Report of a Visit

to

University of Minnesota-Crookston
Crookston, Minnesota
February 20-22, 1995

for the
Commission on Institutions of Higher Education
of the
North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

Evaluation Team

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SECTION I  INTRODUCTION

A. Organization of the Report

This is the report of a visit to the University of Minnesota-Crookston to conduct a comprehensive evaluation for continued accreditation at the Bachelor's degree granting level. The report is organized into four sections: Section I, the Introduction, explains the organization of the report, provides an overview of the University, describes the accreditation history of the institution, and provides a description of the scope of the visit. Section II, Evaluation for Affiliation, is the heart of the report. It considers whether the institution meets the General Institutional Requirements and the Evaluative Criteria. In so doing, the report examines the academic programs and other functions and organization of the institution in some detail. Section III is concerned with Observations and Suggestions for Institutional Improvement provided by the Team members to the University. Section IV contains the Team's formal recommendation sentence and rationale, and notes changes on the institution's Statement of Affiliation Status Worksheet.

B. An Overview of the University

The University of Minnesota-Crookston is located in the sparsely populated northwest part of the state, approximately 25 miles from the North Dakota border and 90 miles south of Canada. Crookston is a campus of the University of Minnesota and is covered by most of its policies regarding such matters as curriculum approval, faculty and staff personnel policies, financial procedures, and the like. The University currently enrolls approximately 1,557 (headcount) students in three academic divisions. The institution has 48 full-time tenure and tenure-track faculty, approximately 107 clerical and support staff and approximately 42 academic professional and administrative staff.
In 1993 the University received authority to offer the bachelor's degree in addition to the AS and AAS degrees. This change required dramatic changes in almost all academic areas of the University.

C. Accreditation History

The University of Minnesota-Crookston was accredited as a two-year institution as part of the University of Minnesota in 1965. It was accredited as an operationally separate unit in 1971. Its most recent comprehensive visit was in 1984; no reports, stipulations, or focused evaluations were scheduled at that time, and the next comprehensive visit was scheduled for 1993-94. After the institution was approved as a baccalaureate degree-granting university in 1992, a focused visit occurred in 1993 in response to the institution's request for a substantive change in its Statement of Affiliation Status. The focus team approved the requested changes and recommended that the comprehensive visit be postponed for one year, to 1994-95. This report is for that comprehensive visit.

D. Scope of the Visit

The visit conducted February 20-22, 1995 was a comprehensive visit for continued accreditation at the bachelor's degree-granting level. In the process of conducting the visit, the Team's contacts and interviews were extensive. In addition to others, interviews were conducted with the Chancellor and Vice Chancellors, the Vice President for Academic Affairs for the University of Minnesota, faculty members, the librarian, students, alumni, community members, administrators and staff at various levels. Open meetings were also held with students and faculty. In brief, the Team made diligent efforts to contact a wide variety of individuals and groups who could provide information regarding various aspects of the University.
SECTION II EVALUATION OF THE INSTITUTION REGARDING THE GENERAL INSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS AND THE EVALUATIVE CRITERIA

Pages 14-19 of the Self-Study provided explicit statements that the University fulfilled the General Institutional Requirements. The Team reviewed additional documentation that, in all but one instance, supported the institution's claim.

GIR 19 requires that: "It has an external financial audit by a certified public accountant or a public audit agency at least every two years." The explication of the GIR further provides that, "Where separate audited financial statements are not available because the institution is a component of a larger corporate entity, the institution may satisfy this requirement by providing audited financial statements of the larger organization (in this case, the University of Minnesota) that include as 'Supplemental Information' the financial activity of the Institution as separate from the organization."

The last financial audit of record is dated 1991, and there is no record of "Supplemental Information" on the Crookston campus as a part of the University of Minnesota.

Although the University is in technical violation of GIR 19, the Team wishes to emphasize that it does not believe the violation is a major concern. The University of Minnesota monitors Crookston's financial transactions and fiscal situation. An audit should have occurred and it is therefore recommended that a report be required: "A certified public accountant or a public audit agency should conduct a financial audit in accordance with the provisions of GIR 19, and forward that report to the North Central Association in 1996-97."

The Self-Study provided statements and documentation that the Evaluative Criteria were met, and the remainder of Section II of this Report shows the Team's findings in that regard.
1. "The institution has clear and publicly stated purposes consistent with its mission and appropriate to an institution of higher education."

The Team verified that a mission statement for UM-C exists, is publicly stated, and is appropriate to an institution of higher education.

A review and revision of the Mission Statement was initiated during the summer of 1991 when the Chancellor convened a task force of faculty, staff and administrators to explore a future vision for the institution. This review, with its assessment and evaluation information, resulted in a redefinition of the institution's customers and an identification of trends and changes necessary for continued effectiveness.

The culmination of this review of the Mission Statement was the action by the Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota to approve the Crookston campus as Minnesota's first "applied technical four-year institution." The new Mission Statement designated Crookston as an institution "...with a focus on applied undergraduate instruction and research in agriculture, business, environmental sciences, human resource development, and appropriate interdisciplinary studies."

The University also "...provides a link to the region for technology transfer and outreach with emphasis on meeting the needs of a rural populace..."

2. "The institution has effectively organized the human, financial, and physical resources necessary to accomplish its purposes."

3. "The institution is accomplishing its educational and other purposes."

*Criteria two and three are closely related and will be examined together.

**Academic Programs**

The University of Minnesota-Crookston is authorized to offer nine Bachelor of Science degree programs, two programs leading to the Associate in Science degree and 12 Associate of Applied Science degrees. The programs are organized in three
divisions, the Technical Studies Division, Management Division, and Agricultural Management Division.

**The Technical Studies Division**

The Technical Studies Division includes those disciplines and fields of study typically found within an arts and sciences division: art; communication; health, physical education and recreation; humanities; math and science; music and theatre; psychology; and social science. In addition, the Technical Studies Division is responsible for offering the courses within the 72 quarter-hour General Education Program at UM-C (as well as GED courses at the Northwest Technical College) and manages, as well, the University's Academic Assistance Center, which offers developmental education courses, peer tutoring, and services for students with special needs.

The Division offers a B.S. in Technical Studies, a B.S. in Environmental and Processing Technology (with emphasis in Applied Science Technology, Food and Fiber Processing, and Waste Management), as well as a minor in Technical Communication. All students are required to enroll in an internship course within their academic major.

The Division is staffed by a full-time director, 14 faculty, 2 shared faculty, 19 adjunct faculty (average per quarter), and two civil service positions. In addition, in order to provide the courses required to meet student needs in general education, courses are purchased from Bemidji State University through interactive television.

The assessment of student learning outcomes is linked with the mission and purposes of UM-C as it is in the other two divisions. Each syllabus for courses offered by the Division includes a list of learning outcomes, several of which are coded to meet the institution's nine core components. This process enables faculty and students to understand the learner outcomes and, at the
same time, informs how student learning in course work can be assessed. In addition, assessment at UM-C includes entry-level assessment, program outcomes assessment, and assessment of satisfaction by students and employers. Most, but not all, Division faculty have participated willingly in the course assessment process.

