns

1. The Placement Center is apparently not sufficiently staffed for the transition to a four-year institution. The move to a baccalaureate program requires more intense work with potential employers and has changed the nature of the preparation of students for work. In order to provide services consistent with other student support operations, staffing issues in this office should be reviewed.
2. BYU-Idaho has developed an admission policy that allows it to avoid becoming too elitist. Some are fearful that the move to a four-year institution is the first step in the process of the Idaho campus becoming a satellite of the Provo campus. The campus should take steps to avoid this if it intends to maintain its unique student body.
3. The financial aid program is generous and based on the wishes of the Church. Without it the University would face a significant enrollment problem. Ongoing Church support is a requirement for continued enrollment success.
4. Clear and well-publicized admission criteria for the BYU-Idaho campus are lacking. These would help to combat a sense of creeping elitism and would reinforce the independent identity of BYU-Idaho.
5. The registrar’s office will benefit from continued attention to AACRAO standards. A completion date for an AACRAO audit should be set.
6. The catalog statement should be revised to include the proper title of the Northwest Association on Colleges and Universities.
STANDARD FOUR-FACULTY

BYU-Idaho has a highly dedicated faculty, committed to the mission of the institution, to the well being and development of their students, and to the University as a human community. This is immediately evident and highly laudable. Compensation seems to be sufficient to attract and retain faculty appropriate to the University’s mission and goals. New faculty are typically selected from a sizable pool of qualified applicants who are evaluated both academically and ecclesiastically. The majority of recent hires have terminal degrees; however, less than half of the total faculty are doctorally qualified. There are still some senior faculty whose graduate training is not in their teaching discipline. Retirements over the next several years will change this.

Faculty members play a lead role in academic planning and curriculum development and review, and a lesser, advisory role in institutional governance. The primary vehicle for faculty participation in institutional governance is the Faculty Association. This organization is not perceived equally by all faculty as having significant influence.

Workloads, discussed under Standard Two, reflect the University’s history as a junior college. This appears to be problematic for maintaining academic quality given the greater disciplinary demands of a four-year institution offering upper-division coursework. Teaching loads are a barrier to adequate professional development, scholarship, and professional renewal. The course loads may also be an obstacle to enabling faculty to model family life consistent with the institutional mission.

Employment processes and procedures for both full-time and part-time faculty are well-defined and understood. In many departments there are few women in faculty ranks, while a majority of students are women. Faculty suggest that gender diversity in both students and faculty are related to the mission statement goal of preparation of students for their roles as citizens and parents. The administration is aware of the multiple requirements for employment and is seeking more women faculty.

There is wide consensus among the faculty that they have a level of academic freedom not enjoyed in secular institutions, where discourse that includes the relationship of religious faith to the discipline is not deemed appropriate. There is also a clear recognition that this freedom is delineated within the bounds of the mission and character of the institution and its relationship to the LDS church.

Standard 4.B states, “Scholarship, including research and artistic creation, is inherent in the work of faculty and students and is integrated in mutually supportive ways with instructional activities, regardless of the size or nature of the institution.” Although it is not part of the articulated mission of BYU-Idaho there are areas where traditional scholarship and artistic creation, albeit at a modest level, are taking place. Faculty are aware of the president’s 2000 call for commitment to Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, even though there appears to be no commonly understood definition of that term on campus, especially as the term is used nationwide. There does not seem to be a clear, shared understanding of the meaning of academic scholarship and artistic creation, and certainly not at a level to galvanize the faculty to action. Such scholarship and artistic creation may be particularly appropriate to BYU-Idaho’s mission, but the institution
cannot expect significant results in this direction until there is a commonly understood and accepted definition.

The University has provided funding for sabbaticals, three credit-hour releases, and workshops and seminars on pedagogy. However, there does not appear to be funding directed toward individual efforts in pursuit of a scholarship of teaching and learning.

POLICY 4.1 – FACULTY EVALUATION

Evaluation of new faculty begins with careful selection in the initial hiring process to ensure a good fit with the Mission. After hiring, there is a clear, published process and schedule for the evaluations that lead to continuing faculty status (CFS). The period of review was recently extended from three years to four, and there is still some confusion among chairs about the schedule for this process. The published “Pre-CFS Faculty Evaluation Program” is specific about the required tasks and timelines. Evaluators include students, peers, the dean and the faculty member. The overwhelming majority of new faculty are successful in attaining CFS, with a small number taking other positions and a very small number leaving after an unsuccessful application for CFS.

