THE NATIONAL HISPANIC UNIVERSITY

Capacity and Preparatory Review
Institutional Presentation
For
Re-Affirmation of Accreditation
To
WASC
November 2006
# INDEX

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INTRODUCTION

The National Hispanic University is looking forward to the WASC Capacity and Preparatory Review. The University has to admit that it has not been able to accomplish all that had been planned because it has continued to undergo leadership changes since the passing of the founder Dr. B. Roberto Cruz in September of 2002.

The President, Dr. David Lopez, was appointed in September of 2003 after nearly a year of having an acting president at the helm. The second important leadership role of Provost has also undergone changes. Interim Provosts were named in November 03 and August 05. In July 06, the President, in consultation with the Board of Trustees, appointed the current Acting Provost with the understanding that a national search would be conducted after the university received the WASC Capacity and Preparatory Report. The university leadership determined that an interim provost would be needed at this juncture in order to manage both the academic and student services areas. The former Interim Provost became a Vice Provost and managed two academic departments that needed permanent leadership. One of those departments, “Math, Science and Computer Science”, was successful in appointing a new chair. The second department, Liberal Studies, has not yet appointed a permanent chair. Before proceeding with permanent appointment of a Provost, it was anticipated that the WASC report would serve to guide the direction of a national search.

In addition to these personnel changes, the university has also seen changes in its student demographics. The characteristics of our student population have started to transform since the recruitment efforts moved to attract “traditional” college-age students instead of the adult population that had been the core of NHU’s student body. After an intense recruitment campaign in spring 2005, the university saw its largest freshmen class and cohort (full-time, first-time students) enter in fall 2005. The same recruitment approach was followed for the 2006-2007 academic year and the results are showing in terms of the type of students we are now enrolling. Predominantly Hispanic, recently high school graduates, first-generation college students are now NHU’s students, and that has brought new needs and challenges to both academic and student services areas. This institutional presentation shows the impact this change has had in the way the University works these days.

Finally, there has also been a space change at NHU. In August 2004, the NHU opened its new, state-of-the-art building that holds the Library, computer and science labs, classrooms and administrative offices. This building gave the university community...
not only a new and modern environment but also a place that is attractive and ready to develop and expand NHU’s work and future plans.

**Organization of Institutional Presentation**

The NHU has prepared this presentation to WASC based on the 2002 recommendations because, in fact, they were the four most pressing areas of concern. In addition, the responses were based on the NHU’s Institutional Proposal of 2004.

This institutional presentation is organized into 4 essays: Strategic Planning, Financial Planning, Educational Quality and Student Support Services. The presentation includes the data sets required by WASC, the answer to the WASC 2002 recommendations, several appendices with information referenced by the essays and with handbooks on our processes and procedures, and a table that cross-references the institutional presentation with WASC Standards.

The Strategic Planning essay speaks to the results of the plan that was developed three years ago stemming from one of WASC recommendations. This essay covers the current progress in the implementation of the plan and speaks to the influence it has had on NHU’s work. It ends with an assessment of lessons learned, areas of success, areas that need improvement and expectations for 2008, when this strategic plan ends.

The Financial Planning report provides an overview and background on the status of the NHU’s financial capacity at this time. This essay also explains a budget process that is being planned. And finally, it provides an outline of the financial strategies that the University will follow in order to increase both stability and sustainability.

The Educational Quality essay analyzes what has been done so far in terms of quality assurance and educational effectiveness. In this essay, the NHU acknowledges that it has not developed nor implemented the ideas and plans that NHU’s Institutional Proposal of 2004 had set. However, it shows the steps that the university has been taking to address the different issues related to this area that have arisen and the plans it has in order to accomplish the plans set before.

The Student Support essay provides an overview of student services since the drastic change in the demographics of the student body. It also provides a summary of an evaluation report that was conducted with the cooperation of the student services staff and the status of its implementation to date.

The different appendices and documents included in the institutional presentation support the four essays and show how NHU addresses WASC standards and the core commitment on Institutional Capacity.

The NHU is looking forward to the visit of the external reviewers and is eager to continue learning from this re-affirmation of accreditation process to improve its academic offerings and services to our unique student population.
STRATEGIC PLANNING BACKGROUND

The NHU was granted initial accreditation by WASC in June 2002. In its letter, WASC commended the university for its work, as well as its achievement of goals such as the purchase of the land to construct a new building, its ongoing capital campaign, and academic development.

In this letter, WASC also indicated there were some areas on which the NHU needed to work constantly to address some of the problems that the visiting team encountered. One of those recommendations related to strategic planning. The letter said,

The University has developed a number of institutional planning documents [...] Despite the numerous planning documents, it is in the area of planning or lack of planning that the University is most vulnerable. The team uncovered a significant gap between the University’s expectations for its development and its financial plans.

In September 2002, the founding president of the NHU, Dr. B. Roberto Cruz, passed away. An acting President was named and she, the Provost and the Board of Trustees started working on the recommendations specified by WASC. In December 2002, the Board of Trustees asked the acting President and the Provost to start working on a comprehensive strategic plan and gave three major initiatives that they wanted to see as the basis of such plan: 1) Increase and sustain enrollment; 2) Advance prestige and sharing of best practices; and 3) Integrate inquiry into NHU’s learning communities.

In January 2003, the Provost and the Director of the Office of Institutional Planning and Evaluation (OIPE) began working on the development of the strategic plan. As a first step, a series of meetings with individual academic and administrative departments were scheduled. During these meetings, participants were asked to develop a needs assessment review where they specified their department goals and needs for the next one, three and five years (Appendix 1A). Once the departmental surveys were submitted, divisional meetings for Academic Affairs and Student Affairs were scheduled. Within these two groups, all the university academic and administrative departments met and worked together to develop a vision for the division, and to determine the goals, priorities, and needs to achieve that vision. NHU students were also invited to participate in focus groups. During these focus groups, students were asked to think of NHU’s future and visualize what they would like to see happening at the university in terms of academics and student life.

The information obtained during the division meetings, the student focus groups, and the President’s Cabinet retreat was compiled and presented during a university-
wide planning meeting at the beginning of April 2003. During this session, faculty, student services personnel and administrative staff worked together in groups and provided information on the areas on which they could work together, and on how addressing the major key themes they could achieve their goals and make the university strategic initiatives happen. Once all the information was compiled, it was organized to address the three strategic initiatives. A draft of the strategic plan was distributed among the University community, and once feedback was received, a final version was developed. The final version of the Strategic Plan was submitted to the university community and then to the Board of Trustees to receive their approval. In June 2003, the Board of Trustees approved the Strategic Plan (Appendix 1B) and it was officially adopted.

When the Strategic Plan was developed, all WASC recommendations were taken into consideration. The recommendations showed NHU the areas on which it needed to work the most and where efforts needed to be centered. The NHU recognized also that work on those recommendations was not a one-time task, but an ongoing responsibility. Thus, all the recommendations are addressed in the strategic plan across the board and in specific areas.

**Approach to the Strategic Plan Implementation**

The implementation of the Strategic Plan was initially approached in a very structured manner, relying on three major components: 1) Departmental action plans and quarterly reports; 2) Quarterly reviews by the President’s Cabinet and; 3) A comprehensive assurance system to conduct inquiry, assessment, feedback and improvement. Academic, student services, the library and administrative departments were asked to prepare an action plan to work on the strategic initiatives within their areas and report to the OIPE their progress, comments and resource needs. OIPE would then present a summary of these reports to the President’s cabinet for their evaluation and to take action on those areas in which it was necessary. The departments received templates to develop their action plans (Appendix 1C), as well as templates to report their progress quarterly (Appendix 1D). A template to present the quarterly summary (Appendix 1E) was also developed.