The Agricultural Management Division

The Agricultural Management Division offers the AAS in Agricultural Aviation, Agricultural Economics/Business, Agronomy/Soils, Animal/Dairy Science, Equine Science, Horticulture, and Natural Resources. It offers the AS degree in Agriculture, and the B.S. degree in Agricultural Industries Sales and Management, Animal Industries Management, Environmental and Natural Resources Management and Plant Industries Management. It also offers several subsets of these degree areas of emphasis. The Division has 16 faculty, two of whom have joint appointments, one with the Experiment Station and one with the Agriculture Utilization Research Institution (AURI), three additional flight instructors and an Acting Division Chair. Several "technicians" assist in providing laboratory and specialized help. Adjunct faculty are not heavily used, and some courses are provided by interactive television by very qualified faculty.

The curriculum seems to be well conceived and generally well delivered. The faculty are well qualified either by formal degrees or experience, though all agree that new faculty will possess the Ph.D. There is some concern, shared by the faculty, institutional leadership, and the Team that the breadth of faculty is marginal in some areas, and that because of the large number of degrees, majors and concentrations, the number of faculty preparations is large. Faculty reported they typically have 7-9 preparations in a given academic year.
Faculty reported, and the Team confirmed, that laboratory and teaching equipment is both marginal in amount and generally outdated. However, faculty reported that the Experiment Station and the Agriculture Utilization Research Institute (AURI) (both of which are located on the campus) allow much of their equipment to be used for instruction, and in some courses students travel to other institutions to see and use specialized equipment. The equipment situation is far from ideal, and the institution should devote additional resources to the problem.

The University provides, through additional tuition and fees, laptop computers for all full-time students and faculty. Part-time students and adjunct faculty may borrow computers. These computers are mandatory in all divisions and their use is increasing each year. The library section will discuss how the use of the computer supplements the library holdings.

The Library is covered in a later section, but faculty reported that while local holdings are barely adequate, students have access to sufficient materials through inter-library loans, computer data bases, and from the University of North Dakota (25 miles away). Such access generally requires some advanced planning, but students seem to be aware of the need for pre-planning. Faculty, by-and-large, were supportive of the institution's decision to devote more resources to the "virtual" library than to traditional books and periodicals.

Faculty are knowledgeable about and supportive of the institution's plan to assess student outcomes. Team members examined course syllabi, and all included learning outcomes and showed how they met the institution's nine core components. The evaluative criteria are not complete, but will exist at both the course and program level. There is still much to do in the area of
assessment, but faculty are aware of the difficulties and are taking steps to address them.

In summary, the Agricultural Management Division is providing an adequate education for its students. However, there is some concern about the broad number of majors and concentrations taught by relatively small numbers of faculty, and the laboratory facilities should be updated.

Management Division

The Management Division is divided into five units: Accounting/Computer, Business Administration, Office Systems Management, Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Management, and Health Management. The total faculty include 15 full-time faculty and four adjunct faculty. Some units have as few as two faculty, with one faculty serving as the coordinator. Over 100 courses are offered throughout the year and most of these courses are taught by Division faculty. A few lower-level courses were imported from other institutions and several upper division management courses have been requested from Bemidji State University to be delivered over ITV. The teaching load is 36 credit hours or 48 contact hours.

According to the Self-Study, the Management Division offered five Associate of Applied Science degrees, two Bachelor of Science degrees and one AS degree beginning in Fall 1994. At the time of the Team's visit, two additional B.S degrees had just been approved. The five AAS fields of study include: business administration; accounting/computer management; office systems management; hotel, restaurant and institutional management; and early childhood education. The baccalaureate fields of study include: 1) applied management with areas of emphasis in management and supervision, information management systems, retail merchandising, and a minor in health management; and 2) hotel, restaurant and institutional management. The two
new baccalaureate fields of study are health management and early childhood education. Except for the field of early childhood education, the discipline and fields of study are typical of those found within a business division. The early childhood program has had several homes in the past; in the most recent restructuring, several departments were eliminated and the Child Care and Development Program was moved to the Management Division.

A review of the associate and baccalaureate degree programs indicated that the programs were consistent with the institution's mission. The program approval process began with faculty involvement and moved through appropriate channels to final board approval. The baccalaureate programs link to the disciplines of the current associate programs and provide an accessible avenue for students to extend a two-year associate degree into a four-year baccalaureate degree. The Management Division plans to pursue ACBSP accreditation for the baccalaureate degree programs.

The addition of baccalaureate programs has resulted in significant curricular modifications and developments. Numerous courses have been changed, deleted/added, or restructured from lower division to upper division levels. According to the current catalog, the Management Division offers approximately 106 courses. The baccalaureate programs and several of the associate programs provide for practical experience through internships.

The course syllabi identify the learning outcomes and are coded to the core components of the University. Assessment of these learning outcomes is in the very preliminary stages. Most programs have developed assessment criteria and procedures, but few have actually implemented them.

In view of the plan to pursue ACBSP accreditation for the baccalaureate degree programs, the qualifications of the faculty will require some modification. One of the ACBSP standards requires that 40% of the
undergraduate hours be taught by doctorally qualified faculty. Of the 15 faculty, currently three have completed doctorates and another is ABD. However, only one of the doctoral degrees is in business. The division chair has indicated that anticipated vacancies will be filled with qualified faculty. Current faculty are being encouraged to pursue advanced degrees, but few seem to be doing so.

While the Division has been aggressive in trying to develop collaborative options with four-year institutions, the number of new and proposed baccalaureate degrees is out-pacing the qualifications of the faculty and may also jeopardize the ability of the Division to effectively accomplish its educational purposes. For example, in some programs faculty teach 8-11 different courses through the year, even though most have 4-5 course preparations. In some areas (in this division and in others) a single person is teaching the majority of courses in a content area. The concern here is that stand-alone degree programs require more faculty and greater depth in appropriate academic credentials. The Team is also concerned about the relatively large numbers of areas of emphasis.

The office and classroom facilities appear to be adequate. Multimedia classrooms and computer classrooms are designated for the Division. Departments have identified equipment and other needs and the Division plans to review and prioritize the proposed expenditures. However, the 1994-95 budget for the Management Division contains only $4,000 for equipment allocation.

The utilization of technology as evidenced by the student laptop computers, has enhanced the searching capabilities of students to complete research assignments. In interviewing students, this technology was the most frequently mentioned positive feature of the recent changes at UM-C. The
students felt that they had much more access to useful information and
databases through Internet and the library than they had when limited only to
library resources.

There are 240 to 265 students enrolled each quarter. In visiting with a
small number of business students, the students were pleased about the
University's move to four-year programs. Several of the students had opted to
attend UM-C as a result of this change and the use of technology. Several
students felt that the laptop computers were invaluable. The students were
also complimentary of the small size of the classes, the close contact with and
the dedication of faculty, the academic advising received in the Division, and
the hand-on projects and internships.

Assessment of Student Academic Achievement

The University has completed its plan for assessment of student
academic achievement which was subsequently approved by the NCA
Commission on Institutions of Higher Education. A review of the assessment
efforts undertaken the last two years indicates the institution is making
effective progress in implementing the plan and in addressing the
Commission's five evaluative criteria. The plan is linked to the mission, goals,
and objectives of the institution. Through the identification of nine core
components, a process has been established to tie specific criteria to course
and program outcomes. The nine core components which have been selected
are covered in all academic programs. The nine core components are:

1. Active Learning
2. Technology
3. Ethics
4. Decision Making
5. Communication
6. Human Relations/Diversity
7. Global Perspectives
8. Environmental Perspectives
9. Career/Adaptability

The core components were selected because they were desired dominant themes, transferable skills, and abilities essential for individual success. The core requirements apply to all parts of the University curriculum.