The 1999 NWCCU evaluation report noted the following about the evaluation of faculty who have previously attained continuing faculty status: “Continuing faculty status evaluation is inconsistent within department, as well as across disciplines, in cycles and methods of review. It is recommended that the evaluation schedule and standards of measurement be published and monitored to ensure that every faculty member on continuing status is regularly evaluated in a timely manner (Standard 4.A and Policy 4.1).”

A post-CFS faculty evaluation schedule is now being published annually and distributed to deans and chairs, resulting in timely evaluations across campus. In 2000 a template for continuing faculty evaluation was presented to the campus community by the College of Arts and Letters. It involves students, peers, the dean and the faculty member. While it was recommended for use by the entire campus, implementation has been left to the discretion of deans. This has resulted in varying approaches and rigor. All evaluations appear to include systematic student evaluations and a self-evaluation, both of which are reviewed by the dean and discussed with the faculty member. However, peer faculty evaluations are frequently not included (as required in Policy 4.1.b). A significant number of students mentioned to the evaluating team that they would prefer evaluations of courses and faculty on a more frequent basis.

Continuing faculty who do not meet the University’s standards, as measured in student evaluations, are placed on probation by the academic vice president, and an improvement plan is put in place. This typically involves two or three faculty per year. Only the president can terminate faculty.

Continuing faculty whose teaching is considered excellent may be awarded one of 100 grants of $1,000 that are made each year. The president, academic vice president, and deans determine the recipients. These merit awards replace a merit pay system that the faculty and administration agreed was not working well in the past. Faculty cannot receive an award in successive years. The top faculty are given awards about every two years, the middle faculty about every three to five years, and the lowest achieving faculty
do not receive the awards. These awards are confidential, on the premise that outstanding faculty are aware of the support for their work, and that dissension is not aroused among those who do not receive the recognition.

STANDARD FIVE-LIBRARY AND INFORMATION RESOURCES

STANDARD 5.A – SCOPE AND PURPOSE

The David O. Kay Library services the BYU-Idaho campus well in the provision of information resources. While acknowledging the shortcomings in their collections, the library staff is striving to provide access to the information required by the students, staff and faculty of the institution.

The Information Technology department is responsible for the telecommunications, computing, and server services for the campus, as well as associated infrastructure. While there is always a need for updating hardware and software, the redundancies in the infrastructure provide a stable backbone on which to build. The campus is to be commended on their investment in this area. A schedule of regular hardware replacement is in place and is being followed.

STANDARD 5.B – INFORMATION RESOURCES AND SERVICES

While the library staff has worked diligently to expand the collections in response to the move from a two-year institution to a four-year institution, there is a long way to go. The Committee has a concern regarding the overall scope of the monographic collection. It is weak in depth and breadth, although some focused areas are well on their way to being at a full baccalaureate level. Comments have been made by faculty, students and library staff that collections are inadequate, especially in the area of upper division courses. However, some individual sections, especially history, are quite adequate. The budget projections for the next three years will provide much needed support. However, getting the materials in the back door is only half the problem. As will be mentioned in the personnel section, additional staffing in cataloging will be necessary unless materials are purchased with complete cataloging records. A proposed approval plan will greatly assist in filling the flood of material requests in a less labor-intensive mode. The monographic collection needs to be strengthened.

Although the journal collection lacks adequate back runs in the print collection, subscriptions to on-line resources, especially JSTOR, provide access to much of the necessary material. Electronic Interlibrary Loan from consortial partners provides patron access to other resources not held by BYU-Idaho.

The infrastructure allows wide usage of resources from a wide range of sources. Databases provided through the Church Education System greatly enhance the information resources available to the campus community. All databases are available to the library’s patrons from any location on or off campus, regardless of physical location.
STANDARD 5.C – FACILITIES AND ACCESS

A casual trip through the library at several times during the day revealed a heavy usage of both the computer terminals and the study spaces. Even in the early morning hours, there were few free seats in the building and by mid-day, students were waiting for access to a computer. With approximately 450 computers and 1250 seats in the facility, more are needed to support the research and study needs of an institution of this size. There is adequate shelf space to support the expansion of the monographic collection, although more will probably be needed in the near future for periodicals as that collection grows.