**Changes in Leadership and Their Effect on the Strategic Plan Implementation**

In 2003, the NHU saw changes in its leadership positions. In September, after a nationwide search, Dr. David P. Lopez was appointed President of the NHU. At the end of that same year, an interim Provost was hired. The change in leadership did have some effects on the implementation of the Strategic Plan. Both the new President and interim Provost familiarized themselves with the strategic plan and started to focus on areas they considered were critical at that moment.

In September 2004, the office of the President organized a retreat to revisit the strategic plan and select the initiatives that were going to contribute to the three major areas the President and the Board of Trustees had selected as essential to NHU’s development—recruitment, retention and revenue. Key staff, representing academic departments, student services, and administrative areas, was invited to the retreat. With the help of a facilitator, the group went through the strategic plan document and from each of the major initiatives, participants selected those that they considered would contribute to the key areas and would reflect the progress that the university had been trying to achieve.
The original strategic plan had three major initiatives and 22 sub-initiatives. From those, the people in the retreat decided to keep the three initiatives as stated and selected 14 sub-initiatives. Table SP1 (Appendix 1F) shows the results from this retreat. In general, the group selected the initiatives they considered were key to NHU’s development, that would address WASC recommendations and that would ultimately contribute to the three R’s—recruitment, retention and revenue—that the President had presented to the group as the new directives for the university.

After the retreat and after receiving the information collected by the facilitator, the director of OIPE prepared a new format (Appendix 1G) to report the progress in the strategic plan implementation. Additionally, a new committee—the Strategic Plan Committee—was formed. The purpose of this committee was to monitor the implementation of the strategic plan and to address the needs, problems, and concerns of the departments in charge of working on the initiatives. The committee was formed by the President, the Provost, the Vice-President of Finance and Administration, the director of Student Services, the chair of the Faculty Senate, and the director of OIPE. Since these participants represented the major academic, student and administrative departments, it was considered they could address problems or concerns in the implementation of the strategic initiatives. The committee tried to convene every three months to monitor the progress of the departments. After the meetings, the implementation report was updated (Appendix 1H) and made available to the strategic committee members for further distribution.

**Current Progress in the Strategic Plan Implementation**

In August 2005, a new Interim Provost was hired and she monitored the strategic plan implementation and organized the strategic committee meetings for the 2005-2006 academic year. The following account shows the strategic plan implementation status as of June 2006.

**A. Increase and Sustain Enrollment**

The goals selected under this strategic initiative aimed at helping increase enrollment through an aggressive recruitment campaign, by maintaining a high retention rate, enrolling transfer students by having strong relationships with SJ SU and local community colleges, and as a result, by building financial and academic capacity to retain and graduate the enrolled students.

1. **Expand partnerships and articulation agreements**

The NHU wants to have stronger partnerships and articulation agreements with SJ SU and with local community colleges in order to help increase transfer student enrollment and work on common projects. When WASC visited the NHU in 2002, the university had a very close relationship with SJ SU. Both President Caret and the late President Cruz had an excellent working partnership that extended to all areas in both universities. With changes happening not only in the President positions in both universities, but also in other leadership posts—Provosts, Vice-Presidents, and directors, the working relationship changed. Some meetings have recently taken place between SJ SU’s President and NHU’s President, and different topics for future collaboration have been discussed. The NHU expects to develop a more active collaboration with SJ SU within the current academic year. (Appendix 1I)

As a first step to restart and expand articulation agreements, the NHU appointed one of its faculty members as Articulation Officer in fall 2005. His main purpose was to
renew the articulation agreement with SJ SU and submit new courses for consideration. A total of 41 courses were submitted in November 2005 for articulation and in spring 2006, the NHU was informed by SJ SU’s articulation office that 34 of those courses had been approved (Appendix 1J). In addition to working on the articulation agreement with SJ SU, the articulation officer also finalized course-to-course articulations with De Anza Community College, Foothill Community College, Evergreen Valley Community College and San Jose City College (Appendix 1J) that will make transferring between NHU and those institutions more seamless.

Another venue of collaboration with SJ SU is the “3+2 Engineering Program” that both universities want to establish. The NHU has now two new Associate of Science degrees that focus on Math and Science (see NHU General Catalog) and one of them has an emphasis on engineering. Most of the courses in math and science have been already articulated, and the new chair for the Math and Science programs that was named in September 2006 will start working with the engineering programs at SJ SU to determine the next steps to develop this program (Appendix 1K).

2. Recruitment and Outreach Campaign

Enrollment at the NHU during the 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 academic years was modestly steady, and it did not grow at the pace that the university needed in order to increase the enrollment at the levels that the Board of Trustees and the strategic plan had established, that is, 1,000 students by 2008. Thus, in spring 2004, a new recruitment coordinator was hired and an aggressive campaign started taking place in the fall 2004 (Appendix 1L). Under President Lopez’s direct supervision and active participation, the recruitment office made visits to and presentations at high schools, made ads on radio, television and newspapers, and developed news stories, brochures and printed information.

This recruitment campaign had good results for the enrollment of Fall 2005 and for the whole academic year. The NHU received 161 new undergraduate students and enrolled its largest cohort (first-time, full-time freshmen) ever — 109 students. For the 2005-2006 academic year, the university had a total enrollment of 773 students (including the post-baccalaureate and certificate programs), and out of those, 249 were new undergraduate students and a total of 346 new students arrived to NHU. For the Fall 2006, the same strategy was followed in order to achieve a goal of 325 students for the new academic year. Preliminary enrollment numbers look similar to last year’s and the recruitment office is expecting to reach that goal. The recruitment office is currently working on a plan in order to achieve the goal of 1000 students for the Fall 2008 (Appendix 1M).

3. Maintain a high retention rate

Three key areas were associated to this goal: 1) identify students who need financial and academic help to ensure their continuous enrollment; 2) develop new academic programs and extracurricular activities that would make NHU more attractive; and 3) institutionalize a student support structure through the Student Academic Assistance Center (SAAC).

As a first step to help students with academic needs, remedial courses in English and Math, and low level courses also in English and Math require students to spend a certain number of hours at the SAAC with tutors in order to ensure they receive all the help they might need in these academic areas. In addition, the SAAC director designed a referral form (Appendix 1N) to have faculty members identify students who required
additional help to be sent to the SAAC. Unfortunately, this initiative has not been widely used. Steps to find the reasons behind this are being taken this fall semester.

In spring 2006, the undergraduate academic departments developed the Midterm Intervention program for students receiving a C- or below. Through this plan, faculty members identify and meet with students who need help with their coursework. A detailed description of this program and its results for spring 2006 can be read in the MIP report (Appendix 1O).

In 2005, the NHU received a grant for a Student Success Program. Through this program, students are identified and helped throughout their academic studies (Appendix 1P).

In addition to all these efforts, the office of the Provost is working on the development of the First Year Experience program to give students a common experience in their curriculum and campus life and help support the retention efforts for new students and first-time freshmen (Appendix 1Q).

On the financial aid front, the Financial Aid and the Grants and Contracts offices have been working on both helping students obtain state and federal aid and on obtaining money from donations and grants to provide students with scholarships and help them stay in college. The financial aid report for the academic year 2005-2006 shows the results of these efforts for last year (Appendix 1R).

