PART V
TEAM'S RECOMMENDATIONS AND RATIONALE

Recommendations

1. The team recommends continued accreditation for Southeast Missouri State University, with the next comprehensive visit in ten years, 2010-2011. A progress report is requested January 15, 2004, addressing these issues:

   A. Diversity
   Describe goals, process, and practices that demonstrate institutional commitment to increasing the diversity of faculty, staff, and students, in order to resolve this continuing concern.

   Southeast’s Response:

   Since 2000 Southeast Missouri State University has increased its minority student enrollment from 646 to 824 (28%); full-time minority faculty has increased from 44 to 50 (14%); and minority staff from 60 to 66 (11%). The university has strengthened its minority recruitment and retention efforts and we have established goals of 10 percent increases in faculty and staff minority representation and a 5 percent increase for students of color. To reach these goals within the next 5 years, the university will initiate the following processes and practices:

   Faculty
   An aggressive advertisement and recruitment initiative is being created to identify and isolate by academic department potential minority and women candidates. Departments are required to submit recruitment plans for each vacancy that highlights specific sources and methods they will use to reach underrepresented applicants. The Assistant to the President for Equity Issues will assist departments in exploring a variety of strategies to identify qualified minority applicants.

   The faculty screening and selection process has incorporated steps to ensure equity and accountability at critical decisions points. A new faculty selection handbook has been written to provide background information on how to conduct a successful vacancy search. Deans and senior administrators are charged with overall responsibility and are accountable for ensuring that the hiring process is equitable and that each search aggressively seeks minority candidates. A committee consisting of representatives from across the campus will convene to produce a campus-wide Strategic Diversity Plan to facilitate additional campus discussion and planning on ways to improve recruitment, retention, and campus climate.

   Staff
   Search and screen procedures for staff hiring have been rewritten. This revision includes requirements for more aggressive advertising and outreach efforts to attract minorities and women. Networking with the local Chamber of Commerce, minority churches, and various minority civic and social organizations will assist in insuring that job vacancies are disseminated broadly in the regional communities of color. The Affirmative Action Plan will be updated to more accurately identify areas where there is under-representation.

   Student
   Southeast Missouri State University enrolls approximately 1,500 beginning freshman and 600 new transfer students each fall semester. The primary recruitment initiatives include direct mail,
telecounseling, high school and community college visits, on-campus special events/open houses, and campus visits.

Southeast’s recruitment program relies heavily on one-to-one contact with students. Admission Counselors are assigned a relatively small number of schools to visit, but are responsible for personalized follow-up with prospective students in their respective territories. The significance of this personalized approach is important for all student populations, and is essential to the University’s multicultural recruitment efforts.

Multicultural student recruitment is coordinated by the Office of Admissions and the St. Louis Outreach Office. The University is committed to attracting and retaining Admissions-related professional and student staff members who embrace and value diversity.

Recruitment of minority students is dependent upon the success of Admissions-related special events, targeted outreach efforts, scholarship and financial aid programs, and quality student/parent-staff interactions. Specific examples of minority recruitment initiatives include:

- Commitment to a St. Louis Outreach Office and a full-time professional Coordinator of St. Louis Outreach.
- Establishment of the Admissions professional position: Assistant Director of Minority Student Recruitment
- Establishment of a student Multicultural Recruitment Team
- An annual budgetary commitment to minority student recruitment of $46,000
- Bus transportation provided to minority students in the service region to recruitment-related functions.
- Two on-campus visit programs, Southeast Showcase, promoting Southeast’s academic programs and minority student support services and student organizations.
- Partnership with the Southeast Gear Up program to promote college planning in grades 6-12.

B. Technology

Provide evidence of processes and practices that assures the institution’s currency and effectiveness in maintaining appropriate academic and administrative technology; in response to the rapid change in technology demands and technological expectations.

**Southeast’s Response:**

Planning for information technology development at Southeast Missouri State University is overseen by the Information Technology Committee. The Information Technology Committee is broadly representative of the University community, including faculty from each college/school, staff, and student membership. The Committee is co-chaired by the Assistant Vice President for Information Technology and the Vice Provost.

Planning is guided by an information technology strategic planning framework by the Information Technology Committee and approved by the President and Executive Staff. Emphasis is placed on the effective use of response to provide technology in support of the University’s mission.

To provide more structure and better response to technology needs, the following noteworthy actions have been taken since the North Central review:

- Creating an assistant vice president level position for leadership in information technology
- Reorganization of separate computer services and telecommunications units into a single unit of Information Technology with enhanced resources devoted to networking and PC support
- Completion of the process of selecting a vendor for a new integrated administrative system (SCT Banner)
- Continued development of instructional technology, including enhanced web course support, a new state-of-the-art foreign language lab, and a wireless instructional classroom
- Hired a webmaster for the University who redesigned the University’s website

C. Off campus programs
Monitor the institution’s success in serving regional needs, by describing programs delivered and proposed; include their relationship to the mission, and impact on other parts of the institution. Also, provide evidence of adequate human, financial, physical, and instructional resources that support extended program delivery.

Southeast’s Response:
Southeast Missouri State University recognizes the important role of Extended Learning/Off-Campus Programs in reaching the University’s Strategic Plan priority to “To provide service to the region.” Continued growth in enrollments and numbers of degree programs being offered to off campus populations are indicators of this success. Off-Campus programs delivered nearly 34,000 credit hours in 2002, up from 19,000 in 2001. Enrollments at the four Higher Education Centers (HEC) are an important part of this with unduplicated enrollments growing from 1220 in fall 2000 to 2099 in fall 2003. New degree programs made available off-campus include: MA School and Community Counseling, MA and EDS School Administration, MS Criminal Justice, MS Industrial Management, MA Elementary Education, MA Secondary Education, BGS Child Care, and BAE Elementary Education. The delivery of these programs has been enhanced by the number and quality of ITV facilities. One new ITV classroom has been added on campus and one at each of the four HECs. There are now three full time technicians to operate and maintain the equipment. For on-campus faculty traveling to teach off-campus, a new financial reward system is in place that pays faculty based on the number of miles traveled.

There has been major curriculum development efforts underway for the development of web-based courses needed to make the Bachelor of General Studies degree available on-line. This project is nearing completion. There has been significant faculty resources made available (financial as well as personnel) to assist faculty in this effort. Several other off-campus programs, including BS and MS Nursing, BS and MS Industrial Technology, are increasing the number of courses delivered entirely on partially on the web.

To assist with student advising and coordination of off campus programs, a number of additional personnel have been hired. In addition directors and advisors at the HECs, there are also three coordinators for off campus education programs, one for child care, one for Teachers of English as a Second Language, and one half-time for Reading Recovery.

Extended Learning/Off-Campus Programs continues to assess needs for new programs to offer at off-campus sites. Efforts are also directed at utilizing the advantages of the various delivery styles to improve instruction and maximize teacher and student time. A “Distributed Learning Model is in place to assist teachers in developing courses that utilize a mix of face-to-face, ITV, and Web.