There is also evidence that faculty have participated in developing the assessment program. Faculty have had extensive involvement in the committee process in preparing the institutional plan as well as in its implementation. In each of the academic divisions, faculty have prepared a set of learner outcomes for all course syllabi.

The assessment plan is comprehensive and the program covers the entire spectrum of the undergraduate experience. It includes entry-level assessment of all new freshmen, course outcomes assessment, program outcomes assessment and assessment of student and employer satisfaction.

The timetable for implementation of the assessment plan is realistic, the implementation process is well underway, and learner outcomes have been established for individual courses. The nine core components have been determined, and in a substantial number of course syllabi some of the components have been linked to the learner outcomes. A significant task still remaining is the full development of appropriate measures for assessment of learning in the courses and programs. The planning timetable extends for another three years to complete all portions of the assessment program. Faculty and administrators realize that assessment is a dynamic process and that continued adjustments and changes are to be expected in any successful assessment program.

The University has put in place a sound and balanced structure for administering the assessment program. The Vice Chancellor of Academic
Affairs is the administrator responsible for assessment, and division chairs have the responsibility for the implementation of assessment within the academic units. Additionally, faculty are aware of the importance of assessing student achievement and have become partners in ownership of the program.

Assessment of student achievement begins with admission to the institution. All entering freshman and transfer students with fewer than 39 credits take the College Board Computerized Placement (CPT). Students who score below a University established cut-off level in two of the three areas of reading, writing and mathematics are required to enroll in the corresponding developmental courses. Following completion of the developmental courses, the student again takes the CPT as a measure of academic progress. Initial indications point to improvement in the skills covered in the developmental courses, though additional analysis of the effectiveness of the developmental courses is planned during the next year.

Implementation of measures for assessing learner outcomes in courses and in academic programs is underway. Learner outcomes are a part of the course syllabi for course work in the Divisions. In the Agricultural Management Division 114 of 119 courses connect one or more of the nine core components to learner outcomes. Similarly, 94 of the 146 courses in the Technical Studies Division and 46 of the 116 courses in the Management Division include references to core components in the learner outcomes. As for the third category of measuring student achievement, assessment of academic programs, learner outcomes have been established for each of the baccalaureate and associate level programs.

The identification of learner outcomes in courses and programs has been an important element in implementing the assessment program. However, the task ahead still includes significant challenges. Major issues are
the development and utilization of appropriate assessment tools and the integration of resulting data into modifying course and program expectations. The approach being utilized is to largely eschew the use of standardized assessment measures, with the exception of the CPT, and to tailor assessment practices to meet the specific program goals. Strategies to be employed include exit exams, capstone courses, portfolio evaluations, licensure exams and other measures appropriate to the program areas. In numerous instances, course assessment measures and strategies have been determined, but in others these elements are not fully developed. Measures and strategies for assessing program outcomes are still being formulated. Eventually, all core components will be incorporated into the academic programs. The core components will be developed, reviewed and revised in accordance with the timetable for implementation of the assessment program.

An important element of the process for fashioning program assessment is the establishment of Program Improvement Audit Committees for each of the academic degree programs. These committees which are an outgrowth of earlier program advisory committees have only recently been created. The committees are comprised of persons external to the University and who are knowledgeable in or have a special interest in the degree programs. Each committee will exercise an audit function for a particular program and will focus on the efforts for success in measuring student learning and fostering program improvement.

A final category for assessing student achievement is the assessment of student/employer satisfaction. Though there have been annual surveys of graduates in previous years, there has not been a systematic process for gathering data from graduates and employers on satisfaction with learning and career preparation. The campus assessment plan provides for the
development of the necessary survey instruments beginning in 1995. The Counseling and Career Center will assist the academic divisions in implementing this phase of the overall assessment program.

In conclusion, the University of Minnesota-Crookston has developed a plan for a comprehensive and effective program of assessing student learning, measuring student achievement and using data to improve academic programs. The plan has been approved by NCA and provides for establishing four categories of assessment from entry into the institution to follow-up data on graduates. The measures and strategies for achieving the goals are not yet fully developed. They do, however, relate to the mission and objectives of the institution. The institution has been careful to develop an assessment process which has the support of the faculty. It needs to continue to be diligent in monitoring the assessment efforts at the program and campus levels. Once fully implemented, the assessment program will be an effective means for measuring student learning and program outcomes and for continuing improvements of the instruction program.

Academic Support

The University has an open admission policy, and as a result enrolls a number of students who are not adequately prepared academically for the rigorous demands of a college education. To help address this issue, the institution in 1993 mandated that all first-time freshmen and transfer students with fewer than 39 hours would be required to take the College Board Computerized Placement Test (CPT). Students not meeting the University-established cut-off score in two of the three areas of mathematics, reading and writing would be required to complete developmental courses in the areas of deficiency. These courses will be reconfigured beginning with the 1995 Spring quarter to encompass a five-week period. In each of the areas of math,
reading and writing, two five-week courses offered consecutively will be available each quarter. A student enrolled in a developmental course will then attempt the CPT exam at the end of the first or second session to determine the level of proficiency achieved. The developmental courses, which do not carry graduation credit, appear to be successful in providing students the essential skills for academic success. At present, more than one-fourth of newly enrolled students have taken a developmental course.

An important component of the program of preparing students for successful academic achievement is the Academic Assistance Center. This Center, which has been operational for several years, was partially equipped with the help of a Title III grant. The Center is staffed by three part-time employees who also teach sections of the developmental courses. Responsibility for administering the program is assigned to the Technical Studies chairperson. The Center is equipped with desk-top computers, printers, and a file-server and has an extensive collection of software-related to basic skills. Utilization of the Center has been extensive, though the advent of notebook computers for students is changing the usage pattern. Now students may access the services of the Center from other locations and not have to be physically present.

Another part of the academic assistance program is peer tutoring. In this program qualified students serve as tutors. Sessions vary in length and are conducted either individually or in small groups. This program is funded out of the Student Services operations, and is highly regarded by students as a means for assisting those who need extra help.

Two other initiatives deserve mention. One is the Freshmen Seminar, which is a requirement for new students who have been placed in a developmental course. This course carries two credit hours and is designed to
teach survival skills for beginning students who have academic deficiencies. The other is the Academic Contract program. This program is open to students who have been suspended academically. Rather than leave school for a quarter, the student may petition to be re-enrolled on an academic contract. The contract specifies conditions of re-enrollment including mandatory class attendance. This program has had better than a 50 percent success rate for participating students.

Faculty show a keen awareness of the implications of an open admissions policy. They understand the importance of effective academic advising and encouraging students to obtain additional help at the earliest sign of academic difficulty. Students speak highly of the quality of academic advising and the availability of academic assistance. This institutional commitment to assisting students who need help is one of the strengths of the institution.

