

# DRAKE UNIVERSITY 2008 SELF-STUDY REPORT SUMMARY

## Self-Study Purpose and Process

The 2008 Drake University Self-Study was undertaken in preparation for review for continued accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. Drake initiated its self-study using the HLC Criteria for Accreditation in September 2004. This document provides a brief summary of the results of that self-study. Full results are presented in the Drake University Self-Study Report.

## Introduction

Drake University is a private, coeducational institution, classified by Carnegie as “Master’s — Large.” The University offers more than 70 undergraduate majors, two first-professional degrees (Juris Doctor and Pharmacy Doctorate), and 13 graduate programs (master’s, specialist, doctorate) in its six colleges and schools: College of Arts and Sciences, including which includes Fine Arts; College of Business and Public Administration; School of Education; School of Journalism and Mass Communication; Law School; and College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences. The University is residential with 95% of first-year students and 61% of all undergraduates living on campus.

Drake University has been accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools since that association was established in 1913. The last comprehensive accreditation visit in February 1998 recommended continued accreditation for the University. No monitoring reports, contingency reports or other visits were required.

Since the 1998 reaccreditation review, a new Drake administrative team has led the University into an era of mission-driven planning and development. The University has become more focused on the necessity of comprehensive planning that ensures effective preparation for the future. During the past 10 years Drake University has developed a clear identity based on a shared understanding of our current status and goals and recognition that both are dependent on an exceptional learning environment.

## Criterion 1: Mission and Integrity

**Core Component 1A:** *Drake University’s mission documents are clear and articulate publicly the organization’s commitments.*

The Drake University *Mission Statement*, approved in 2002, is the measure against which every action is judged. The mission is included prominently in publications and other communications designed for students, faculty, staff, alumni, prospective students, and the general public. All key mission documents are available via the University Web site and *blueView* portal. The shared understanding of Drake’s mission is evident in and expanded by the Strategic Plan and the Drake University *Mission Explication*. Mission Statements of individual units further articulate and strengthen the University’s commitment to its mission.

**Core Component 1B:** *In our mission documents, Drake University recognizes the diversity of our learners, other constituencies, and the greater society we serve.*

The Drake University *Mission Statement* and *Explication* make clear that the University welcomes diversity, plans strategically for it, and articulates a commitment to diversity in its governance documents. The *Mission Statement* expressly acknowledges diversity in committing to preparing students to be responsible global citizens. In addition, it acknowledges the diversity of Drake’s learners through a directive to provide an exceptional learning environment through collaborative learning. Drake’s planning for a diverse world is evidenced in Goal IV of the Strategic Plan that calls on the University to “ensure that Drake students, faculty and staff are able to function effectively as members of diverse local, national and global communities.” The University has developed centers, programs and partnerships that provide support for faculty, students and staff involvement in international initiatives.

**Core Component 1C:** *Understanding of and support for our mission pervade Drake University.*

Pervasive understanding and support for the mission is conveyed in student responses to surveys. Requests for special funding, principles for deciding open positions, performance evaluation and other processes must be grounded in mission goals. The mission-driven nature of planning is evidenced in the pervasive use of the *Mission Explication* and other mission documents in all planning activities. Drake Board of Trustees and senior administrators insist that the mission serve as the guide for difficult decisions related to resources. Curricular and cocurricular programming explicitly reinforce the mission goals.

**Core Component 1D:** *Drake University's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the University to fulfill our mission.*

Drake University's official documents commit firmly to its mission, effective leadership and shared governance. The University ensures qualified leadership through broad-based and consultative processes of selection and performance review. Performance reviews are systematic and tied to mission goals. The AAUP *Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities* is an integral component of the *Academic Charter* of the University.

**Core Component 1E:** *Drake University upholds and protects its integrity.*

The Board of Trustees works in an intensely collaborative manner with University staff and faculty to ensure that University operations are consistent with the law, with responsibilities to our various constituencies, and with the principles of transparency and accountability. The Board makes its expectations regarding these responsibilities clear to senior administrators responsible for carrying out University operations. The University is committed to operations consistent with local, state and federal laws and regulations and to standards of practice set by relevant professional associations.

University policy statements identify central values, responsibilities and expectations that guide members of the Drake University community. These documents are applied consistently. Among the most central is the *Statement of Principles* which reinforces our collective commitment as an academic community to the free and open exchange of ideas and identifies those responsibilities crucial to preserving that core value. Two of the University's core values articulate Drake's commitment to external constituencies: (1) *Integrity*: our actions and interactions must be informed by fairness, equity, honesty, accountability, justice and mutual respect; (2) *Citizenship*: we are prepared to participate in all of the communities in which we live — local, regional, national, and global — and we are committed to public service, the common good and personal growth.

