



# Northern Illinois University

## 2014 Program Review Report

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**Program:** B.S. in Accountancy (52.0301)

Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: Graduates with a B.S. in Accountancy are prepared for careers as auditors, tax professionals, and forensic accountants. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, occupational demand is expected to grow 15.7 percent in the next decade. The Illinois Department of Employment Security estimates that 5,387 new accountants and auditors will be needed by 2020 (an 11.4 percent increase). Curricular changes have been implemented to help prepare graduates for success in a dynamic employment environment and include additional focus on: career planning and professional development; reporting requirements related to U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) regulations; forensic accounting and fraud investigation. The department maintains high enrollment standards and a limited retention policy in which students must maintain a 3.20 GPA in upper-level courses. Many graduates (16 percent) are employed by public accounting firms and a high percentage seek additional graduate training (43 percent) in order to become Certified Public Accountants (CPAs). Although total enrollments have declined during the review period (from 937 in fall 2008 to 742 in fall 2012), the total number of degrees awarded each year has remained relatively constant (a yearly average of 190 degrees). Minority student enrollments have increased from 27 percent to 35 percent from 2008 to 2012 (35 to 44 students), with a sizeable proportion of this increase being due to increasing Hispanic student enrollments. The number of transfer students has remained relatively constant over the review period and accounts for an increasingly large percentage of total enrollments (37 percent in 2008 and 44 percent in 2012).
- Major findings and recommendations: The accountancy program has been nationally recognized for decades. In 2013, the program was ranked 12<sup>th</sup> in the nation by the Public Accounting Report. The program is effective at meeting student learning objectives, in part demonstrated by employer evaluations of student interns. In 2009, the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) reaccredited the program for another five years, the maximum allowable amount. First time pass rates on the CPA exam are consistent with the state-wide average and consistently higher than the national average. A high percentage of alumni (98 percent) express satisfaction with the program. Program costs are consistently at or below state-wide credit hour costs—particularly with respect to upper division courses. Alumni stay engaged with the program. They participate on advisory boards, attend recruiting events, generate student internships, and are guest speakers in classes. The department enjoys a high degree of financial support from individual and organizational donors. As a result of this support the department has added three endowed chairs and increased student scholarships from \$120,000 in 2005 to over \$400,000 in 2012.
- Actions taken since the last review: During the last review, the department was found to be in good standing and was encouraged to: continue to monitor costs, review its assessment program, and seek additional opportunities for fundraising. The department has since added a dedicated assessment committee to review assessment methods/results and make recommendations to program faculty. As noted above, alumni support has increased substantially. The department has made curricular changes to keep pace with federal regulatory changes and to respond to employer feedback. The department has added student engagement opportunities by encouraging additional internships and participation in

projects with the Business Experiential Learning Center as well as providing field experiences with local firms such as Caterpillar.

- Actions taken as a result of this review: The department is seeking ways to increase minority faculty representation. In addition, the department is evaluating ways to expand the use of technology throughout the program and provide students experience in analyzing large data sets. The program is seeking ways to improve graduates' global mindset.

## **Outcome**

- Decision:

\_\_\_ x \_\_\_ Program in good standing (review in 8 years)

- Explanation: The B.S. in Accountancy is a nationally ranked program that continues to deliver a high quality program with costs at or below state-wide averages. Faculty endeavor to keep the curriculum current and responsive to employer needs. A variety of assessment practices are used to ensure students are meeting program objectives.