Library

The NCA report on a focus visit to the University of Minnesota-Crookston in 1993 listed the library and library collections as a concern. This concern was directed to the smallness of the library, both in space and collections. Book holdings number only slightly more than 30,000 volumes. The visiting team in 1993 was especially concerned with the increased library support that should accompany the transition from a two-year institution to a baccalaureate degree university and the lack of an adequate budget to support that growth. The budget has not improved markedly since 1993 and is not likely to do so in the future. The current acquisitions and services budget is less than $115,000 annually. The University has made a conscious decision to address the issues of collections and acquisitions by utilizing its technology emphasis and capabilities in the development of a virtual library. The concept
of a virtual library is a relatively new phenomenon which is beginning to be embraced to at least some degree by other college and university libraries. Existing technologies make vast library collections and resources available to students and faculty through computers. The institution will focus a significant portion of its acquisitions budget to accessing collections electronically. The Minnesota State University System project for automated library systems (PALS) provides access to 4.7 million titles. Other collections available electronically are Libraries of the University of Minnesota Integrated Network (LUMINA) with 4 million titles, the On-line Computer Library Center (OCLC), Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), Information Access Incorporated, and DIALOG, a vendor of 300 data bases, which collectively provide access to most materials in print in the United States. Additionally, a program of inter-library loan make available a vast array of books and serial collections.

The University's commitment to the virtual library concept appears to be warranted. Utilization data indicate a rapid increase in the number of electronic transactions since notebook computers have been available to all students. Student comments indicate that electronic access is not only feasible, but is a methodology with which they and most of their instructors feel comfortable. Considering the technology focus of the institution, the University decision to pursue the virtual library concept appears to be justified and seems to be the most effective way to use scarce monetary resources.

ITV

Instructional television is an area of increasing promise for the University. The campus in Crookston is the hub of an analog fiber network extending over 500 miles and connecting eleven post-secondary institutions in northwestern Minnesota, including Moorhead State University, Bemidji State
University and a number of the technical colleges. Additionally, the University is also a node in the University of Minnesota digital network which reaches the University of Minnesota campuses and its Rochester Center.

The University currently has three electronic classrooms and plans to add a fourth. These classrooms serve as interactive sites over which course work can be originated or received. In the Fall 1994 quarter, ten classes were available over the ITV network, and the utilization pattern is increasing. The ITV medium is consistent with the technology emphasis of the institution and makes possible the transfer of needed courses from one institution to another. ITV will increase the breadth of the academic offerings on the Crookston campus and increase the outreach to other sites. This connectivity significantly enhances opportunities for the collaboration and articulation which the University has initiated. The number of students enrolled in ITV courses more than doubled from 1991 to 1994, and reached 1,126 in 1993-94.

ITV, through the fiber network and satellite reception, also is being used to transmit non-credit educational services and to receive programming for faculty and staff development. This approach to information transfer should become increasingly important for the University in the years ahead.

The UM-C Technology Support Services unit provides computing resources and technical assistance to support instructional, administrative, research and community outreach functions. It provides support for student and faculty computing, which is an essential service since the university is committed to all students and faculty having notebook computers. The range of services provided has increased substantially in recent years. The unit has four FTE professional employees, excluding students, and there are plans to employ a full-time professional to assist faculty in course design and development of appropriate computer-based instructional activities.
Continuing Education and Outreach

The Continuing Education Office is staffed by a director who also works with the Red River Trade Council project and by part-time support staff. With the recent addition of the Office of Outreach, which is separately staffed, the overall efforts in community outreach and continuing education have been expanded. The two offices cooperate to provide a broad a service as possible and to avoid unnecessary duplication. The Continuing Education Office concentrates on credit courses, most of which are offered on a contract basis in cooperation with sponsoring agencies. These are usually lower level courses which are customized to meet the needs of the sponsoring agency. The number of course offerings is steadily growing, as is the number of consultations with area businesses to identify service needs. This continuing education enterprise, particularly with the advent of four-year program offerings, serves a vital mission of providing technology transfer for the region.

The Office of Outreach, a cooperative venture funded by the University of Minnesota-Crookston, the Minnesota Extension Service, and University Continuing Education and Extension, was established in August 1994 and adds to the outreach services. The Office is funded by a director and part-time staff. A strategic plan has been developed to determine desired outcomes. The Office is arranging graduate courses by ITV to serve local demands. Additionally, a range of non-credit activities, including programs for disadvantaged youths is being actively planned.

Faculty Governance

Faculty Governance at Crookston is closely related to the structure of the University of Minnesota. The Crookston campus is represented on the Faculty Senate of the University of Minnesota. Additionally, each campus determines its own
assembly and adopts its own constitution and by-laws (consistent with the constitution and by-laws of the Senate and Board of Regents policy).

The Campus Assembly exists as the faculty governing body of the Crookston campus and has jurisdiction over the educational concerns of the campus. It has the usual array of committees dealing with specific areas.

Members of the Team met with faculty leaders and were told that the governance system works as reported in the Self-Study and that the faculty were generally pleased with its effectiveness.

**Administrative Organization**

As one of the four campuses of the University of Minnesota, UM-C is headed by a Chancellor who reports to the UM President. The Chancellor is assisted in managing the Crookston campus by three vice chancellors (academic affairs, finance, and student affairs) and four directors (external relations, human resources [a vacant position supervised by the Vice Chancellor for Finance], outreach, and plant services). UM-C presents a clear pattern of evidence that its administrative organizational structure is adequate for the effective administration of the institution and lines of communication are well understood.

**Student Development and Services**

**Admissions**

The Office of Admissions and Enrollment Management focuses on student recruitment, admission, and orientation. The number of enrollments has risen steadily for the last five years, and FYE enrollment for 1993-94 reached 1,019. Headcount enrollment has also increased and was at 1,557 in the Fall 1994 quarter. With the addition of baccalaureate programs to the institutional mission, it is expected that enrollments will increase further. In fact, the number of degree seeking students is greater at the baccalaureate than associate level. Benchmarks have been established for enrollment for the
Crookston campus at a nine percent per year increase with the goal of an FYE enrollment in 1998 of 1,200 students.

The University is above its target enrollment projections for the current year, but will need to make maximum efforts to sustain the growth. Recruitment efforts are directed extensively to marketing the new baccalaureate degrees and the technology focus of the associate and baccalaureate programs. UM-C has traditionally been a regional campus, and current enrollments reflect this status. Of the 1,557 enrolled in the Fall 1994 quarter, the substantial majority reside within 100 miles. Nearly 29 percent (451 students) are residents of Polk County, which is the "home" county for the Crookston campus. The goal is to develop a greater state-wide and regional (eastern North Dakota) focus. The technology-based program at UM-C provides a basis for attracting a wider audience.

UM-C is making progress toward achieving its enrollment goals. Yet, it serves an area where the projected growth in high school graduates is small and where there are a number of competing higher education institutions which are also looking to expand enrollments. The institution may wish to consider the addition of a full-time professional employee to assist with recruiting and admission. The meeting of the enrollment benchmark targets is essential for the institution.

Registrar

The Office of the Registrar is responsible for maintaining student academic records, for course registration and all procedures related to academic record keeping, and carries out these functions adequately. The institution has established several policies and practices which promote matriculation. One of these is a transfer policy which permits incoming associate degree holders to receive at least 90 credits from UM-C. There are
additional "student-friendly" procedures to help keep students in school. An "early-warning" program provides for timely notification to students and advisers of students who are experiencing academic difficulty. The Academic Contract program for students who have been suspended is an effective process for re-enrollment of students. In this program, each student signs a contract which provides for GPA target goals and requires class attendance. More than one-half of the students who enter the program, successfully complete the contract.