As an effort to increase enrollment and help maintain a high retention rate, the NHU decided to embark on the development of new academic degrees. In 2004, the Single Subject Credential was added to the Teacher Education offerings (see NHU General Catalog). In fall 2005, new Associate of Science Degrees in Mathematics and Science started, as well as an Associate of Science Degree in Computer Networking. In spring 2006, the new Associate of Arts degree in Early Childhood Education also started. In the Teacher Education department, a new credential in Special Education was approved by CCTC in September 2006, and the department is planning on enrolling students as early as October 2006 (see NHU General Catalog). All these programs will be recruiting students and the university expects to start seeing significant results by fall 2007.

4. Build capacity

In order to build capacity, the NHU recognized that a combination of high enrollment and retention rates and financial stability are needed. As described above, there is a university-wide effort to recruit and retain students. These efforts also aim at obtaining steady tuition revenue that will contribute to the university’s financial planning. As part of this initiative, other goals included are growth of NHU’s endowment, increase in corporate, business and individual donations, establishment of a new capital campaign, and growth of the scholarship fund. The Financial Planning Essay describes in detail the work and plans that the Finance Office, the Grants and Contracts office and other areas have to build a stable financial capacity.

B. Advance Prestige through Sharing of Best Practices

This strategic initiative aimed at showing the university community—internal and external—the teaching, learning and assessment practices that work with NHU’s student population. The original goals from the strategic plan focused on a research-based approach. In 2004, the initiatives were updated during the retreat and the practices that the university wanted to share were related to faculty committee work, community service, and work in local and state commissions. Additionally, it was decided to focus
on applied research, having recognized academic programs, and developing an institutional portfolio to showcase NHU’s work.

The NHU, unfortunately, has to report that not much work has been done in this area since the strategic initiatives were redefined. Faculty members have been focusing on the teaching and advising aspect of their work and activities such as community service, committee service and participation in local, state or national commissions have not been included in their job expectations. Additionally, no venues have been provided to work on applied research that could document and showcase the work that is done at the university in diverse areas.

In terms of having recognized academic programs, the NHU has not focused on marketing a specific program. In general, the university has been recruiting students for all the academic programs it offers. However, none of the academic programs could be considered as recognized for its uniqueness. New programs granting associate degrees, single subject and special education teaching credential programs are now available at the university. However, the NHU recognizes that special efforts have to be done in order to get to the point of having a niche for successful programs targeting Hispanics and other minorities.

The NHU institutional portfolio is being developed to show the work done for the WASC re-affirmation of accreditation visits. Originally, the portfolio was conceived as the repository to showcase the work done at NHU. Some of the information that it should have contained was instead shared in different ways throughout the university. For example, the fact book, semester fact pages, and reports on retention, accreditation, and the strategic plan implementation were disseminated through our internal computer network using shared drives. The Director of Institutional Research is now working on the implementation of the portfolio and expects to have a structure that can be used beyond the accreditation visits to share and report work that is done in the academic, support and administrative areas at the NHU.

C. Integrate Inquiry into NHU’s Learning Communities

This strategic initiative aims at addressing issues on educational effectiveness through program quality, new academic initiatives, a student learning results system, faculty and staff development, and the strengthening of the university’s library. It is important to mention that in some areas there has been good progress and that in others, more work needs to be done.

1. Advance Program quality and recognition

One of the goals of the academic departments is to have programs that have quality and up-to-date curriculum. The curriculum committee, formed by NHU faculty, works on the revision and approval of new courses, updates to already existing courses and approval of new academic programs. During the past four years, the curriculum committee has been really active working with the different academic areas and the faculty senate in the development and revision of the curriculum. A summary of their work can be found in the Curriculum Committee Report (Appendix 1S).

In spring 2005, the chairs of the academic departments and the director of the Office of Institutional Planning and Evaluation (OIPE) developed the Program Review Guidelines (Appendix 1T). Guidelines for program reviews from other universities were reviewed and after analyzing them, a philosophy and questions addressing NHU’s needs were developed. The guidelines provide the roadmap to develop the self-study for the program where several areas are addressed, and then give a guide to the role of
external reviewers. After the guidelines were finished, they were revised by the Interim Provost and then they were presented to the faculty senate that approved them and adopted them. The guidelines included a calendar for the program reviews, too. The calendar was not followed due to changes in personnel and the need to address some other areas such as the high enrollment of freshmen received in the fall 2005 semester, and the first four program reviews have been delayed for a semester or more. In spring 2006, the Liberal Studies program had its program review (Appendix 1U). During the summer 2006, the Teacher Education and the Business Administration programs prepared their self-studies (Appendix 1V-1W). The current Interim Provost is reviewing them and once they gain her approval, they will schedule the visits for the fall 2006 semester.

In terms of student assessment, the academic programs have different ways to assess course-by-course progress: tests, research papers, group projects, presentations and the like. The bachelor degree programs have capstone courses where students prepare special projects and self-evaluations. The Teacher Education program has specific rubrics that need to be followed in order to fulfill the requirements of the credentialing agency. However, as of summer 2006, the academic programs have not developed the student assessment plans that aimed at analyzing the progress students do throughout their programs and that would also evaluate the fulfillment of the program objectives and goals.

Another area in which the NHU is far behind is in the integration of technology in the teaching and learning practices. In 2003, the university purchased a site license of WebCT and provided training to both adjunct and full-time faculty. Unfortunately, only a handful of faculty members used the software for a couple of semesters and then desisted from continuing using it. A survey was conducted by the OIPE among the faculty and asked them their opinion about the program. Those who answered the survey said the program was not user-friendly and that it was time-consuming to learn to use. Additionally, the university did not have a technology specialist who could help and guide the faculty in the use of the program, leaving them alone in their intentions to use it for their courses. In 2005, the Academic Council decided to stop paying for the license and as of summer 2006, there were no plans to find a replacement for that software. Isolated efforts have been done in courses for Teacher Education, but in general, the use of technology is not widespread.

Finally, another initiative that aimed at promoting the quality and program recognition was the development of feasibility studies to offer advanced degrees—especially master degrees—in some academic areas. This initiative has not been addressed at all. Instead, the undergraduate academic departments focused on opening Associate degrees in areas such as Mathematics and Science and in Early Childhood Education. The Teacher Education department, on the other hand, just developed a new teaching credential on Special Education and received approval from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC) in September 2006.

2. Promote faculty and staff development

NHU has been giving internal training and professional development to its faculty during the past 3 years. In 2002, the post of Academic Operations Officer was created with the intent to have a direct contact with faculty and attend to their needs. Workshops on assessment, grading, writing across the curriculum and other topics have been addressed during these years (Appendix 1X). The attendance to the workshop varies, but in general it can be said that it has not been as successful as one could expect. Most of NHU’s faculty is under an adjunct contract—in the last 3 years, an
average 71% of NHU’s faculty has been adjunct. Most of the times, because of schedule conflicts, they have not been able to attend the workshops loosing a good opportunity to learn about NHU’s practices in some of the areas mentioned above. Professional development, however, has been scarce. Outside trainers have not been brought and faculty members are rarely sent to conferences or outside workshops that would enhance their knowledge in their disciplines or in teaching/learning practices.

In terms of staff development, there have also been very few opportunities. The Human Resources Office does not organize campus wide training. Some personnel attend yearly conferences or workshops that pertain to their work disciplines. However, these individual efforts do not follow a staff development plan. The university is aware of this and will start looking into it.

3. Establish a student learning results system

As mentioned in a section above, the academic departments have not developed their student assessment plans as of summer 2006. Faculty members use different types of approaches to assess students such as tests, projects, presentations, group work and the like. However, the university does not have a system to assess students throughout their studies and address needs as they progress in their programs. Additionally, this initiative had as a goal the dissemination and use of new and up-to-date assessment practices. This has not been accomplished either. There has only been one workshop on assessment for faculty and that was done internally. The office of the Provost is aware of this problem and will start looking into it.