The computer resources located in the library are the primary computer lab on campus. Other computer resources are available in other locations and wireless connectivity to the campus network allows students and faculty adequate access to library and information resources.

STANDARD 5.D – PERSONNEL AND MANAGEMENT

Although the campus population has increased significantly, especially in the faculty ranks, the library staffing has not kept pace. During a period of growth where enrollment has grown by 17% and the faculty has increased by 13%, the library staff has only increased by 9%. The staff that is in place is well-qualified and doing a very good job in providing support to the Mission of the institution. However, the backlog in technical services will continue to grow if more staffing is not provided. There is a heavy reliance on student workers to fill the gap in many areas that have the potential to compromise the quality of the services provided. This is another area of concern that needs to be addressed.

Library personnel are encouraged to participate in professional organizations and attend a wide range of training opportunities. Financial support is provided to facilitate this activity.

Both the library and the Information Technology department are well-managed and supported. There are many avenues for communications between them to ensure a high level of service to the campus community in both areas. The institution has provided the fiscal support necessary to make the conversion from a two-year institution to a four-year college. They are both well-positioned on appropriate committees and councils to provide input in the planning process.

STANDARD 5.E – PLANNING AND EVALUATION

The library staff has a well-developed program of assessing their activities. It includes a variety of survey instruments that provide broad data that can be compared to results from previous years. They also administer the CSEQ survey on a regular basis, which allows them to compare their results with peer institutions on a broad geographic scale. In the Spring of 2004 they administered the LibQUAL+ instrument, which will allow them to compare their results with national norms. The results and comments from these surveys are used in the planning process as evidence of needs and accomplishments. By having longitudinal information, they are able to show change over time in the perception of their patrons. Each academic department has appointed a faculty member to function
as a library liaison. The liaisons assist in collection development and planning for the library.

The Information Technology department has created a well-conceived plan for providing technology equipment and infrastructure to the campus. The plan anticipates growth and flexibility needs in all areas of the campus. Wireless connectivity is being introduced in a measured way to ensure the integrity of the system while addressing the growing demand for a wider area of coverage. The Information Technology management is well tuned to the expressions of need coming from all constituencies and is dedicated to providing the support needed in a judicious and well-reasoned manner.

Commendation

The University is to be commended for their investment in computer resources, especially in providing redundant capabilities.

Concerns

1. The committee has reservations about the scope and depth of the monographic collection. While more than adequate for a two-year institution, it falls short of the needs of a baccalaureate program.
2. The library staff growth has not kept pace with the growth of enrollment and programs on campus. This has resulted in relying on students to do work beyond their level of training and knowledge. Additional support staff would help alleviate this situation.

STANDARD SIX-GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

STANDARD 6.A - GOVERNANCE SYSTEM

BYU-Idaho is part of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints and, as such, is governed within a multi-unit governance system, which includes BYU-Provo, LDS Business College in Utah, BYU-Hawaii, elementary and secondary schools in developing countries, and hundreds of seminaries and institutes of religion worldwide.

There is a division of authority between the Board of Trustees, the Central Church Educational System (CES) and the individual institutions, in this report, BYU-Idaho. The relationships are clearly delineated and the policies and procedures of the Board are clearly defined and are consistent for all the institutions within the authority of the Board.

The President reports to the Church Commissioner of Education, who is the executive officer of the CES. The President has full operational responsibilities for the University. The Commissioner of Education is directly responsible to the Executive Committee of the Board and thus to the Board of Trustees. The President regularly attends the meetings of the Board, but does not have a vote. Other members of the University staff participate as appropriate for the issues under consideration.
Through a series of committees and advisory councils at several places in the University’s organizational structure, there should be the possibility of wide participation in the concerns for the University. The respective roles of Board members and University personnel seem to be well understood and effectively carried out. A new program directive can come directly from the Board, such as when the decision was made to move from a two-year program to a four-year program.