**Student Activities**

There are a number of student activities provided for the student body which are targeted to residential and commuting students. These activities include functions such as dances, concerts, and special events. Additionally, there are a number of student clubs which are primarily organized around the academic major. The Student Forum is the elected student governing body. Students are represented on institutional committees and have an adequate role in the conduct of campus affairs. Students are generally supportive of the level of activities provided for students and for the extent of involvement in institutional governance.

**Counseling/Career Center**

The Counseling and Career Offices provide professional counseling and career and placement services for all students. The career placement services are designed for students at entry level as well as those nearing graduation. The office assists with the internship placements for the academic division and provides help to those completing degrees. The office will need to expand its service role as the campus-wide assessment program is implemented. Since a major focus of assessment is collecting and utilizing follow-up information from students and employers on the success of
graduates, the Career Center will be in a position to assist the academic divisions in these efforts.

**Office of Students With Disabilities**

This office is staffed by one person who has a masters degree in counseling. The individual is on a nine-month contract, one-half of her time is spent in the Office for Students With Disabilities and one-half is spent in counseling. The individual works with approximately 50 students with disabilities. The office equipment needs are minimal and adequate. Students have access to computers and can receive assistance in the Academic Assistance Center. The retention rate of these students typically runs in excess of 77%.

The UM-C Accessibility Committee has provided leadership in improving services to students with disabilities and making the campus more accessible. Currently, there are two problem areas that do not meet accessibility requirements: the access to Kiehle Auditorium is difficult, and a ramp by the business area that does not meet grade requirements.

**Student Health Services**

Medical and health-related services are provided to all UM-C students throughout the academic year, except during the summer months. The office, staff by an RN, maintains and validates medical records, and provides health education materials and programs. The medical services include a walk-in clinic which provides diagnosis and treatment and referral to appropriate agencies when necessary. A contractual arrangement with a local clinic provides phone consultation and physician referral services as needed. All off-campus costs are the responsibility of the students and their insurance provider. The services appear to be appropriate and adequate.
Multicultural and International Office

The director of this office is an Hispanic. The purpose of this office is to improve educational access for minority populations. Services include advocacy service, general counseling, personal and academic advising, and extracurricular activities. The facilities and equipment include a small office, a computer, and a part-time secretary (approximately 10% time).

The Hispanic population is the fastest growing population in the region. The region served by UM-C is considered to extend beyond Polk County, up to 250 miles surround the University. It was observed that minority populations within Polk County are very small (5.2% including people of Hispanic origin). Minority students at UM-C comprise account for 3.7% of the student population. Of the 59 minority students enrolled in 1994, 21 were Hispanic Americans, 12 were African-Americans, 12 were Native Americans, and 13 were Asian Americans. International students account for 2.5% of the student population.

The Self-Study identified minority recruitment and retention as an opportunity as it relates to the strategic plan. Funds were secured for minority recruiting and a mini-grant for retention and marketing efforts. The campus hosted approximately 400 prospective minority students for the second annual All-University Minority Education Fest for a one-day summer conference on educational opportunities with the University of Minnesota System. However, according to the director, only eight students were recruited from this event. Of course, others may have enrolled at other Minnesota universities. A minority peer advisor program was initiated, cultural sensitivity workshops provided and a minority scholarship program created. A statement was made in the Self-Study about the need to secure additional funding to recruit minorities.
Residential Life

Three residence halls and two apartment complexes provide coeducational on-campus housing for approximately 400 students. The residential program is staffed by a director, assistant director, part-time secretary, maintenance employees and student resident advisors. Routine and minor maintenance and cleaning are performed by persons reporting directly to the Director of Residential Life. More complex tasks are performed by plant services.

The residence halls seemed to be well-maintained and students reported their overall satisfaction with the facilities and residential programs.

Dining Services

Dining Services provides food and nutritional services for on-campus residential students, off-campus commuter students, faculty, and staff. In addition, Dining Services functions as a training laboratory of the Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Management program and provides catering for UM-C functions and regional organization meetings on campus.

The operations of the dining facility appear to have improved since the 1983 NCA visit. According to the information provided, this operation is self-supporting, equipment has been upgraded, new catering equipment has been purchased, and changes in services have been initiated as a result of student feedback. Some of these initiatives include establishing a convenience store (Morsels), increased flexibility in meal contracts, charge debit/credit accounts, and other special or promotional items such as sack meals, sick trays, snacks during exam week, and snacks for athletic trips.

Discussion with a few students verified the improved dining services, and the recent additions of pizza and stir fry. The comment was "what they do, they do well."
Intercollegiate Athletics

UM-C fields four men's teams (football, hockey, basketball and baseball) and three women's teams (basketball, volleyball and softball). Except for hockey, which has applied for affiliation with the American Collegiate Hockey Association, the University is affiliated with the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics. UM-C will join the North Dakota Collegiate Athletic Conference in the Fall of 1995.

A total of 135 student-athletes participate in the intercollegiate athletic program with some students playing more than one sport. While there are head coaches for each of the sports, some of the coaches serve in dual roles as assistant coaches of other UM-C teams, fitness center staff, equipment room manager, part-time teaching positions, and admissions staff. While there is no sports information director, the University employs a part-time athletic trainer, other part-time staff, and utilizes volunteers. A part-time secretary serves the Athletic Director and coaches.

The athletic program is funded by the general operating budget for coaches' salaries and benefits at $297,091 and operating expenses for the seven teams at $88,825. Income totals $134,987—derived from a special legislative fund for women's athletics ($65,887), student fees ($65,100) and gate receipts ($4,000). A newly formed Teambackers group is in the process of raising funds in the regional community to provide athletic scholarships and operating funds.

Under NAIA rules, the Chancellor is responsible for the intercollegiate athletic program. The Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs supervises the program through the Athletic Director, while a Faculty Athletic Representative meets the responsibilities of supervising student athletes' academic eligibility and progress toward graduation.

Opportunities for improvement in intercollegiate athletics are evident beyond those identified in the Self-Study. Facilities for intercollegiate athletics are adequate but in need of selective rehabilitation. The institution needs to consider giving
someone the part-time responsibility for sports information and statistics
management. Academic Affairs should consider developing academic majors or
minors that would be advantageous to attracting athletes to UM-C, especially women
student-athletes. The offering of high contact sports suggests the need for more than
a part-time athletic trainer.

Business Affairs

The Business Affairs function is managed by a Vice Chancellor for Finance.
The position is assisted by a senior accountant, accounts payable clerk, payroll clerk,
a full- and part-time cashier, bookstore manager, postal clerk and a human resources
and development assistant. UM-C staff initiate and code financial paperwork on the
Crookston campus, and payables and checks are processed at the University of
Minnesota in the Twin Cities. Financial data are available in a read-only format at
Crookston and a tracking system on paperwork makes it possible to determine the
status of a particular check request.