4. Advance academic initiatives

The office of the Provost and the academic departments have been mostly successful at addressing this strategic initiative. Almost all the goals in this area have been achieved and the programs that were proposed are in place.

The Teacher Credentialing program had its Single Subject Credential approved in 2004 and now offers seven single subject options. In addition to this program, the department had a Special Education Credential approved by CCTC in September 2006 and they expect to start enrolling students as early as October 2006 (see NHU General Catalog).

Another goal that has been fulfilled is that of becoming a CISCO certification site. A report on this program can be read in the CISCO Certification Program update (Appendix 1Y).

The other goal that was achieved was the completion of the changes to the Liberal Studies program to have it aligned with CCTC requirements. The changes were submitted in 2003 and approved in 2004, and consisted of aligning the program to the new requirements derived from new state legislation (SB2042).

Another successful goal was the program reviews. As explained in a section above, in 2005, the Faculty Senate approved the new program review guidelines (Appendix 1T). One program had its program review in Spring 2006 (Appendix 1U) and two more programs are working on having theirs done this fall 2006. Due to personnel changes in the program coordinating positions, some of the program reviews have been delayed. However, the office of the Provost expects to have all the program reviews done by the time the university needs to prepare its educational effectiveness presentation to WASC.
The last initiative, which is the establishment of the “3+2” Engineering program with San José State University (SJSU), has not been completely met. However, the NHU is still working on that and as it is explained in a section above (Appendix 1K), progress is being made.

5. Strengthen the role of the library

One of the recommendations that WASC gave to NHU in 2002 made reference to the fact that our library did not have quality resources or services available for students, and that the university needed to set a budget for library acquisitions beyond Title V monies. The library has grown and it has now good access to online databases. As the library report (Appendix 1Z) explains, it is still not at the level that it should be and more work needs to be done. Budgetary constraints are the main reason for the slow growth of the library collection and a stronger commitment from the university needs to be made in order to continue enhancing the library services. The library, however, has made some progress in some other areas—as the report describes—like having a technology specialist, more personnel and an active participation in the first year experience with an introductory course on information literacy. With a better budgetary commitment from the university, the library should be able to thrive in its new facilities.

6. Partner with the Latino College Preparatory Academy

Finally, the NHU considered it essential to work with the Charter High School (LCPA) it has in its facilities in order to develop a pipeline and enroll the high school graduates into the university’s academic offerings. In 2005, the first class from the LCPA graduated and 30 students enrolled as freshmen at the university. In 2006, 20 students have enrolled so far. The partnership, however, is not limited to enrolling students. Most teachers from the LCPA obtained or are obtaining their teaching credential at the NHU, high school seniors have enrolled in university level courses in computer science, English, and introduction to the university, and the NHU Library Director recently obtained a grant to purchase books for the high school and will set a special section for these students. Both the LCPA and the NHU will keep finding ways to work together and make the transition from high school to the university more seamless.

Influence of Strategic Planning in NHU's Work

The strategic plan has had some influence in the way the university has worked in the past 3 years since the plan was approved although not at the level one could expect. As noted in the previous report on the implementation status, some initiatives were left aside in order to work towards the more pressing areas of recruitment, retention and revenue, and those other initiatives that would support the achievement of these three goals. The changes in leadership at different levels have also had an impact in the way the strategic plan has influenced NHU’s work since the new appointees had to understand what needed to be done in order to accomplish the strategic initiatives and this process usually took time.

In terms of financial planning, the strategic plan has had little impact. It was not until the last year that the finance department started to re-take the idea of using the strategic plan as the guide for financial planning and to determine financial needs and goals in terms of revenue, expenses and needs. The financial planning essay expands more on this topic.

In terms of educational quality, results are mixed. There are initiatives that been addressed and completed while there are others that have been left aside. Areas such
as professional development for faculty, the development of an overall educational quality model and system, and an assessment system for students are some of the goals that have had little progress and that need more attention and planning. The constant changes in the Provost position have had a great impact on this area and on the continuity of strategic initiatives. During the next year more work needs to be done in terms of fulfilling both the recommendations WASC made in 2002 about educational quality and effectiveness and in the accomplishment of the strategic initiatives related to this area.

LESSONS LEARNED

During these three years since the strategic plan was approved, there are lessons that the NHU has learned. One of the most important realizations is that the administrative and academic areas need to buy-in to the strategic plan process and implementation, and really adopt the plan as the guide for actions and work. Without a true commitment to the implementation of the plan, initiatives might not be easy or feasible to achieve. In addition, the university also realized that leadership at administrative and academic key positions needs to follow the commitment to have a clear path to achieve the goals set by the plan.

Another important lesson is that implementation requires constant monitoring and discussion that will allow key personnel to realize what resources are needed to achieve the goals set, what areas are successful, and what initiatives are falling behind in the implementation schedule. Furthermore, the strategic plan needs to be revisited every year by the university community for communication and revision purposes. In this way, everyone will know the status of the implementation, and important decisions on possible changes can be taken in consensus.

A year and a half after the strategic plan was approved, the university realized that the plan was very ambitious and that it needed to be re-focused. As a university, we underestimated the number of initiatives that the plan covered and the infrastructure—personnel, leadership, financial capacity, and time commitment—that was needed to sustain the type of work needed to accomplish all the strategic initiatives. In particular, financial capacity turned out to be the most important area that affected several of the initiatives and required immediate attention. The university realized that before other goals could be addressed, financial stability needed to be built.

Thus, after three years in the implementation of the strategic plan, the university continues learning from this strategic process and making changes as needed in order to achieve the goals set.

AREAS OF SUCCESS

The NHU has been partially successful in the implementation of its strategic plan. The changes in leadership at several administrative levels affected the initial implementation and course of action. Once the new administration selected the initiatives that it wanted to pursue, resources and personnel were selected to address these initiatives. As of summer 2006, the initiative on recruitment can be considered the most successful one, since there has been a clear increase in new students at the undergraduate, freshman level. The work in the areas of retention is starting to take shape and the constant work to obtain money for scholarships has given results in the last two years.
In the same way, some initiatives related to academic areas and educational effectiveness have been partially addressed and efforts are being focused on student assessment plans, new academic initiatives, retention efforts through various venues, and constant curriculum reviews.

The university so far has been successful at remembering that it has a strategic plan that aims at shaping its future actions, and at using several of its initiatives as the guide for its current work. Even when there have been many obstacles to achieve all the goals such as constant changes in personnel, lack of monetary resources and delays in the implementation of certain initiatives, the NHU is still trying to catch up and continue working under the strategic plan it developed almost four years ago.

**Areas that Need Improvement**

The NHU recognizes that there is room for improvement in several areas. The initiatives for building financial capacity and stability have been addressed but the results so far have fallen short of the goals. The university is well aware this requires more attention than any other initiatives since work in the administrative and academic areas—such as professional development, enhancement of the Library, research, recruitment and retention—require financial support to take place.

There has been no progress in the conceptualization and development of the quality assurance system and that has influenced also the development of student assessment plans and work on the educational quality recommendation made by WASC.

In terms of faculty, they have focused mainly on teaching and advising, and the university has not developed clear directives for them to do applied research, community service or other scholarly activities. Faculty also does not have professional development plans that could guide the training they receive or need throughout the year.

Another area that we have noticed needs improvement is the use of data for decision-making, which again is related to the lack of an established quality assurance system. Currently the university collects and summarizes a good amount of data (Fact Book), but little actions are taken based on that. Data is available through different venues; however, the university as a whole has not developed a data-based, decision-making mentality.