STANDARD 6.B - THE GOVERNING BOARD

Several members of the visiting team met with three members of the Board of Trustees via video conferencing and in person with the Secretary of the Board. We were impressed with the detailed information the Board shared with us and with the forthrightness with which various issues were discussed. The representatives clearly knew their roles and responsibilities and were well informed of the issues at BYU-Idaho.

The Board is made up of members from the central leadership of the Church and the members have a wide diversity in their areas of experience and expertise. There are 10 members of the Board plus the secretary, and two of the 10 members are women. The Board meets monthly, except for July, as does the Executive Committee, which has 7 members, including the secretary. It is the responsibility of the secretary to establish the agenda so each institution may not necessarily be on the agenda each month. There is an appropriate conflict of interest policy.

The Board selects, appoints and evaluates the President regularly and delegates to him the responsibility to implement and administer approved policies and programs under the direction of the CES Commissioner of Education.

The Board reviews and establishes the number of employees and gives final approval to faculty appointments; approves all new programs and expansions of existing programs; establishes the size of the University’s buildings (in total square footage); approves increases in tuition and fees, salaries, benefits and other major expenditure categories; and reviews and approves the annual budget. The Church provides extensive financial support to the University. Though the decision to move to a four-year institution was made by the Board, the implementation of that decision was delegated to the University.

The Committee found the Board members to be well informed, committed to the success of the University, frugal in their management concerns, but willing to make strategic changes in direction as in the move to a four-year program.

STANDARD 6.C - LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Dr. David Bednar is the chief executive officer and serves fulltime as President of BYU-Idaho. He is well-qualified and has had extensive educational experience prior to being named President. The President is assisted by four Vice Presidents, all of whom are also well-qualified and have had long-term relationships with the University. Most administrative positions are filled from within the University.

The duties, responsibilities, policies and procedures are well developed and published in various University documents. Administrators are qualified to provide effective
leadership and management. There are regular evaluations. The vice presidents participate in the President’s Council (weekly meetings) and the Expanded President’s Council (bi-monthly meetings). The Expanded Council includes key employees from across the University who address complex issues and work to improve the decision-making process. There is a Strategic Planning Council (quarterly meetings) and the Campus Leadership Forum, which was created to facilitate effective communication. In addition, each of the vice presidents has one or more administrative councils.

The University has a large number of committees and structures which include students, faculty and administrators, as appropriate. However, we did find in open meetings with faculty and staff, a concern about effective communication. The administration is aware of this and continues to work on methods of improving communication.

The Vice President for Advancement administers development, fund-raising and alumni relations (see Standard 7.D). Their work is consistent with the mission and goals. Though there are several elements to the administrative structure, it appears that the University is able to respond in a timely way in the decision-making process.

Policies, procedures and criteria for administrative and staff appointments, evaluation, retention, promotion and/or termination are published, accessible and periodically reviewed. The University is challenged to provide representative percentages of women in key administrative and faculty positions. We urge the University to strive to strengthen its recruitment and hiring of women in all capacities.

Faculty participate in a number of committees, but appeared not to be clear about where their input was or would be most effective. There was concern expressed about lack of communication, but this seemed to vary greatly among departments. Efforts should be made to find a way for information to be uniformly disseminated throughout the faculty. The Faculty Association is a voluntary organization established..." to improve the Faculty." There was some conversation that it could or should be more successful in working for the betterment of the faculty. Many issues centered on the workload.

Students also participate on several University wide committees. They may also become members of the Associated Students of BYU-Idaho. Surveys and interviews with students suggest they are satisfied with their role and participation.

Commendation

The Trustees demonstrated exemplary knowledge of commitment to BYU-Idaho. The President and senior staff are fully committed to the achievement of the mission and goals of the institution.

Concern

There should be continuing efforts to recruit more women for faculty and senior administrative positions and continuing efforts to improve communication.
BYU-Idaho is an equal opportunity employer. There is a published affirmative action and nondiscrimination statement consistent with the University's mission and goals.

STANDARD SEVEN-FINANCE

General Impression

Financial planning, resources and management functions as well as fundraising efforts are managed by capable professionals, equipped with state-of-the-art systems, in a well-coordinated effort, within a strong procedural structure providing for clarity and accountability in all areas. The University produced all of the required documents for Standard Seven. The Committee discussed the content of each document with relevant members of the administration during the site visit.

