

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION MULTI-SITE ACCREDITATION REPORT AT
IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY**

Action Requested: Receive the Higher Learning Commission multi-site accreditation report from Iowa State University.

Executive Summary: Iowa State University underwent a multi-site accreditation visit by the Higher Learning Commission. The university's operations at its extended additional locations were deemed to be adequate and no further review or monitoring by the Higher Learning Commission is necessary. This accreditation report addresses the Board of Regents Strategic Plan priority to provide "educational excellence and impact."

Background:

- ◇ **Purpose of Visit.** Since 2006, the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) has been required by the U.S. Department of Education to visit a sample of off-campus locations of any institution that has four or more additional locations; the visit must occur within five years of receiving institutional accreditation from HLC. ISU was awarded accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission in 2006; this was the first time that the rule applied to ISU and the first review of this type.
- ◇ **Accrediting Agency.** The accrediting body is the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association.
- ◇ **Review Process.** To initiate the process, the University provided the necessary materials to the Commission regarding the off-campus locations. The person appointed by the Commission evaluated the off-campus locations selected by the Commission. Off-campus location reviews focus on the administration of the program, the quality of the faculty and resources available to students, the location's physical facilities, and both academic and support services available to students. Curriculum is not part of the review.

HLC selected the Des Moines location of ISU's MBA degree program and the Ankeny location of ISU's Educational Administration Masters in Education program for superintendent and principal preparation. Both programs function as remote classrooms of ISU's Ames campus with all faculty, administrators, and student services provided through the Ames campus. Each program prepared a report which was combined into a single document for the reviewer.

- ◇ **On-Site Visit Report.** In June 2011, the single HLC reviewer determined that the pattern of ISU's operations at the extended additional locations appeared to be adequate. There were no operations that needed attention.
- ◇ **Administrative Systems for Managing Multiple Additional Locations (Educational Masters in Education/Superintendent Program).**
 - ☑ ***Instructional Oversight.*** Adequate. "The program is under the supervision of the program coordinator and clinician of the Education Administration program in the College of Human Sciences and the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies.

The coursework is approved by the Iowa Department of Education and leads to Superintendent Licensure. Classes are taught by tenure/tenure-track faculty who are considered part of the Ames campus faculty with the same professional expectations as on-campus faculty. The classes are taught on a regular schedule in a designated building on the campus of Des Moines Area Community College. Upon admission, the students become part of a cohort and their enrollments are taken care of by department personnel. All fees, book or class materials are managed via web sites. Faculty make themselves available before and after class to attend to student concerns. Students were very impressed with the quality and timeliness of the services as well as the quality of the course work and the faculty.”

- ☑ *Academic Services.* Adequate. “Students expressed complete satisfaction with the schedule of courses and the availability of faculty before and after class as well as by email.”
 - ☑ *Adequacy of Assessment of Student Performance.* Adequate. “Students in the program complete an assignment of items which address the outcomes outlined by the Iowa Department of Education for superintendent licensure.”
 - ☑ *Student Services.* Adequate. “Students indicated a high level of satisfaction with the level of access to advisors and faculty as well as interactions with the services available on the web.”
 - ☑ *Facilities.* Adequate. All classes are held in rooms on the campus of Des Moines Area Community College. All rooms are equipped with the latest technological devices. Students stated that facilities in terms of access met their highest expectations.”
 - ☑ *Marketing and Recruiting Information.* Adequate. “Since this program leads to Superintendent Licensure authorized by the Iowa Department of Education, there is a steady demand of students. The College of Education via this program is continually communicating its availability. A review of web site materials indicated an attention to accuracy and integrity of information being presented.’
- ◇ Administrative Systems for Managing Multiple Additional Locations (Master in Business Administration).
- ☑ *Instructional Oversight.* Adequate. “The program is under the supervision of the director of graduate admissions and student services in the College of Business. The core of the 48-hour curriculum is the same as that taught on campus and is taught by the same professors. On-campus professors usually teach an on-campus section of a course and a Des Moines course as part of their regularly scheduled duties and responsibilities. Only tenured faculty are allowed to teach in this program. Classes are taught in leased rooms within the Capital Square complex. These rooms are dedicated to the delivery of classes and have all of the expected technology available. One graduate assistant is available to handle technical difficulties. The recruiter/advisor for this program is available on a regular schedule to address student concerns. Students upon admission are part of a cohort who take the scheduled core courses on a regularly scheduled basis. Students have the opportunity to also enroll in elective courses to complete the 48-hour requirement.”

- ☑ *Academic Services.* Adequate. “Students expressed complete satisfaction with the schedule of courses and the availability of faculty before and after class as well as by email.”
 - ☑ *Adequacy of Assessment of Student Performance.* Adequate. “Students in the program are assessed on learning objectives in the same manner as on-campus students.”
 - ☑ *Student Services.* Adequate. “Students indicated a high level of satisfaction with the level of access to advisors and faculty as well as interactions with the services available on the web.”
 - ☑ *Facilities.* Adequate. All classes are held in two rooms within a designated area in the Capital Square complex. All rooms are designed for delivery of content to students. The area is connected to the Iowa State Wi-Fi so that any materials available at the Ames campus are also immediately available on this site. Students indicated complete satisfaction with the facilities and services offered.”
 - ☑ *Marketing and Recruiting Information.* Adequate. “This program is offered in the heart of the Des Moines corporate offices. Many of the local corporations encourage their employees to take advantage of this opportunity. A review of website materials indicated an attention to accuracy and integrity of information being presented. Students indicated that website materials could be more explicit in distinguishing which concentrations are available only on the Des Moines campus. It should be noted that it is not necessary for MBA students to complete a concentration. Students also indicated there were plenty of electives offered allowing them to complete the degree within the designated time frame.
- ◆ Accreditation Status. In August 2011, the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association informed Iowa State University that the pattern of operations at the off-campus locations visited appeared to be adequate and that no further review or monitoring was necessary.