Technology is one more area in which the university is behind. The strategic plan did not have a specific initiative on technology, but implied that all the processes and initiatives would make use of technology in one form or another. So far, little has been accomplished in this area. Our technological infrastructure is not up-to-date and there has been little training in the use of new technological advances both in the academic and administrative areas. As of summer 2006, the university does not have a technology plan that would outline the goals in this area.

Finally, we have found through this self-study process that we need to have better communication among and between academic and administrative areas. Communication is not a strategic initiative; however, the lack of it has actually hindered the implementation of the strategic plan. The NHU, as an organization, needs to develop better communication channels to ease the implementation of initiatives and collaborative work.
STRATEGIC PLANNING EXPECTATIONS FOR 2008

NHU’s strategic plan was set for five years and it will end by 2008. In the two and a half years that are left, there are several areas that the NHU wants to address and goals that need to be achieved.

First of all, the university will continue working on those areas in which it is having success such as recruitment and enrollment. It will continue working on its retention efforts and finding new financial aid venues for students that do not qualify for state or federal aid. It will also continue working on academic initiatives and strengthening its existing programs to increase enrollment and graduation rates.

Financial capacity will continue being a priority beyond 2008. After experiencing the importance of having a solid and effective financial capacity during the past three years, and noticing the key role that it plays in the implementation of other initiatives and plans, the NHU will keep working on developing a more sustainable financial system. As presented in the financial planning essay, the university has developed a plan to obtain revenue and financial resources through a capital campaign, corporate donations, and contracts and grants. The NHU expects to obtain good results from these efforts and keep working on building financial capacity.

The development of a quality assurance system is a priority for next year. This initiative has not been addressed so far and the university has also noticed that the lack of such a system has affected educational quality areas such as student assessment plans, program reviews, faculty scholarly activities, evaluation, and the establishment of recognized academic programs. The development of a quality system will allow the NHU become a data-driven, decision-making organization that will take advantage of the information and resources it has available.

The enhancement of the library services will continue being a priority. So far, the development of the library collection has been hindered by the lack of financial resources. The university expects that through its financial plan, it will obtain more resources that can be used to develop this key area which in turn, will also strengthen our academic offerings. The library director will continue working on obtaining additional financial and information resources and on establishing solid communication with academic programs to ensure that students’ information needs are covered in order to succeed in their studies.

Finally, the NHU will address areas such as personnel professional development, the upgrading of its technological infrastructure, and the integration of technology into its teaching and learning activities. All these areas are important to continue the improvement of the university’s academic and support services. The university acknowledges that these areas have been left aside due to financial constraints, but wants to start addressing them and fulfill the goals established for these areas in the strategic plan.
OVERVIEW

Three main sources fund The National Hispanic University’s general fund operations: tuition, grants and contracts, and donations. Our goal is to increase student tuition revenue, increase grant & contract revenue, and begin a process to lower the percentage that donations represent of NHU’s unrestricted operating funds.

The activities depict an operations-based plan of action. Success in meeting these goals will fully fund anticipated operating costs for the next three years and fund activities (academic and student support) necessary to create a competitive, local education solution.

BACKGROUND

After WASC’ visit in 2000 NHU recognized the need to better connect the budget process to institutional planning so that the process was less driven by bottom line considerations.

In June 2001 Dr. Cruz initiated a Budget Oversight Committee with the responsibility of “facilitating good communications and effective coordination of planning and monitoring efforts of the Finance office”. The President, Vice President of Administration, Provost and Chief Financial Officer were responsible for developing and acting upon agreed recommendations. One of the recommendations of the Budget Oversight Committee was that the Provost and CFO visit other universities of comparable size and complexity and learn from their counterparts about their budget processes.

During the summer and fall of 2001, the Provost and CFO visited a number of institutions including Holy Names, Mount St. Mary’s (Los Angeles) and SJSU. In spring 2002 the Provost and CFO indicated that they were developing a procedure, focusing on academic departments, to decentralize the budget process. The initial, “pilot”, year was AY 2002-2003. Starting in April of 2002 departments began a budgeting process that briefly addressed revenues and detailed line item expenses. Their projections and rationale were forwarded to the Provost whose recommendations were then passed on to the President’s Cabinet. This process culminated in a Board adopted budget in time for the new AY beginning July 1, 2003.

Concurrently, the campus was preparing to break ground on a new, 65,000SF educational facility on almost 11 acres of land fully paid for. Construction financing was being finalized and various administrative and academic units were focused on...
construction related activities. Fundraising and grant activity declined, and a new President was in the process of being selected. Consequences related to the campus' transformation and the magnitude of associated costs were only beginning to be raised.

Forward planning related to recruitment, for example, resulted in only nominally improved numbers for the 2002-2004 period. The enrollment numbers did not meet projections. The resulting revenue shortfall from recruitment efforts contributed, along with the momentum loss in donation and grant activity, to operating deficits. Recognition of these deficits was not part of the implementation of the university's budget process that started around April of 2003 for the next AY (2003 - 2004). This process largely mirrored the prior year. This academic year was notable for completion of the new campus building. The University was fundamentally different. This was a time of profound change.

**Transition**

Financially the university was facing new challenges. Not realizing the capital campaign's $25M goal resulted in the University entering into a 7 year, interest only, $9.6 million mortgage for the balance of building project. This raised operating costs by approximately $550,000 each year. Operating the new building also raised other costs like utilities and maintenance. Personnel costs associated with student instruction and support also increased in anticipation of higher enrollment. Coupling increased operating costs with reduced revenues from tuition and grants/contracts resulted in operating deficits that we are working our way out of.

It is important to digress a bit in order to understand why the university went down the path described above. Successful completion of the campaign, as originally planned, would have resulted in a debt free campus and approximately $3M in seed capital for an endowment. This multimillion-dollar infusion into the endowment would have served as a launching point for future fundraising activities. Dr. Cruz' passing, unfortunately impacted the campaign’s success.

In spring 2004 the budget process started as before with new personnel. The finance department had additional construction related responsibilities related to the project such as punch list items, final project accounting, releases, and obtaining a permanent loan and no attendant increase in personnel. This impacted the finance department's capacity to provide meaningful information to the budget process.

In fall 2004 a new VP of Finance and Administration was brought in to address the financial issues raised by the changes. One challenge was to better align the budget process with institutional planning and inform stakeholders of the financial challenges and opportunities.

Based on a review of WASC recommendations and internal personnel dynamics (July 2002 wherein it was stated “The University must make certain that its priorities are in alignment with its financial capacity by developing and implementing strategic planning” budgets were re-centralized and an ad-hoc group was formed from the existing Faculty senate budget subcommittee to more strategically examine the university’s finances. Several staff members met a number of times to discuss the university’s financial status, future funding priorities and evaluation metrics. This group included the Provost, VP of Finance and Administration as well as senior staff from the faculty, finance and student services. This core group reviewed current financial information, discussed priorities within the strategic plan framework.
Our findings were shared at NHU’s Board retreat in spring 2006 focusing on strategic issues. These included funding strategic priorities, the Board’s role and governance. From this retreat we gained direction on specific items that staff needed to address.

As a group, we were asked to identify and quantify a list of priorities needing funding within a three (3) year time frame. The President and Board of Trustees would then review and, assuming agreement; pursue an appropriate fundraising effort (Appendix 2A). This is a step forward in our development of a strategic financial planning framework, the budget process being a central element.

The budget process needs to continually improve in the areas of institutional alignment and transparency. By this we mean equating financial capacity to priority, and creating broad awareness of near and long term institutional goals. NHU adopted, for the 2006-2007 academic year a revised budget process that provides for broader representation at decision-making levels (Appendix 2B). The budget process will bring together a representative group focused on building a sustainable university strategic plan. This process provides macro level guidance to the organization while allowing for flexibility at the department level and incorporating more accountability into the budget equation.