STANDARD 7.A – FINANCIAL PLANNING

The Board of Trustees exercises control over several key dimensions of University operation. These are: 1) control of the total FTE (faculty and staff); 2) control of the total square feet (building space) available on campus; and 3) control of the, “appropriation”, which constitutes the Church contribution to annual operations and capital expenditure.

The University conducts financial planning and has developed detailed long-range plans. This is particularly true and evident with respect to the “transition” currently underway from a two-year to a four-year institution. Before the transition, a six-year plan for enrollment growth, program change, and all of the estimable collateral implications was developed. This plan has been followed closely and targets have been reached, often ahead of schedule and under budget.

The University has employed a consistent budgeting process for a number of years. This budget process is basically the same one used by other schools in the CES. The BYU-Idaho Budget Officer oversees local management of the budget, distributes and collects relevant materials, provides guidance to institutional decision-makers at various levels and manages against a published schedule of deadlines. Throughout the budget process, close communication is maintained with the Board of Trustees and the CES, of which the University is a member. The budget model is computerized, allowing for prompt assembly, distribution and reflection of change. Expenditures are tracked and available for review, via the web, at a number of different levels from basic transaction to summary reports. Monthly closes occur within seven days of month’s end with many transactions available for review in real or almost real time. Mid-year adjustments to the budget are possible and there is a process for initiating and accommodating approved requests.

Debt for capital outlay is limited to auxiliary enterprise only. Debt financing requires Board approval with funds made available by the Church and repayment to the Church over time with revenues from auxiliary enterprise. All other capital outlay is underwritten by the Church through the appropriation process, is paid in full, and carries no debt.
within the University. As a result of these funding conventions, resources for educational purposes are never threatened by the competing obligation of debt service.

STANDARD 7.B – ADEQUACY OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Substantial student demand for its educational programs and the steadfast support of the Church, afford the University sufficient committed financial resources to serve appropriately the mission, goals and priorities of the institution.

Points of significance with respect to the adequacy of Financial Resources include:

1. Debt service is limited to auxiliary enterprise and is allowed only with Board approval. Planning documents for debt and tracking of repayment are maintained in all cases.
2. Audited financial statements for the past six years have been reviewed and demonstrate impressive financial stability with no accumulated deficit.
3. Interfund borrowing is limited to short-term cash borrowing from operations for capital expenditure. This borrowing is repaid quickly and usually within one month.
4. The University (Church) is committed to keeping tuition relatively low. Even so, many students require additional assistance. There are a number of options available to these students managed appropriately by the University.
5. The University does not maintain operating reserves other than limited budgeted contingency within the current year. In lieu of operating reserves, the University relies upon its long-standing relationship with the Church to provide for the long-term health of the institution.
6. The University enjoys an effective and appropriate separation of auxiliary enterprise from education and general operations. University education and general operations are not dependent on auxiliary enterprise and the reverse is also true.

STANDARD 7.C – FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

As a member of the Church Educational System, the University has well-developed financial, organizational and management polices ensuring the integrity of University finance. The University benefits from sound financial decision making and controls designed to deliver predictable results against budgeted goals and objectives.

Notable actions or conditions underpinning the quality of the University’s financial management activity include:

1. The President reports regularly to the Board of Trustees on the financial adequacy and stability of the institution (opportunities include: Board meetings 11 times per year, Executive Committee meetings 11 times per year).
2. Financial functions are centralized and are under a single qualified financial officer responsible to the President. Institutional business functions are under one or more qualified officers, are well organized and function effectively. The complexity of the business organization reflects the size of the institution and the significance of its transactions.
3. All expenditures and income from whatever source, and the administration of scholarships, grants in aid, loans, and student employment, are fully controlled by the institution and are included in its regular planning, budgeting, accounting and auditing procedures.

4. The institution has clearly-defined and implemented policies regarding cash management and investments that have been approved by the governing board.

5. The University is audited annually by an independent certified public accountant (Pricewaterhouse Coopers). The audit is conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and includes an audit of government financial aid.