**Criterion II: Preparing for the Future****Core Component 2A:** *Drake University realistically prepares for a future shaped by multiple societal and economic trends.*

Since January of 2000 planning has been continual and mission-driven. *Program Review 2000*, an intensive review of every Drake program, resulted in significant institutional transformation. A new Strategic Plan in 2001, updated in 2003, and Mission Statement approved in 2002 provide clear guidance for planning for the future. The 2004 *Mission Explication* clarifies the implications of the mission for Drake and for our graduates.

Strategic planning has become pervasive and is accompanied by strategic and fiscally responsible budgeting. A *Campus Master Plan* was approved in June 2005, and has been updated systematically since that time. *Strategic Enrollment and Revenue Planning* focused on currency and appropriateness of academic programs and improving and sustaining the financial strength of the University. Contingency planning has occurred to prepare Drake for ongoing health and safety issues as well as for unexpected but potential disasters. A new planning structure has been put in place that will support the University in maintaining systematic planning procedures.

**Core Component 2B:** *Drake University's resource base supports its educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening its future quality.*

In recent years Drake University has planned carefully to ensure that its rich reservoir of financial, physical and human resources are stable and allocated to support its educational programs. Measures have been taken to ensure long-term success and financial health: the strategic allocation of resources to fund University priorities and the application of sound fiscal policies and practices. Financial objectives are set and measured on an annual basis. Tuition has been controlled resulting in Drake being identified by several publications as an excellent value.

Improving Drake's physical facilities has played an important role in enhancing its learning environment. Recognizing the increasing importance of technology to effective teaching and learning environments Drake has planned carefully to make changes that significantly improve its technological environment and its effectiveness in supporting student learning. Among initiatives taken to attain the Strategic Plan Goal to "Recruit and retain faculty and staff of the highest quality" are a compensation initiative that has resulted in significant improvements in salaries, doubling of faculty and staff development funds, and new staff development programs have been instituted.

**Core Component 2C:** *Drake University's ongoing evaluation and assessment processes provide reliable evidence of institutional effectiveness that clearly informs strategies for continuous improvement.*

Drake is committed to ensuring that evaluative data are available and used for planning in every program. External reviews, self-studies, and consultants regularly provide feedback about program effectiveness. The University participates in many surveys and collaboratives that provide comparative and benchmark information for use in planning and development and for analysis and assessment of institutional and program performance. Finally, advisory boards and councils comprised of individuals from all constituencies provide regular feedback and advice.

**Core Component 2D -** *All levels of planning align with Drake University's mission, thereby enhancing its capacity to fulfill that mission.*

The gravitational center for all planning documents is the University *Mission Statement*. Everything — new course proposals, requests for hiring, capital equipment purchases, promotion and tenure, existing and proposed programs, development projects, strategic plans — is prioritized in terms of its centrality to and support for the University's mission and our strategic plan.

### Criterion III: Student Learning and Effective Teaching

**Core Component 3A:** *Drake's goals for student learning are clearly stated for each educational program and make effective assessment possible.*

In the last four years, efforts have focused on developing more systematic program evaluation and assessment, and increasing faculty and staff understanding the value of these activities to achieving learning goals in their own programs and classes. Faculty across the University have participated in task forces and workshops related to examining mission statements, writing assessable learning outcomes and designing assessment methods. The University also has committed to transparency in dissemination of outcomes data. From 2003 through 2006 task forces reviewed parts of the Drake Curriculum general education program. This resulted in enhancement of the first-year experience, development of the *Mission Explication*, recommendations related to the senior experience, and mapping of mission outcomes to the Drake Curriculum. These efforts provided the basis for Drake's successful application to become part of the first *Academy for Assessment of Student Learning* cohort.

**Core Component 3B:** *Drake University values and supports effective teaching.*

Drake hiring policies and procedures emphasize the importance of teaching, as do tenure and promotion criteria and criteria for merit-based salary increases. Awards for excellence in teaching and mentoring publicly recognize and reward those faculty members who most clearly reflect teaching excellence. "Teaching

Effectiveness” is the first criterion in the Provost’s Guidelines used to guide selection of endowed chairs and professorships. To ensure high quality curricula, teaching, and an excellent learning environment, the University provides extensive support for faculty development. The funding for faculty development comes from both internal and external sources. The University further supports faculty development with a flexible sabbatical leave program.