**INTERIM**

The fall 2004 staff retreat focused attention on three critical areas; recruitment, retention and revenues. These would have the most impact on our long-term sustainability as substantive cost cutting was seen as endangering our core mission. Consensus was built around building enrollment, improving retention strategies and re-building grant activity to prior year levels.

An ambitious recruitment goal of 250 new students was set and a plan led by the President’s office was initiated. This plan focused attention on surrounding feeder high schools and included a substantial amount of radio, TV and newspaper coverage. This coordinated effort resulted in the largest ever freshmen cohort and the largest influx of new students to NHU and in a year-to-year tuition revenue increase of 9%.

New retention strategies were employed for the first time that focused on better preparing incoming students for the rigors of college and providing improved student activities and technology (Appendix 2C). Lessons learned during this period were incorporated into subsequent enrollment periods. Most important was the recognition that an effective summer bridge program would tangibly and positively impact student success.

Revenue enhancement activities initially focused on developing improved coordination between faculty and the grant office. Coordination between the two offices would result in grants that would complement existing programs, build capacity and improve student support. There was also a move to incorporate more elements of the university’s resources (library, research etc.) into the grant submission process. Donation activity remained relatively high due in large part to supportive Board members and community supporters.

All of these endeavors helped concentrate staff attention on the core challenges facing the university. Improving understanding, coordination and leveraging of these actions would be the next challenge in building a sustainable university.
**Sustainability**

As a post-secondary institution with a short history NHU must primarily rely on its operating sources of revenue. This spotlights the need for its programs to be competitive and relevant. Students' educational opportunities are greater and NHU needed to build competitive and relevant programs for its prospective customers. Staff discussions held in advance of the 2006 Board retreat reinforced the need to invest substantial sums toward the building of competitive programs. This led to Board initiated discussions on fundraising that would guide NHU’s efforts to realize the goals outlined in the strategic plan. Specifically, NHU would address the capacity issues thru a fundraising campaign to improve academic offerings that would in turn provide rationale for increased tuition rates. Increased per student revenue should then allow for a decrease, over time, of the need to generate grant and other revenue. The ultimate goal over the next several years is to have net tuition revenue represent the greatest percentage of university revenues.

**A. Donations**

As described earlier, NHU is embarking on a $12 million dollar, 3-year fundraising initiative (averaging $4 million per year). For planning purposes we forecast initial year success at 60% of the annual amount, consistent with the capital campaign’s achievement. Borrowing from that campaign’s organizational framework and operational plan (Appendix 2D), we are closely integrating our Board of Trustees’ social network to help realize our goals. Second and third year success rates are expected to increase as we gain experience and confidence. With our history of success (Appendix 2A-Donors) and remarkable Board of Trustees we have reason to realistically look forward to success.

Our case statement builds on a 25-year history of meeting the educational needs of a non-traditional student population. With our faculty and community partners NHU is now able to deliver on an 8-year educational pipeline, from high school to a baccalaureate. This is a first for our traditional population; first generation, first in family, Hispanic and low income. Our challenge is to demonstrate the value proposition that is NHU and how supporting it can energize other communities to employ proven strategies for meeting a vexing educational issue.

**B. Tuition**

WASC has commented on NHU’s past dependence on donations and Dr. Cruz’s role therein. Some of these comments were telling. It’s a measure of the organization’s maturity that 4 years have passed and we’re still feeling the impact. It’s equally important to note that 4 years have successfully passed. Many accomplishments have taken place, most notably the largest freshmen cohort in university history in AY 2005 – 2006.

NHU must continue to build our tuition revenue to a level complementing other revenue sources. Driving net tuition revenue are the depth and breadth of our course offerings coupled with an appropriate enrollment management strategy. Also significant will be our ability to recruit (Appendix 1L & 1M) and retain students (Appendix 2E) on a full time basis. While NHU built an attractive campus infrastructure the process of building academically attractive programs sufficient to have students pay competitive tuition rates is ongoing.
Tuition rates for this (2006 – 07) and the next two years were set by the Board of Trustees in 2003 when they established a five-year tuition plan (Appendix 2F). We have considered the competitive landscape (namely San Jose State University and Evergreen Community College) to determine whether our rates are appropriate given our limited academic offerings. At this point, no changes are recommended.

This is why NHU began a 3 year, $12M fundraising initiative. The focus is to improve academic programs, expand library offerings, enhance student life and further develop industry opportunities for graduates.

Students today have a range of available educational options and NHU must be relevant in order to be competitive. Academic offerings must provide meaningful skills, in professional areas of need, with local employers attractive enough for students to invest their time and resources. This is our challenge, financially and academically.

For the next three years we anticipate tuition revenues will be at or below both donation and grant/contract revenue. As we move towards AY 2008 – 2009 tuition revenues should increase relative to grants and contracts reflecting increasing enrollment.

C. **Grants and Contracts**

Projected revenues from grants and contracts declined as personnel dedicated to those functions changed roles in the 2004–2006 period. Ongoing management of these activities was not impaired, only development of future opportunities consistent with our strategic plan. This reduced volume is seen in the total grant revenues in place for AY 2006 – 2007 as of academic year-end 2005-2006.

Complementing tuition revenue, on an operating basis, will be our grants and contracts activity (Appendix 2G). This area has historically concentrated on federal grants as a means to build capacity and fund scholarships. While there are continuing opportunities, we are cautioned to not engage in activities academically inconsistent or requiring institutionalization of non-mission centered activities.

Over the past 18 months staff has developed a number of draft processes related to grants and contracts (Appendix 2H). Some relate to the administration of existing grants/contracts. Others center on the pre-application timeframe wherein discussions relate to academic appropriateness, management, and institutional value. Through these and other efforts, we believe that NHU will reach and exceed past levels of grant activity.

As for contracts, NHU is now in a position to serve as a vendor to state, federal and other public agencies. We’ve successfully contracted local city agencies to provide training (<18 months duration) in one of our certificate programs. These same agencies are looking at NHU to expand other services we’ve provided in the past, GED, ECE and ESL to name a couple. Overall, grants and contracts will likely represent 40-50% of NHU’s overall revenue over the next three years.

**CONCLUSION**

NHU is now better aligned to address issues in a manner that strengthens existing programs and ensures successful implementation of our core mission.

In a fall 2004 staff retreat the President identified Recruitment, Retention and Revenues (3R’s) as being the focus of our collective efforts. Understanding the dynamics of these areas and their interdependencies has been an ongoing process. One result is
the broad based budget processes that will better inform stakeholders leading to better decision-making. Another is the development by staff of fundraising objectives that became the basis for the President’s 3-year fundraising initiative. The first year program is another example of university communities working together to create a program designed to meet the unique challenges of a first generation, first in family college population.

These activities, among others, have worked to build a broader understanding of our challenges. With this understanding comes awareness, which we are translating to actionable and measurable milestones. The milestones represent the recently added 4th “R,” for results. As an institution we will work to improve our recruitment, retention and revenue efforts to demonstrate positive growth as an institution of higher education.
BACKGROUND

The NHU recognizes that educational quality issues permeate the entire academic and student services areas and should be monitored by a quality assurance system. While we have some evaluative or assessment measures in place, we do not have a formalized or comprehensive system that is premised on the philosophy of “beginning with end in mind”. Instead, NHU has measured what has transpired instead of measuring what we anticipated having achieved. In part, this lack of long range planning and assessment is due to the leadership changes in the Provost’s office that oversee these efforts.