UM-C has authority to budget whatever total unrestricted funds allocated to it
from the University, including the authority to carry over funds from one fiscal year to
the next. The Crookston campus has six sources of income, which in 1993-94
amounted to $13,387,427.00:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuition and fees</td>
<td>$2,416,836</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal appropriations</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State appropriations</td>
<td>5,162,886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local appropriations</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants and contracts</td>
<td>1,793,576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endowment income</td>
<td>53,994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auxiliary enterprises</td>
<td>2,242,633</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (sales/services)</td>
<td>1,171,503</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cost center directors are responsible for managing the budgets provided to
them, and for making requests for funds during the budget-building cycle. An
Operations Committee (comprised of the Chancellor, three vice chancellors, and the
directors of plant services, external relations, and outreach), receives general advice
from the Finance Working Group of faculty, staff and students, but is responsible for
developing the annual budget under the Chancellor's leadership.

The Basic Institutional Data Form D showed 1993-94 total expenditures and
transfers of $13,489,837 which provided an excess income of $48,645 (down
$226,788 from the previous year, but nearly twice more than 1991-92).

Bonded indebtedness for 1993-94 is a modest $740,000 for capital outlay
which has consistently become lower since 1991-92; there exists approximately
$1,000,000 in residence halls reserves. A debate between UM-C and UM Central
System officers currently exists as to how to retire the remaining $380,000
(approximately) payment on a loan for the initial purchase of IBM notebook
computers.

The balance sheet data provided on BiD Form D was difficult to analyze
because of differences in reporting year-to-year data.

Neither UM-C nor UM Central System officers could provide evidence of a
public audit as required in GIR 19. The last campus audit performed was in 1991
(prior to achieving baccalaureate degree status) by the University of Minnesota audit
staff. At that time, 60 recommendations were made for improvement (none were
found to be "essential," five were found to be "significant," and 55 were found to be
"useful"). No "material weaknesses" were reported, and all recommendations were
reported to be "fairly easily correctable."

The University of Minnesota-Crookston--in developing into a baccalaureate
degree university--has undergone several significant changes which have required
allocations or reallocations of funds. While UM-C has forward-looking plans for
growth and benchmarks to measure results, factors such as market saturation, increased competition for students, declining state financial support, changing demographic trends, and retention of academically at-risk students, all will have an impact on the University's growth plans and future financial health.

**Human Resources**

Human resources policies of the Crookston campus are guided by the University of Minnesota. University policies establish three major classifications of employees--Faculty, Academic Professionals and Administrative Staff and Civil Service/Bargaining Unit Staff. The Civil Service/Bargaining Unit Staff are covered by collective bargaining agreements.

The campus does not have a "personnel office" or "human relations office" in the traditional sense. The Director of Human Resources position was vacant and therefore the Vice Chancellor for Finance has overall administrative responsibilities which he has delegated in great part to a "Principal Secretary." The "Principal Secretary" handles routine personnel matters, but significant issues and questions are, in fact, handled by personnel at the University's central office. Personnel at Crookston seems to be comfortable with the arrangement and it works reasonably well.

Morale among all three classifications of employees seemed to be quite high, even though both Professional and Administrative Staff and Civil Service/Bargaining Unit Staff noted that they were often performing multiple functions in multiple positions. There seemed to be a "can do" attitude among staff and there was little evidence that the dearth of staff was hindering overall operations.
Physical Plant and Services

The campus is situated on 137 acres and consists of 27 buildings. This Team concurs with the 1993 Team that there is "an attractive and well-maintained physical plant that includes, for the most part, adequate educational facilities."

University Relations

A Director of External Relations, an Assistant Director of University Relations, and two secretaries are responsible for the typical duties associated with development, alumni relations, and public information at a small university. The functions of coordinating University publications, writing and sending news releases, editing, coordinating special events, fund and friend raising are carried out by this staff. There is hope that an additional person will be employed to focus attention on marketing the University and building a larger donor base.

UM-C has an endowment of some $2.9 million for scholarships and $700,000 for other purposes. Funds are held and managed by the University of Minnesota Foundation and expended in accordance with its guidelines. As an example, 5.5 percent of earned interest income on the endowment can be used annually by the UM campuses.

It is evident through discussions with members of the regional community, especially Program Improvement Advisory Committee members and students, that the University of Minnesota-Crookston enjoys broad and enthusiastic support. The institution's development into a baccalaureate college is very much appreciated in the regional community.
Planning

There are ample patterns of evidence that the University of Minnesota-Crookston is committed to strategic planning as a way of charting its future and strengthening its educational effectiveness. UM-C has used the NCA Self-Study process as a campus-wide planning guide. Moreover, the University of Minnesota has a Regents-approved "University 2000" plan and the Crookston campus has its "UM-C 2002 Strategic Plan," both of which guide UM-C's development.

UM-C's strategic plan is understood by the campus community as an aggressive growth plan whose success is dependent on both increased enrollments and increased retention. With several changing conditions (such as a history of decreasing state financial support, changing demographic trends, and rapid development of new degree programs that require greater financial expenditures), the institution is vulnerable to the vagaries of exogenous forces as pointed out by NCA's consultant-evaluators during the 1993 focused visit.

Planning at UM-C is assisted by a governance structure, oversight by the University of Minnesota, and a stability of campus-based leadership, all of which should serve the institution well.

4. *The institution can continue to accomplish its purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness.*

The University provides pattern of evidence that it currently has an appropriate mission, is effectively organized to accomplish its purposes, and currently is accomplishing those purposes. Criterion four is concerned about the future.

As noted earlier, the campus has planned well for the future and seems to be quite aware of the challenges that lie ahead. While this Team is fundamentally optimistic about the future of Crookston, a number of significant concerns exist. Although the institution has made the initial
transition to a four-year university, the team has concerns about academic quality, and a number of those concerns must be addressed by additional resources. Yet, there is little indication that the resources will be forthcoming. The University of Minnesota has publicly set forth challenges ("critical measures and benchmarks") for the campus regarding enrollment numbers and academic quality, and has said that the continued existence of the campus is contingent upon meeting those challenges. The goals, while reasonable, are somewhat in conflict. The campus leadership believes that in order to grow, it must increase its program offerings. That expansion will require additional staff and other resources. Simultaneously, some of the existing programs are understaffed and the quality of some programs is marginal as a result. No one is optimistic about additional funds, for the cost per student credit is already too high in the view of the University of Minnesota central administration.

How then will the campus resolve the dual challenge of increasing enrollments and improving quality while receiving few, if any, additional resources? This Team believes that the oft-uttered threat to close the campus, if the challenges are not met, is real. Another branch campus of the University of Minnesota was recently closed for the same reason.

As a consequence, the Team believes that while it is probable that the institution can continue to accomplish its purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness, the outcome is not assured. We are encouraged by the progress to date in curriculum change, assessment of learning outcomes, and planning for the future. However, because of the importance of improving the quality of the existing academic programs, the desire to offer additional new degree programs which will require even more resources, and the uncertainty regarding the institution's ability to meet the challenges put forth by the University of Minnesota, the Team is recommending the next
comprehensive visit in six years—this will be two years after the institution is expected to reach the enrollment goals and one year after it is to meet the qualitative goals established by the central administration.

5. The institution demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships.

Chapter five of the Self-Study dealt with this criterion, and all evidence indicated that the institution demonstrates integrity its it practices and relationships.

