An Open Letter to the Linfield Community about the 2006-08 Accreditation Process:

With this inaugural issue of the "Accreditation Update" (planned for monthly distribution), we officially invite each of you to participate in the two year effort that will produce the college self-study, undertaken every ten years, to secure Linfield’s institutional reaccreditation.

The nine standards by which we will assess our institutional performance have been determined by dozens of regional educational entities, including Linfield itself, which together comprise the Northwest Commission of Colleges and Universities (NWCCU). Linfield’s completed self-study will answer a variety of questions related to each standard that essentially boil down to the following in each case: Do we comply? What evidence do we have to show compliance? If we don’t have evidence, how will we get it? If we don’t comply, what is our plan to achieve compliance?

The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities defines the process we are about to undertake this way:

“Regional accreditation is a voluntary non-governmental peer review mission-driven process that assures educational quality and encourages purposeful institutional improvement through regular analytic examination of intentions, actions, and achievements in light of institutional characteristics, standards of the academic community, and expectations of the public.”

The accreditation process is comprehensive, complicated and unquestionably daunting. But though it may seem an externally driven exercise, it is in fact anything but. Done well, a successful self-study is grounded in an internal sense of mission; it rests on very specific questions that every institution must answer for itself.

In our case: what does Linfield College uniquely profess to offer its students, and how well do we achieve our mission? What might we do better, and what do we need to enable us to do so? And what might we change (and why)? Those questions are ones every quality institution asks of itself as the natural order of things, and if we keep that in mind, the scope of the effort is very worthwhile indeed.

This is especially true as the Linfield community seeks to answer President Hellie’s challenge to clarify for ourselves what kind of college we seek to become. He has also asked that we strive to make the self-study, with its emphasis on what we are currently doing, inform our strategic planning efforts to determine what we need to do next. All these conversations are linked in exciting ways that the accreditation process can meaningfully inform and guide.

Culminating in the Accreditation Visit: October 22-24, 2008
Accreditation Steering Committee activity

The Accreditation Steering Committee first met for a half day on August 22. The Committee began the work of organizing the process of completing a self study. The Accreditation website was demonstrated, which includes the full 1998 Self-Study for Accreditation, the 1999 Focused Interim Report, and the 2003 Visit Report.

The Committee reviewed a timeline and the steps the committee and community will need to follow to ensure delivery of a high quality self-study to the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. Next steps will include the formation of sub-committees that will be assigned specific accreditation standards (go to http://www.nwccu.org/to see the standards). The Steering Committee aims to use existing faculty and institutional committee structures to facilitate the completion of the self-study while not overtaxing the community with an array of additional committees.

The process will culminate in the institutional visit by the Evaluation Team assigned to Linfield College, scheduled for October 22-24, 2008.

Members of the Accreditation Committee

Chair: Barbara Seidman; co-chair Dan Preston

Standard I: Institutional Mission
Co-chairs: Planning Council members Bernie Turner (trustee) and Dr. Chris Keaveney (MLA)

Standard II: Educational Program
Co-chairs: Dr. Barbara Seidman (Interim Dean of Faculty) and Dr. William Millar (REL)

Standard III: Students
Chair: Dan Preston, Dean of Enrollment Services

Standard IV: Faculty
Co-chairs: Dr. Brenda DeVore Marshall (TCA) and Dr. Pam Wheeler (NUR)

Standard V: Library/Information Resources
Chair: Susan Whyte, College Librarian

Standard VI: Governance and Administration
Co-Chairs: FEC chair Dr. Amy Orr (SOAN) and Dr. Liz Atkinson, Associate Dean of Faculty

Standard VII: Finance
Chair: Greg Copeland, College Controller

Standard VIII: Physical Resources
Co-chairs: John Hall, Facilities Director, and Dr. Jeff Summers, Associate Dean of Faculty

Standard IX: Institutional Integrity
Chair: Pam Jacklin, J.D. (trustee)

Committee Staff
Jennifer Ballard, Assistant Registrar for Institutional Research

Next committee meeting

The Steering Committee will meet again Thursday, September 28th, at 6:15pm. The Committee plans to meet approximately monthly over the next 25 months leading up to the visit in 2008.

To learn more...

To learn more about the accreditation process, or to read the 1998 report, 1999 interim report or the 2003 visit report, or to see other materials that are available about the accreditation, go to: http://www.linfield.edu/accreditation/index.php and click on “Resources.”