6. The institution demonstrates a well-organized and effective program of internal audit (managed by the CES) well coordinated with the accounting system and working in support of preparation for the external audit.

STANDARD 7.D – FUNDRAISING AND DEVELOPMENT

BYU-Idaho meets each requirement of the Finance sub-standard for fundraising and development. Fundraising is conducted via the LDS Foundation an umbrella division within the Corporation of the Presiding Bishop of the Church of Latter-day Saints (approximately 14) to which BYU-Idaho belongs. Fund raising is conducted by a team of Certified Fund Raising Executives (CFRE) focused in areas authorized by the Board and guided by the Code of Ethics and Professional Practices, the Uniform Management of Institutional Funds Act (State of Idaho) and the LDS Foundation Handbook: A Guide to Policies and Procedures Manual.

BYU-Idaho is in compliance with the requirements of Standard Seven.

STANDARD EIGHT-PHYSICAL RESOURCES

General Impression

Funding for capital expenditure (Physical Resources) is completely underwritten by the Church. This is true with the exception of capital improvements in auxiliary enterprise, e.g., the campus bookstore, food service, etc. In these instances, loans are extended by the Church and payback schedules are followed to repay loans with retained earnings from auxiliary operations over time.

This generous relationship places BYU-Idaho in a powerful position for addressing deferred maintenance and programmatic need. There exists a genuine level of, “trust”, between the campus population, the leadership of the University and the Board of Trustees based in no small part on the expectation that all involved proceed as careful, frugal stewards, with a common commitment to make every dollar count.

With 340 acres and 1.78M square feet to manage on the main campus, the University is aware of and responds appropriately to needs across the board. Capable professional management leverages a comprehensive computerized inventory of space attributes, to conduct a deferred maintenance program operating efficiently and economically by
allowing physical assets to wear to the end or near end of their useful life before executing appropriate remedy. A stable and responsive funding source allows for efficient planning and construction efforts to proceed in timely fashion with minimum disruption to mission function.

Evolving from a two-year to a four-year institution with ambitious goals, particularly with respect to enrollment growth, the University is in the middle of a very active time with respect to Physical Resource management. There are many significant projects underway, many recent projects completed and more to come. Each project appears to be well-managed with outcomes tied closely to supporting the growth and quality of the University’s mission and programmatic direction.

STANDARD 8.A – INSTRUCTIONAL AND SUPPORT FACILITIES

The University provides sufficient instructional facilities to meet the institution’s mission and goals. The Evaluation Committee enjoyed an extensive tour of campus facilities observing numerous work, study, teaching and research settings in active use. In all cases, the facilities appeared well-designed, safe, accessible and maintained in ways conducive to productive use. With an expanding student population, the University is in the process of creating new space and improving existing space to accommodate this growth. Evidence was produced of planning and construction management carefully crafted to generate the least disruption to current coursework/study/life in a complex and dynamic environment, while conducting these improvement efforts.

The University offers significant educational programs/experiences at a variety of sites. The Animal Science facility and the Farm are of the same high quality as the primary campus. The Animal Science facility allows state-of-the-art instruction utilizing modern technology in addition to the time-honored practices of animal husbandry. The Agronomy, Agriculture and Horticulture programs demonstrated the full utilization of their facilities both on the primary campus and at the Farm.

STANDARD 8.B – EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

Suitable equipment exists, is well distributed and readily accessible to meet educational and administrative requirements. This is evidenced by touring classrooms, laboratories, the library, performance spaces, athletic facilities, greenhouses, galleries, etc. and by interview with students, faculty and staff. The University maintains and manages their capital equipment assets via a well-developed capital equipment inventory. A Capital Needs Assessment program (CNA) and an Information Technology Infrastructure program (ITI) managed by the CES provide a common platform for funding and review and replacement scheduling for all capital equipment requirements. The CES is headquartered in Salt Lake City.
STANDARD 8.C – PHYSICAL RESOURCE PLANNING

Physical Resource planning at BYU-Idaho is professionally and appropriately managed. There exists a coordinated effort of the Board, University officers, planners, architects and an array of contractors and builders to bring on new building as well as remodel existing structures. Everyone appears to be on the same page. Planning documents, charts, renderings, schedules, etc. were reviewed as well as extensive touring of completed projects and projects underway. All work and outcomes appear to be as envisioned through the planning process and appropriate to the support of the institution’s mission.