The Crookston campus, supplemented by policies from the University of Minnesota, had a variety of publications, policies, rules and regulations dealing with such matters as Academic Freedom and Responsibility; Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity; a Code of Ethics; policies on Faculty and Staff Misconduct; Nepotism; Personnel; human subject research; Student Conduct; grievance procedures; sexual harassment; copyrights; and the like.

The University also had a variety of policies dealing with financial and business transaction—"Accepting and Managing Gifts"; purchasing guidelines; "Retention, Archival, and Destruction of Records; Indirect Costs; Business-Related Expenses; and others.

The Team examined publications such as catalogs, viewbooks, student and employee handbooks, and found them to be informative and reflective of the actual situation on campus.
STRENGTHS AND CONCERNS

Strengths

1. UM-C's mission, focused on applied undergraduate instruction, research, and service, is understood and endorsed by members of the academic and regional communities.

2. The University of Minnesota-Crookston, following the leadership of the Regents of the University of Minnesota, has a long-range plan that includes key strategies and benchmarks for measuring results. UM-C is to be congratulated for developing and following the "UM-C 2002 Strategic Plan" in designing its future.

3. The faculty and staff are dedicated, hardworking, and committed to the challenge of moving UM-C into the next century.

4. There is a positive attitude about the progress toward the utilization of technology as evidenced by student and faculty laptop computers, and increasing use of both interactive television courses, and on-line data base searching capabilities through the library.

5. UM-C effectively provides academic assistance and developmental education opportunities for beginning students that are appropriate to its policy of open admissions.

6. UM-C is enterprising in its development of educational services, including collaborative efforts and program articulation with other post secondary institutions, and in continuing education ventures which promote technology transfer.

7. The faculty and administration have, by and large, a good understanding of, and positive attitude about, the need for assessing student learning outcomes. UM-C is encouraged to build upon this strength and fully implement this NCA requirement by the time of the next Self-Study and on-site review.
Concerns

1. As a part of the "Critical Measures and Performance Goals" specified in the Board of Regent's "University 2000 Mission, Vision, Strategic Directions and Performance" statement, the Crookston campus is being held to a number of performance objectives among which are: to achieve an enrollment of 1,200 FYE students by FY98; to reduce the educational cost per student; and to enhance overall academic quality. It has been publicly stated by responsible University officials that the Crookston campus's continued existence is contingent upon meeting those goals.

2. UM-C does not meet the NCA General Institutional Requirement 19—"It has an external financial audit by a certified public accountant or a public audit agency at least every two years." The last financial audit of record is dated 1991, and as a component unit of a larger corporate entity (the University of Minnesota), the "...supplemental information on the financial activity of the institution..." is not available.

3. The ability to provide the breadth and depth for the courses of the several new baccalaureate degree programs and emphases, with existing faculty resources, appears to be marginal in several areas and must be monitored carefully by UM-C.

4. The amount of money in the budget for supplies, equipment, and other expenses in the academic programs is very small, particularly for equipment intensive courses.

5. Even though UM-C is an integral part of the University of Minnesota, which undoubtedly possesses financial flexibility, the campus itself lacks sufficient reserve funds to face downturns in its income fund or for unbudgeted emergency expenses.
SECTION III  OBSERVATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

These observations and suggestions are offered in a consultative fashion. They represent the views of the evaluation Team which do not bear directly on the accreditation recommendations and are not issues of a nature that should be cited as concerns.

1. Given the University's challenge to increase enrollments, UM-C might devote additional resources to recruitment activities, including new staff.

2. As the University moves into athletic competition at the baccalaureate level, it might give more focused attention to improvements necessary to mount competitive programs.

3. In light of the recent significant curriculum changes, the University might devote additional resources for the development of faculty, including the potential of utilizing ITV.

4. The University of Minnesota should be encouraged to have all campuses of the University adopt the same academic calendar (beginning and ending dates) to facilitate the sharing of faculty and resources. Among other things, this would lessen the complications of offering ITV classes among campuses.

5. In the development of culminating academic experiences, the institution may wish to consider developing capstone courses for each academic division rather than for each degree program. Such an approach would make possible a greater critical mass of students and reduce the number of course preparations in each of the academic units.

6. Official financial records are maintained at and bills are paid by the University of Minnesota as authorized by the Crookston campus. UM-C is advised to consider establishing a local system of downloading financial records or other procedures which allow a standardization of financial record keeping which
will lead toward consistent reporting of financial information in the required format of NCA's Basic Institutional Data, Form D. The lack of consistency from year-to-year in the current BID reports presents a confusing pattern of evidence regarding the institution's financial condition over time.

7. UM-C is congratulated for developing and gaining approval of the new baccalaureate degree programs since receiving authority to offer such degrees. The institution may wish to give consideration to the broad number of specifically named degrees and to consider focusing upon offering a smaller number of generic degrees with majors and minors. As one example, a single degree such as a B.S. in Business should achieve financial efficiencies if all students in Business were required to take a large set of core business courses and a smaller number of courses in a major area of emphasis and an even smaller numbers of courses in a minor area of emphasis. The result would be an economy of scale in using faculty resources through larger classes and a smaller menu of courses offered in the major. Such an approach would not preclude the institution from marketing areas of emphasis within certain degree programs which are designed to prepare students for particular careers.
SECTION IV  RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE

The Team's recommendations for action, including its recommendation to continue the accreditation of the University of Minnesota-Crookston, are shown on the attached Worksheet for the Statement of Affiliation Status. The Team's reasons for its recommendations are:

This report is for a comprehensive visit, the last comprehensive visit being conducted in 1983. No reports, stipulations or focused evaluations were scheduled at that time. However, a focused visit occurred in 1993 in response to the institution's request for a substantive change in its Statement of Affiliation Status—it became a baccalaureate degree-granting university rather than a two-year institution. The focus Team approved the requested change and the comprehensive visit was postponed for one year, to 1994-95.

The University of Minnesota-Crookston is a branch campus of the University of Minnesota and is covered by most of its policies regarding such matters as curriculum approval, faculty and staff personnel policies, financial procedures, and the like. The University currently enrolls approximately 1,557 (headcount) students in three divisions—the Technical Studies Division, Agricultural Management Division, and Management Division. It offers nine Bachelors of Science Degree programs with several areas of emphasis and it also offers 12 AAS degrees and two programs leading to the Associate in Science degree. The institution has 48 full-time tenure and tenure-track faculty, approximately 107 clerical and support staff and approximately 42 academic professional and administrative staff.

The University is organized in fairly typical fashion. There are the usual administrative functions with persons responsible for them. However, this is one campus where few would say there are too many administrators or clerical/support staff. Nevertheless, the operations appear to be efficiently run with several persons responsible for multiple functions.
The physical plant is adequate and well-maintained; this same observation was made by the focus Team in 1993. One of the biggest challenges facing the University over the past three years has been in moving from a two-year to a four-year institution. By-and-large the transition has progressed well and appropriate changes have been made in the programs and in course work. The academic programs are well-conceived and well-taught, though there is concern about the lack of faculty depth and breadth in some programs and the number of class preparations seems to be relatively high in a number of academic areas (8-11 preparations in some areas).