As of fall 2006, there have been three interim provosts since the WASC Accreditation of 2002. It is anticipated that a national search for a permanent provost will be conducted soon after the WASC visit in February 2007. In large part, the skill set for permanent leadership positions will be guide by the recommendations that WASC leaves with NHU.

We believe that our quality assurance system (QAS) will consist of five stages that will form a continuous renewal cycle:

- Data Collection
- Data Analysis
- Data dissemination
- Decision-making
- Improvement and Changes

As previously noted NHU does have historical and on-going data collection of our student body at the institutional level. In terms of admissions, enrollment and recruitment, weekly numbers are given to the leadership team on campus by the Admissions Office. However, for more in depth, comparative data and data analysis, the University relies on the Office of Institutional Planning and Evaluation (OIPE). That office
places a permanent file of data on the institutional shared drive which provides historical data for anyone in the university to access. This wealth of information covers data on enrollment, retention and graduation rates. Thus, NHU has data; however, the institution needs to develop a culture that bases its decisions, changes and program improvements on this information.

To internalize the use of data will take the insistence and persistence of having both the academic and student services take leadership in this area. Ultimately, institutional data on enrollment, retention and graduation rates is tied to educational quality. It provides empirical evidence and the possibility of knowing why students leave or do not graduate, and how this is related to our University’s educational offerings, advising and services.

**Educational Quality**

Educational Quality within NHU would be addressed by:

- Academic Program Reviews
- Student Assessment Plans
- Evaluations of areas such as:
  - Faculty
  - Student Services
  - Library
  - Student Academic Assistance Center (SAAC)

**Program Reviews**

In terms of Academic Program Reviews, NHU did develop new guidelines in 2005 that were accepted by the Faculty Senate and the University President. Embedded in the reviews are the requirements for faculty and student evaluations as well as historical data in terms of enrollment, retention and graduation rates (Appendix 1T).

Since the University’s Institutional Proposal of 2004, the Liberal Studies program has undergone its academic review based on the new guidelines. The report on liberal studies written by two external reviewers (Appendix 1U) will be summarized and presented in the Faculty Senate in November of 06. The Provost will then also have a meeting with department chairs to discuss this report and future ones in more depth. Two more academic programs are also currently going through program reviews. The Business Program (Appendix 1V) had three external reviewers come to assess the program in October of 2006. The Teacher Education Program will undergo an external evaluation in November of 2006 (Appendix 1W).

It is anticipated that the reviews will send their comments before the beginning of 2007. Additional Program reviews are scheduled for the future:

- **Computer Information Science** Spring 2007
- **General Studies** Fall 2007
- **Translation & Interpretation** Spring 2007
**Student Assessment**

In spring 2005, the department chairs, in coordination with the provost, organized an academic assessment work plan to establish learning outcomes for each program. In addition, the department chairs worked with their faculty to clarify their mission, vision and goals.

The student assessment plans have not been developed or implemented as of Fall 2006. However, an initiative on Assessment Vision, Principals and Goals was developed and adopted by the Faculty Senate in July, 2005 (Appendix 3A). Unfortunately, after adoption of the document, the faculty attention dwindled and the work was not begun. However, the document presents solid Assessment Principles that are guided by the University's mission and recognizes that competency for doing assessment requires training and consistent monitoring from faculty and student services staff. The goals are primarily to support student learning and enhance faculty teaching. The document was also guided by the AAHE Best Practices in Assessment. The principles that NHU will work on to establish its review on educational effectiveness are:

1. The assessment of student learning begins with educational values.
2. Assessment is most effective when it reflects an understanding of learning as a multidimensional, integrated, and revealed in performance over time.
3. Assessment works best when the program it seeks to improve has clear, explicitly stated purposes.
4. Assessment requires attention to outcomes but also, and equally, to the experiences that lead to those outcomes.
5. Assessment works best when it is ongoing, not episodic. Assessment is a process whose power is cumulative.
6. Assessment fosters wider improvement when representatives from across the educational community are involved.
7. Assessment makes a difference when it begins with issues of use and illuminates questions that people really care about.
8. Assessment is most likely to lead to improvement when it is a part of a larger set of conditions that promote change.
9. Through assessment, educators meet responsibilities to students and to the public.

**Evaluations**

NHU has conducted evaluations on some services that students are receiving such as Library Services (Appendix 3B), the Student Academic Assistance Center (Appendix 3C) and the Summer Bridge Program (Appendix 3D). The evaluation of the Student Success Program will be done when it completes its first year of funding in 07. NHU recognizes that such evaluations are necessary in order to determine where work needs to be done to support students in achieving their educational goals.

The attention to faculty evaluation has increased since WASC came to the campus; however, consistency and timeliness continues to lag behind the good intention of using evaluations to help faculty improve pedagogy and student learning. Currently, every faculty member is, in fact, evaluated for courses they teach (Appendix 3E). The evaluation is done electronically toward the end of each module. Unfortunately, not all evaluations have been discussed with the faculty and the University needs to make
progress by discussing the results with each faculty member. This is of particular importance for the renewal of contracts for the adjunct faculty.

Peer evaluations are also a recognized method of offering feedback, mentoring and capturing best teaching practices in a collegial manner. The faculty, in conjunction with the Provost, adopted a different peer review form in the fall of 2006 that provided better and usable feedback to the professor. The goal is to conduct these peer evaluations at least once a year and to do so in the middle of a module so that the process can allow mid-course improvements. This is also a source of evaluation that will be considered in the reappointment of adjunct faculty as well as renewals of faculty contracts.

Full time faculty submitted portfolios that allowed for self-reflection and an assessment of professional development. The portfolios were a factor in awarding multi-year contracts. The value of this portfolio process will be evaluated by the Provost and Chairs and have a resolution by the time of the next WASC educational effectiveness visit. What has become clear is that multi-year contracts have given faculty a sense of stability and a longer term investment in the University and its students.

**Next Steps**

In conclusion, the University will need to harness its central attention to the issue of educational effectiveness. It is our intention to develop and formalize the implementation of our quality assurance system. We believe that we have the foundation to do this by using the assessment vision and goals and identify what needs to be done with student assessment plans. NHU will use the program review model to improve educational offerings programs, personnel and address the problems that have arisen. The notion of a program review for the SAAC, and Student Services should be also assist the alignment toward quality assurance.

In terms of faculty, we must insure that they are evaluated as specified in the faculty handbook, and review the portfolio to determine if it serves the awarding of multi-year contracts. Based on faculty evaluations, we will need to determine professional development and training needs to help insure educational effectiveness. This is particularly true of adjunct faculty who are doing the lion's share of teaching on the campus. Their orientation and more frequent meetings to discuss issues of learning and teaching related to the University's core mission will be critical if we are to make deep progress in educational effectiveness.

The University will also have to establish better mechanisms to address enrollment, retention and graduation outcomes and problems that are arising given the new student population profile. Data will need to inform our future decision making at all levels of the campus.
BACKGROUND

In the NHU’s Institutional Proposal of October 2004, the report characterized the student body as being a “predominately female, Hispanic, adult student population.” This had been an accurate portrayal of NHU’s student body from the university’s inception nearly twenty-five years ago until the fall of 05 when half of the new student enrollment shifted to being first year traditional college age students. This drastic demographic shift of bringing younger students occurred because the Board of Trustees and the President made the conscious decision to target recruitment from the high school population. This was done in order to bring additional enrollment and increase revenue. The new University building could now accommodate a much larger number of students.