**Core Component 3C:** *Drake University creates effective learning environments.*

Drake has worked to ensure that students are provided a holistic learning environment in which academics, student life, and all other University entities collaborate to achieve Mission-learning outcomes. Upgrading of the physical learning environment, expansion of electronic support for learning, and increased diversity among students, faculty and staff have enhanced this effort. Drake’s location provides extensive opportunities for internships and service learning. Each year speakers, musical performers, art exhibits and other events enrich the learning opportunities for Drake students. Student government, Greek Life, Drake Athletics and other programs provide support and encouragement for students developing leadership skills that help them achieve meaningful personal lives and professional accomplishments. Other programs such as Student Academic Support Programs, the Iowa Caucus Project, the Honors Program, Cowles Library, and Student Life cocurricular programming provide support for effective learning.

**Core Component 3D:** *Drake University’s learning resources support student learning and effective teaching.*

Drake University provides extensive support for student learning and effective teaching. Careful coordination of a range of services by the Office of the Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Academic Excellence ensures that services are delivered effectively and consistently assessed. Guided by the Campus Master Plan and the Science Master Plan classrooms and laboratories have been renovated to accommodate a variety of teaching and learning styles. The Drake University student technology fee, now in its seventh year, funds educational technology projects that relate to teaching and learning. Workshops and regular staff support ensure that faculty can learn to implement technology in the classroom. Cowles Library provides electronic access to many resources for Drake students, faculty, staff, alumni and many other constituencies. Cowles Library’s entire “electronic collections” of 15,000 journals and 30,000 electronic books are available to all Drake students, including those studying abroad.

#### **Criterion IV: Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge**

**Core Component 4A:** *Drake University demonstrates, through the actions of its board, administrators, students, faculty, and staff that it values a life of learning.*

While teaching excellence is the primary criterion for faculty review, Drake expects that all faculty members to engage in scholarship and creative activity. The University recognizes scholarly and creative work through merit evaluations and raises, endowed professorships, faculty recognition awards and campus publicity. Endowed professorships and chairs recognize both scholarly accomplishments and teaching excellence of Drake faculty. Faculty sabbaticals provide support for faculty learning. Drake University faculty and staff development programs provide extensive support for scholarly work and provide opportunities for ongoing learning and skill development. Several University sponsored grant programs support faculty research and teaching. Drake is committed to being a center of life-long learning in Central Iowa. The University hosts the RaySociety for Lifelong Learning and hosts or sponsors numerous speakers, events, workshops, performances, exhibitions and symposia, almost all of which are free and open to the public.

**Core Component 4B:** *Drake University demonstrates that acquisition of a breadth of knowledge and skills and the exercise of intellectual inquiry are integral to its educational programs.*

As a member of the *Associated New American Colleges*, Drake University is committed to the goal of “purposeful integration of liberal education, professional studies and civic engagement.” This is reflected in the Drake *Mission Explication* specification that a Drake graduate will have “breadth and depth of knowledge and a range experiences and skills gained through the Drake Curriculum, coursework in major fields and cocurricular experiences.”

*Drake Curriculum* Area of Inquiry requirements are designed to provide students with a solid introduction to a variety of intellectual fields and a diversity of learning experiences. The Honors Program and many undergraduate majors and graduate programs emphasize breadth of knowledge. Interdisciplinary majors and concentrations encourage multidisciplinary approaches to understand world phenomena. The campus provides students, faculty, and staff the opportunity to broaden and deepen their educational experience through attendance at musical recitals, lectures by disciplinary and issue experts, workshops, and readings. Drake Fine Arts and other organizations bring concerts, exhibits and plays to campus, and thus to broaden opportunities to prepare for lifelong learning.

**Core Component 4c:** *Drake University assesses the usefulness of our curricula to students who will live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society.*

Curricular assessment occurs at every level and involves faculty, students, staff, alumni and area professionals. In preparing for reaccreditation Law, Education, Pharmacy, Journalism, Business, Music, Art and Education programs have expanded and improved their assessment procedures. All colleges and schools have articulated student-learning outcomes and plans to assess the achievement of those outcomes. In 2004, Drake extended to the entire University a requirement that every major program undergo external review every seven years. External review of support areas such as the library and instructional technology have resulted in significant change and improvement in teaching and learning programs.

