

The Higher Learning Commission

A Commission of the
North Central Association
of Colleges and Schools



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Serving the common good by assuring and advancing the quality of higher learning

June 10, 2002

Dr. G. Jay Gogue
President
New Mexico State University
Box 30001; MSC 3445
Las Cruces, NM 88003-8001

Dear President Gogue:

The progress report you submitted to our office has now been reviewed. A staff analysis of the report is enclosed.

On behalf of the Commission, I accept the report on assessment of student learning in general education. A contingency report is required if the institution begins second cohort of students in Brazil. The institution's next comprehensive evaluation is scheduled for 2007-08.

I am enclosing a copy of the institution's Statement of Affiliation Status, which reflects the actions I have taken on behalf of the Commission. I have also enclosed a progress report survey. Please respond to the statements about your preparation and submission of the report as well as the Commission's analysis of the report. If you have any questions about this analysis or any other evaluation matters, please let me know.

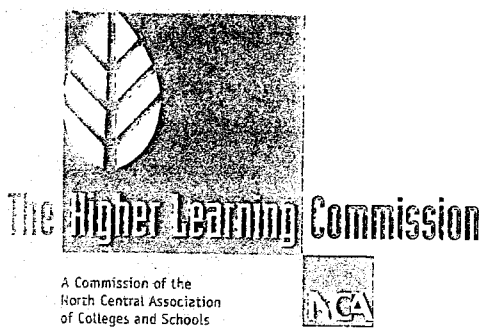
Sincerely,

Barbara Pollard Taylor, Mus.Ed.D.
Assistant Director for Process Integrity

Enclosures

cc: John A. Taylor, Associate Director





STAFF ANALYSIS OF INSTITUTIONAL REPORT

DATE: June 10, 2002

STAFF: John A. Taylor, Associate Director

REVIEWED BY: Barbara Pollard Taylor, Assistant Director

INSTITUTION: New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM

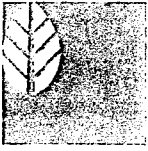
EXECUTIVE OFFICER: G. Jay Gogue, President

PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTION RE: REPORT: A progress report due on 4/15/02 focused on assessment of student learning in general education.

ITEMS ADDRESSED IN REPORT: The Higher Learning Commission office received the New Mexico State University assessment report on 4/11/02. Attached to the seven-page report of the University's general education assessment efforts were the General Education Assessment Committee's assessment timeline and a copy of the 1998 report of the general education assessment program.

STAFF ANALYSIS: The team report of the April 1998 comprehensive evaluation visit to New Mexico State University (NMSU) identified two areas for documentation in this progress report. 1) The report should demonstrate that general education faculty have worked together to identify the learning outcomes that reflect learning objectives and have adopted assessment measures that will document learning outcomes. 2) The report should document the information loop between the data from assessment of learning outcomes and the faculty who are teaching general education courses. NMSU in response to the team's concerns:

- Expanded the membership of the General Education Assessment Committee (GEAC) to include more faculty members.
- Revised the GEAC purpose statement to reflect its charge to provide oversight to the general education assessment program, enhance faculty involvement, and assure the availability of assessment results.
- Established the importance of faculty engagement in assessment with a revised GEAC purpose statement, an all-college assessment seminar with Trudy Banta, and sub-committees for the three general education program areas.



To demonstrate the greater involvement of faculty in assessment processes, NMSU implemented ten improvements to improve general education assessment practices. Among these, the institution created assessment measures for five academic areas; involved larger populations of students in assessment; trained faculty and other personnel in administering and evaluating assessments, and monitored the match of assessment measures to general education objectives.

To strengthen the communications and feedback loops between the assessment of learning outcomes and the faculty who teach the courses, NMSU has:

- Initiated a general education newsletter and a general education website
- Established a joint membership structure between the GEAC and the General Education Course Certification Committee (GECCC) who report regularly to the faculty senate and its sub-committees
- Analyzed and shared the results of each administration of national tests
- Evaluated and determined useful test data for informing content and pedagogy
- Instituted longitudinal studies of student achievement.

The general education assessment report listed general education outcomes and the assessment measures used to determine the achievement of these outcomes. In addition, the report documented the changes in general programs because of assessment and demonstrated the feedback loop.

Faculty teaching the general education curriculum have identified learning outcomes and adopted assessment measures that will document achievement of these outcomes. The University has also demonstrated that a feedback loop is established to inform faculty of assessment results and to inform their pedagogy and curriculum development. NMSU has demonstrated that it has the procedures in place that address the evaluation team's concerns.

STAFF ACTION: Accept the report focused on assessment of student learning in general education. A contingency report is required if the institution begins second cohort of students in Brazil. The institution's next comprehensive evaluation is scheduled for 2007-08.