These new freshmen students were largely the first in their families to attend college and, in many cases, were also English language learners. The students brought a sense of renewal of the NHU’s mission and also brought the need for additional academic as well as student support systems. NHU recognized that this new cohort of students now required that the University have a deeper understanding of how the academic and administrative systems helped or hindered admission as well as retention.

It was also during this period that the University recognized that one of its unique strengths was the sponsorship of a charter high school: The Latino College Preparatory Academy (LCPA). The sponsorship was begun in 2001 with the assistance of the Superintendent of the East Side High School District. The vision was to establish a small seamless educational pipeline between high school and college that would follow NHU’s mission of serving the Hispanic population and demonstrate best practices in the field of education. The sponsorship of LCPA has born fruit and an increasing number of LCPA graduates enter NHU as new college freshmen. The relationship has been continuously strengthened and a large proportion of LCPA teachers have earned their credentials from the NHU Teacher Training Program. This unique and collaborative arrangement will continue to be developed in the following years.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES EVALUATION

The President recognized that the demographics of the NHU student population had been transformed. Therefore, in order to determine what student services and academic directions were needed for this new student population, he called for an external evaluation of student services in January of 2006. The consultant’s report is included in Appendix 4A. This resulted in recommendations for action that the Board of Trustees considered during its retreat in March of 2006. Overall, the report made recommendations in the areas of student life, academic programs and academic capacity building.
**Student Life**

In the area of student life, the recommendation was to continue a student-centered and personal approach with our students; particularly with first-time college students. There was the recommendation that a staff member be designated as a Director of Student Activities in order to harness student energies in visual and performing arts, sports, and intramural sports and foster clubs and interest groups. At present, the University has not yet created a new position for this role, but the new Student Success Program has stepped in and created several student community building activities such as study halls, a men’s group, a women’s group, movie nights and a monthly calendar of activities.

**Academic Programs**

In the Academic Program Area, the consultant recommended the development of core courses for all first year students that could include a University 100, Basic Technology, summer bridge, library information competency, public speaking, math and English core courses. At present, the University has taken the first step in creating a “First Year Experience” with core courses in these areas.

There remains a great deal of work to develop a complete program that is guided by faculty and informed by student assessment and data analysis. Because of the unique nature of our freshmen student population that has many English language learners, NHU needs to focus on our students’ assets and maintain high expectations that excel their learning. Our new student population also requires that all faculties who teach for NHU recommit to its mission and to the understanding of how their pedagogies contribute to learning.

**Academic Capacity**

In the areas of building Academic capacity, the consultant recommended that the University define strategic areas where it could make unique and important contributions to its students and its community. The following areas were highlighted: Teacher Education, Early Childhood Education, Computer Science and the expansion of Liberal Studies to include Spanish and Study in Mexico. In addition, it was noted that both the Teacher Education Program and the Business Program should undergo program reviews and find their unique contributions to the mission of the National Hispanic University. There has been progress in some of these areas. The Business Administration program had its external review visit in October 2006 (Appendix 1V), and the Teacher Education program is undergoing a program review (Appendix 1W) in November of 06 with external reviewers who are teacher training experts from San José State University, San José County office of Education, and the University of Arizona. The Early Childhood Education program has begun with courses that have prepared local community child care providers with the required skills in this area. The program is also offering a GED preparation in Spanish which is unique in the Bay area.

**Other Evaluation Results**

The Office of Student Outreach and Support Services assisted the consultant by facilitating student focus groups. The findings from this and a student satisfaction survey that will be given in early November of 2006 will give the student affairs staff a reading on how students view their services. The offices have conducted their own informal evaluations of student satisfaction but the survey is the first comprehensive review of all services.
Due to the need to pay increased attention to academic and student issues with this new young cohort of students, the President decided to appoint a new interim Provost and asked the former Provost to serve as Vice Provost so that there could be more focused attention to both student and academic affairs. The Vice Provost has served as acting chair of Liberal Studies and Math, Science and Computer Science. The University has now been successful in appointing the Chair of the Science areas but has not yet appointed the permanent chair of Liberal Studies. This Vice Provost also serves as the ALO to WASC.

In order to strengthen retention efforts and create an enrollment management team, the Provost reorganized the Student Services division in August of 2006. The Office of Admissions and Records, Financial Aid, Outreach and Recruitment, Talent Search and Student Success now report directly to the Provost. These five directors meet bi-monthly with the Provost to discuss recruitment barriers and successes in recruitment, persistence and retention. These workshops will be planned by the Directors and the Provost. The purpose is to have the student affairs staff engage in professional development to learn about best practices. The goal is to become an organization informed by student data. The Office Institutional Planning and Evaluation will participate in these seminars by providing relevant data and having discussions about what decisions can be made based on this evidence.

In terms of Student Support Services, the NHU acknowledges it has much work to do. However, the university is certain that with the changes made so far, the new organizational structure of the area and the new leadership, it is on the right path to offering more and better services to its students. These services, in turn, will help increase recruitment, retention and graduation rates, and student satisfaction. The NHU expects to be able to report good results by the Educational Effectiveness Review visit.
CONCLUSION

This National Hispanic University Capacity and Preparatory Review report contains responses to the 2002 letter from Dr. Ralph Wolff, Executive Director of WASC. It also incorporates the University’s goals as stated in the October 15, 2004 Institutional Proposal. The organization of this report is centered on four reflective essays.

The Strategic Planning essay presents the background and approach to developing this Plan and its implementation. It is important to notice that all WASC recommendations were taken into consideration and addressed throughout the plan. The report presents some thoughts on how Strategic Planning has influenced the University’s work as well as the lessons learned from having engaged in this process. Areas of success as well as areas needing improvement and finally, expectations for 2008 conclude the report.

The Financial Planning essay provides a historical context on leadership and is centered on the issues of sustainability. A section of the report outlines the sources of revenue and presents a financial strategy for increasing funds. It concludes with the plans to continue implementing a budget planning process on campus.

The Educational Quality essay presents the work accomplished to date related to educational quality and also acknowledges that there are several areas that require more attention. In order to do that, the essay also sets out the nine assessment principles that will guide NHU’s educational effectiveness work. Issues of faculty evaluations, multi-year contracts and peer reviews are also included since these issues are tied to educational quality.

The Student Support Services essay underscores the fact that the demographics and size of the student body have changed dramatically since WASC last visited the campus in 2002. Due to these changes, the university conducted an external evaluation of the services and program offerings. This essay outlines the recommendations made to the University and steps that have been taken to address some of those ideas. The issue of retention is highlighted and there is the plan to become a data driven organization in order to better understand our educational effectiveness issues.

The NHU acknowledges that there are several areas where more work is needed. The preparation of this institutional presentation has made us aware of those areas and has helped us concentrate on the needs that our institution has.

In terms of the work we see ahead to keep improving, it is clear that we must focus on sustainability. The Board of Trustees has made the commitment to work with the President and an advancement group to raise funds for the university. The issue of assessment in order to determine Educational Effectiveness will also be central in order to understand better best practices in student learning, particularly with our English language learning population.

For the 2008 educational effectiveness review, the NHU has several key areas on which to focus. We have made progress in the area of completing and evaluating the work accomplished in the strategic plan. In addition, the faculty and Provost have completed the protocol for Academic Program Reviews and have conducted reviews on Liberal Studies and Business. However work needs to be done reviewing and implementing the Student Assessment plans so that the University develops a coherent and consistent way of measuring student learning outcomes and the effectiveness of our
University’s teaching. In addition, progress must be made in the area of orientation, evaluation, and professional development of both the adjunct and core faculty. In summation, the University has to recommit itself to strengthening its use of data, evaluation and assessment tools so that they are used in a systematic way to achieve quality assurance and educational effectiveness.