An important measure of Drake University's success in preparing students for professional accomplishments is the success in job placement. The University *Graduate Report* reflects the status of graduates approximately six months after the May graduation date. Other university professional programs report exam and licensing success rates for their graduates.

**Core Component 4d:** *Drake University provides support to ensure that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.*

The Drake University *Statement of Principles* clearly establishes expectations for ethical behavior in all activities related to the University. This is reinforced by many policies and procedures that are available on the Drake Web site. Drake University ensures that faculty, staff and students are provided with policies and guidelines for ethical conduct of research and provides resources for training and oversight of research. In addition to the general University statements on academic integrity, each College and School has an academic integrity policy and procedures for handling allegations of their violation. The Environmental Health and Safety Department provides oversight and technical assistance to University colleges and departments on all environmental and safety issues with the goal of providing and ensuring a safe and healthful environment for faculty, staff, students, and visitors.

#### **Criterion V: Engagement and Service**

**Core Component 5A:** *The organization learns from the constituencies it serves and analyzes its capacity to serve their needs and expectations.*

The Drake University *Mission Explication*, in providing guidance for achieving an *exceptional learning environment*, consistently emphasizes the importance of connecting with the broader community and of developing *citizenship*. Drake's engagement with the community is most clearly evidenced by the individuals, groups and organizations that turn to the University for support. Over the years Drake has learned to assess such requests in terms of fit with its mission, its ability to provide support without negatively affecting achievement of its primary mission, and its actual ability to provide the support requested. Examples of such endeavors are provided throughout Criterion 5.

**Core Component 5B:** *Drake University has the capacity and the commitment to engage with its identified constituencies and communities.*

For 126 years, Drake and the Des Moines community have had a strong partnership, supporting both the vitality and health of the community and the mission of Drake University. In recent years Drake leadership has been very intentional in developing positive working relationships with local and regional businesses as well as City Council, Neighborhood Advisory councils, and city agencies. Drake is keenly aware that it exists as a part of a greater community. It enacts that awareness through recognizing and rewarding community service, promoting community volunteerism and fostering student service organizations.

Drake University and our students, faculty and staff actively participate in the broader Des Moines community, an involvement that supports Drake's core value and mission goals related to *citizenship*. Drake and its constituent units host literally dozens of special service events annually. All residential units have regular community service projects, as do academic programs and various student honoraries. In 1996, Madelyn Levitt, then a member of the University's governing board, established a special award to acknowledge outstanding contributions of Drake faculty and staff to the Drake community. Other awards, including the annual Leaders and Luminaries event, recognize outstanding community service by faculty, staff and students.

**Core Component 5C:** *Drake University demonstrates its responsiveness to those constituencies that depend on it for service.*

Drake University has become a center for many types of activities in Des Moines. Lectures and fine arts events on the campus are open to the public and usually free of charge. Athletics events bring thousands of people to campus each year. Local organizations use the campus facilities for many activities.

Drake's connections with education and legal organizations are symbiotic, enhancing both Drake and the organizations served. The University collaborates with other area higher education institutions and educational organizations. The Drake Alumni Office and other campus offices support alumni interests and involvement. Drake Athletics and Recreational Services offer a range of activities that support health wellness and preparation for lifelong learning, as well as interests and needs of faculty, staff, alumni and community through spectator sports and recreational and wellness activities.

**Core Component 5D:** *Internal and external constituencies value the services Drake University provides.*

Appreciation for the services and support that Drake University provides to the Des Moines community and to its many individual groups is expressed through formal awards and testimony as well as through participation in the *Ray Society* and Drake Athletics activities, campus symposia and fine arts events. The *Friends of Drake Arts* provides clear evidence of the community value the community places on the educational and cultural activities of the University. The *Martin Bucksbaum Distinguished Lecture Series* is another way that Drake gives back to the community in a way that clearly is valued. Since its inauguration in March 1997, the lectureship has brought 23 internationally known speakers to campus. Attendance at the free, public lectures has grown from approximately 500 to over 4000 per lecture.

### **Challenges and Opportunities**

Over the past decade, Drake University has aggressively engaged the challenges confronting us with the attitude that they also represented opportunities. Much has been accomplished and past challenges have been turned into achievements. We do believe Drake has become a high performing organization that is mission-driven as it prepares for the future. We intend to confront the future in the same way; challenges will be turned into opportunities. The Self-Study Report identifies challenges and opportunities connected to each of the Criteria.