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EIU Prepares for Accreditation With NCA Survey; Seeks Community Input

Feb-09-2004

One year ago this month, Eastern Illinois University began the lengthy process of preparing for its next North Central Association (NCA) accreditation visit.

This process has now reached the stage at which the university requests input from a wide range of EIU constituents, including the community at large, via an on-line survey.

Eastern requires accreditation if it is to continue its comprehensive participation as an institution of higher learning. Thus, the accreditation process continues to rank among Eastern's most important activities and achievements. Every 10 years, the NCA (which includes colleges and schools in 19 north and central states) performs an extensive evaluation of EIU, which necessitates the institution to undertake a self-study, followed by an agency site visit.

In preparation for this self-study and site visit, scheduled to take place in February 2005, Eastern's NCA Committee has developed an on-line survey that will gather input on how well the university is meeting the five accreditation criteria established by the NCA.

Those five criteria include:

- **Mission and Integrity**, meaning that the organization operates with integrity and ensures the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff and others who understand and support that mission;
- **Preparing for the Future**, meaning that the organization's allocations of resources and its processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate its capacity to fulfill its mission, sustain and improve educational quality and respond to future challenges and opportunities;
- **Student Learning and Effective Teaching**, meaning that the organization assures and advances student learning, recognizes and promotes effective teaching and evaluates the currency and relevance of its curricular offerings;
- **Acquiring, Creating and Applying Knowledge**, meaning that the organization promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff and students by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice and social responsibility in ways consistent with its mission; and
- **Engagement and Service**, meaning that the organization engages other groups, as called for by its mission, and collaborates with and serves them in ways both value.

Eastern's NCA Committee urges off-campus community members served by EIU to join faculty, students, staff and administrators to participate in the self-study process by completing the NCA Self Study Survey. This survey can be accessed at the following Web site -- <http://cats.eiu.edu/nca/survey/> -- and will be available until **Monday, Feb. 16**.

The survey requires approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete. Participants who need assistance with completion of the electronic survey may seek help from staff in Eastern's Gregg Triad Computer Laboratory, located in the center of campus next to Booth Library. Staff there can help participants access the survey and provide any needed assistance.

NCA Committee members urge all community members to make this important contribution to EIU and complete the survey.

Those wishing more information on the accreditation process should visit the NCA Web site at <http://www.eiu.edu/~acaffair/NCA/>. Questions may be addressed to NCA co-chairs Jill D. Owen, cfjdo@eiu.edu, or Robert M. Augustine, cfrma@eiu.edu.