The University of Minnesota is facing the same fiscal constraints as much of higher education and those constraints are evident in a number of areas. By-and-large, this Team believes the institution is meeting the five criteria for accreditation. However, for purposes of this "Recommendation and Rationale," we will repeat our observations from criterion four, "The institution can continue to accomplish its purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness":

4. **The institution can continue to accomplish its purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness.**

The University provided patterns of evidence that it currently has an appropriate mission, is effectively organized to accomplish its purposes, and currently is accomplishing those purposes. Criterion four is concerned about the future.

As noted earlier, the campus has planned well for the future and seems to be quite aware of the challenges that lie ahead. While this Team is fundamentally optimistic about the future of Crookston, a number of concerns exist. Although the institution has made the initial transition to a four-year university, the team has concerns about academic quality, and a number of those concerns must be addressed by additional resources. Yet, there is little indication that the resources will be forthcoming. The University of
Minnesota has publicly set forth challenges ("critical measures and benchmarks") for the campus regarding enrollment numbers and academic quality, and has said that the continued existence of the campus is contingent upon meeting those challenges. The goals, while reasonable, are somewhat in conflict. The campus leadership believes that in order to grow, it must increase its program offerings. That expansion will require additional staff and other resources. Simultaneously, some of the existing programs are understaffed and the quality of some programs is marginal as a result. No one is optimistic about additional funds, for the cost per student credit is already too high in the view of the central administration.

How then will the campus resolve the dual challenge of increasing enrollments and improving quality while receiving few, if any, additional resources? This Team believes that the oft-uttered threat to close the campus, if the challenges are not met, is real. Another branch campus of the University of Minnesota was recently closed for the same reason.

As a consequence, the Team believes that while it is probable that the institution can continue to accomplish its purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness, the outcome is not assured. We are encouraged by the progress to date in curriculum change, assessment of learning outcomes, and planning for the future. However, because of the importance of improving the quality of the existing academic programs, the desire to offer additional new degree programs which will require even more resources, and the uncertainty regarding the institution's ability to meet the challenges put forth by the University of Minnesota, the Team is recommending the next comprehensive visit in six years—this will be two years after the institution is expected to reach the enrollment goals and one year after it is to meet the qualitative goals established by the central administration.
The following strengths and concerns were identified.

Strengths

1. UM-C's mission, focused on applied undergraduate instruction, research, and service, is understood and endorsed by members of the academic and regional communities.

2. The University of Minnesota-Crookston, following the leadership of the Regents of the University of Minnesota, has a long-range plan that includes key strategies and benchmarks for measuring results. UM-C is to be congratulated for developing and following the "UM-C 2002 Strategic Plan" in designing its future.

3. The faculty and staff are dedicated, hardworking, and committed to the challenge of moving UM-C into the next century.

4. There is a positive attitude about the progress toward the utilization of technology as evidenced by student and faculty laptop computers, and increasing use of both interactive television courses, and on-line data base searching capabilities through the library.

5. UM-C effectively provides academic assistance and developmental education opportunities for beginning students that are appropriate to its policy of open admissions.

6. UM-C is enterprising in its development of educational services, including collaborative efforts and program articulation with other post secondary institutions, and in continuing education ventures which promote technology transfer.

7. The faculty and administration have, by and large, a good understanding of, and positive attitude about, the need for assessing student learning outcomes. UM-C is encouraged to build upon this strength and fully implement this NCA requirement by the time of the next Self-Study and on-site review.
Concerns

1. As a part of the "Critical Measures and Performance Goals" specified in the Board of Regent's "University 2000 Mission, Vision, Strategic Directions and Performance" statement, the Crookston campus is being held to a number of performance objectives among which are: to achieve an enrollment of 1,200 FYE students by FY98; to reduce the educational cost per student; and to enhance overall academic quality. It has been publicly stated by responsible University officials that the Crookston campus's continued existence is contingent upon meeting those goals.

2. UM-C does not meet the NCA General Institutional Requirement 19—"It has an external financial audit by a certified public accountant or a public audit agency at least every two years." The last financial audit of record is dated 1991, and as a component unit of a larger corporate entity (the University of Minnesota), the "...supplemental information on the financial activity of the institution..." is not available.

3. The ability to provide the breadth and depth for the courses of the several new baccalaureate degree programs and emphases, with existing faculty resources, appears to be marginal in several areas and must be monitored carefully by UM-C.

4. The amount of money in the budget for supplies, equipment, and other expenses in the academic programs is very small, particularly for equipment intensive courses.

5. Even though UM-C is an integral part of the University of Minnesota, which undoubtedly possesses financial flexibility, the campus itself lacks sufficient reserve funds to face downturns in its income fund or for unbudgeted emergency expenses.
RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE

Control: No change as description is correct.
Status: No change as description is correct.
Location: No change as description is correct.
Stipulation: No change as description is correct.
Reports Required: A certified public accountant or a public audit agency should conduct a financial audit in accordance with the provisions of GIR 19, and forward that report to the NCA during 1996-97.

This recommendation is made because the last audit of record is dated 1991.

Focused Evaluation: No change as description is correct.

The next comprehensive visit is scheduled in six years because this will be two years after the institution is expected to reach the enrollment goals and one year after it is to meet the qualitative goals established by the central administration of the University of Minnesota.
WORKSHEET FOR STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS

INSTITUTION: UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA-CROOKSTON
Highway 2 and 75 N.
Crookston, MN 56716

TYPE OF REVIEW: Comprehensive

DATE OF THIS REVIEW: February 20 - 22, 1995

DATE OF SAS:

COMMISSION ACTION:

ACCEPTABLE PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT:
YES__ NO__
(If "NO", the team must recommend appropriate follow-up under PROGRESS REPORTS REQUIRED or FOCUSED VI; Candidate institutions are exempted.)

STATUS: Accredited (1971-)

Institution
Recommended Wording: RETAIN ORIGINAL WORDING

Team
Recommended Wording: RETAIN ORIGINAL WORDING

HIGHEST DEGREE AWARDED: Bachelor's.

Institution
Recommended Wording: RETAIN ORIGINAL WORDING

Team
Recommended Wording: RETAIN ORIGINAL WORDING

MOST RECENT ACTION: July 15, 1993.

TO BE CHANGED BY THE COMMISSION OFFICE

STIPULATIONS ON AFFILIATION STATUS: Offerings outside the state are limited to courses offered in North Dakota.

Institution
Recommended Wording: RETAIN ORIGINAL WORDING

Team
Recommended Wording: RETAIN ORIGINAL WORDING
NEW DEGREE SITES:

Prior Commission approval required.

Institution

Recommended Wording: RETAIN ORIGINAL WORDING

Team

Recommended Wording: RETAIN ORIGINAL WORDING

PROGRESS REPORTS REQUIRED:

None.

Team

Recommended Wording: November 1, 1996. A report on the completion of an audit.

MONITORING REPORTS REQUIRED:

None.

Team

Recommended Wording: NONE.

CONTINGENCY REPORTS REQUIRED:

None.

Team

Recommended Wording: NONE.

OTHER VISITS REQUIRED:

None.

Team

Recommended Wording: NONE.

LAST COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION: 1983-84.

TO BE CHANGED BY THE COMMISSION OFFICE

NEXT COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION: 1994-95.

Team

Recommended Wording: 2000-01.