BYU-Idaho meets all requirements of Standard Eight. All required documents were provided for the visit.

STANDARD NINE–INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY

The concern for institutional integrity was examined both in discussion with all constituencies, as well as in a review of the policies of BYU-Idaho. Honor and integrity are central tenets of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and also of the University. All students and University employees are expected to live by the Honor Code, which is widely available and understood. The Honor Code reflects the principles and values of the Church. Annually, students and employees receive an endorsement from their ecclesiastical leader that certifies they are living in accordance with the guidelines of the Honor Code.

There is a comprehensive policy manual and the policies are regularly reviewed. With the change from a two-year to a four-year program, all publications have been revised and updated. They appear to accurately reflect BYU-Idaho, the nature of the University, its educational intent (which is developing into the four-year model) and its expectations of behavior and conduct.

Members of the Board of Trustees and employees sign the conflict of interest policy annually. The faculty also have a conflict of interest policy to be signed annually. The policies are well-articulated and comprehensive. New employees are required to sign the statement upon being hired.

Employees and students are mostly members of the Church. There is broad academic freedom to pursue truth in the various disciplines. However, the Board of Trustees and the administration reserve the right to place reasonable limitations on individual academic freedom in order to protect the University’s essential identity and mission.

The visiting committee found that the University upholds the highest degree of institutional integrity.
COMMENDATIONS

1. BYU – Idaho is commended for putting students’ best interests above all other interests. Faculty, administration, staff and trustees are committed to providing a quality educational experience for the students.

2. The University is commended for its sense of community that is clearly tied to institutional values. There is a sense of community at work, with a familial relationship. Students, faculty and staff are often heard to say, “I love this place.” Among the students there is a high sense of energy and enthusiasm with a willingness to participate.

3. The Committee commends the Board of Trustees and the Church for their extraordinary support of the University.

4. The University is commended for its care and effectiveness in advising. The University has created a set of nine satellite advisory offices, well integrated with academic departments. The disciplined focus on student needs is admirable.

5. The University is commended for maintaining the high quality of the remaining 16 specialized associate degree programs while developing four-year programs. Their connections with industry stimulate faculty professional development, course content and development of facilities. Evidence of quality comes from success in award competitions, availability of internships and jobs, and employer satisfaction with graduates.

6. The University is commended for maintaining impressive physical facilities in support of its mission. Across the board, conspicuous success is evident in the provision of inviting and productive classroom, office, laboratory and common space facilitating all aspects of the programs and functions of the University. This clean, safe and accessible campus constitutes a precious and sustaining asset, clearly appreciated and respected by the population it serves.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. While the Committee commends the University community for its dedication and diligence in moving from a two-year program to a four-year baccalaureate institution in a very short time period, the Committee recommends that the University re-examine its capacity to accomplish its self-identified aggressive academic goals while simultaneously maintaining a wholesome academic, cultural, social, and spiritual environment. (Standard 1.A.4 and 5)

2. While the Committee finds considerable evidence of assessment activities, there is little evidence that assessment is influencing planning across the University. Evidence of the linkage between assessment and planning consistently over time is required. (Standard 1.B.4 through 1.B.8, Standard 2.B, Policy 2.2)
3. Noting the emphasis the University places on teaching and service, the Committee strongly recommends the University develop and implement workload policies that will both maintain those emphases and ensure that faculty are able to maintain currency in their teaching fields at a level appropriate to a baccalaureate institution. The current teaching loads of faculty, coupled with the University’s expectations for service, appear to leave little time for faculty to maintain disciplinary currency. This is exacerbated by the University’s movement to the baccalaureate level, which requires engagement with the discipline at a deeper level than at the associate level. (Standard 2.A.1, Standard 4.A.3)

4. Faculty scholarship in the discipline is necessary to maintain effective instruction. The Committee recommends that institutional policies and procedures concerning scholarship be developed and implemented in collaboration with the faculty to ensure that faculty members maintain in a chosen subject a high level of expertise, originality, critical analysis, significance, and demonstrability. (Standard 4.B)