**Program:** Master of Accounting Science (52.0301)

## **Major Findings and Recommendations:**

- Major changes in the program: The Master of Accounting Science (MAS) degree provides advanced study in accounting in which students focus on one of three tracks: financial reporting and assurance, managerial accounting systems, or taxation. Students are required to demonstrate technical competence appropriate to their chosen track and a set of professional skills that will enable them to advance within the profession, these include: leadership skills, research skills, business communications skills, and ethical decision-making skills. Students with an undergraduate degree in accounting can complete the program in one calendar year and are eligible to sit for the Certified Public Accountant (CPA) exam in Illinois. Occupational demand for accountants is strong with an increasing value being placed on graduate training. According to the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA), the number of new hires with graduate degrees increased from 26 percent in 2008 to 40 percent in 2010. In addition, AICPA reports that salaries for Master's level graduates tend to be 10 to 20 percent higher than for those with a B.S. degree. Nearly 60 percent of NIU MAS graduates are employed in public accounting firms. Although program enrollments have declined over the review period from 163 in 2008 to 129 in 2012, the number of degrees awarded has increased from 104 in 2008 to 118 in 2012. Enrollment declines are attributed to the implementation of two program changes in 2009: an additional program fee on all courses and stricter admission standards. The Department of Accountancy's goal is to maintain an admission and graduation rate of 100 to 120 students per year.
- Major findings and recommendations: The graduate accountancy programs has consistently achieved national recognition and as of 2012 was ranked 23<sup>rd</sup> in the country. Stricter admissions standards (relative to the previous review period) have resulted in lower enrollments but a consistent number of degrees conferred. The percentage of female MAS students has decreased from 52 percent (85 students) in 2008 to 43 percent (50 students) in 2012. Although this dip is consistent with national trends in female business school enrollments, the department has created a task force to identify ways of attracting women to study in accounting. Minority students enrollments have been trending upward (28/245 students in 2011) and indicate that efforts to reach out to minority student organizations such as the National Association of Black Accountants (NABA) and Association of Latino Professionals in Finance and Accounting (ALPFA) are paying off. The number and amount of scholarships available to MAS

students has increased from 32 (\$65,396) in 2008-2009 to 53 (\$128,604) in 2012-2013. Surveys of alumni indicate high levels of satisfaction with the program ranging from 97.6 percent to 100 percent of alumni being satisfied during the review period. In addition, 83 percent of 2011 graduates indicated that they are employed or seeking an advanced degree. Pass rates for the CPA exam indicate that 49 percent pass on their first attempt (50 percent is the department goal).

- Actions taken since the last review: Beginning with the 2008-2009 academic year, a revised MAS program was launched. The revised curriculum places greater emphasis on the leadership and professional skills required to be a successful practitioner. Specific course changes emphasize students' ability to make sound financial decisions in complex and uncertain environments. In addition, students' leadership and communication skills are developed through coursework, assessment tools and feedback, as well as extramural activities such as the Leadership Challenge and a "Second City" communications skills workshop. Finally, a capstone experience (ACCY 690) focusing on business valuations was implemented. This course was recognized in 2010 and again in 2013 by the AICPA for innovation in graduate education.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: This review, in conjunction with input from the Accountancy Executive Advisory Council, has highlighted three areas for improvement: 1) incorporate data analytics in the curriculum in accordance with AACSB standards; 2) expand students' global mindset with a study abroad experience or additional coursework in international business; 3) consider offering the MAS degree at one or more NIU off campus locations.

## Outcome

- Decision:

\_\_\_ x \_\_\_ Program in good standing (review in 8 years)

- Explanation: The Master in Accounting Science program has consistently been cited as one of the highest quality programs in the nation. Curricular innovation is guided by AACSB standards and input from the departments Accountancy Executive Advisory Council. Additional evidence of program quality is gleaned from employer evaluations of interns, student pass rates on the CPA exam, and employability.

**Program:** Master of Science in Taxation (52.1601)

## Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The Master of Science in Taxation (MST) provides advanced training to students for careers as tax professionals. The program must continually adjust to changes in the tax code and business practices related to reporting requirements. The Accountancy Executive Advisory Council provides input and recommendations on these changes. Some of the notable curricular changes are in response to: implications of multijurisdictional taxes, tax implications of business acquisitions, and income tax disclosures in financial statements. Approximately 90 percent of MST students are employed full-time while completing the program. Students take classes exclusively at NIU-Hoffman Estates. Enrollments have declined somewhat over the review period from 71 in 2008 to 56 in 2012. The percentage of females enrolled in the program has declined from 65 percent in 2008 to 55 percent in 2012. Minority enrollments have stayed relatively constant over this period. In 2011, at-large professionals were allowed to enroll in MST courses and receive continuing professional education (CPE) credit. From spring 2011 through fall 2013, 220 courses were taken for CPE credit, with approximately 11 percent being taken by students who were not enrolled in the MST program. These credits are often used by practicing CPA to meet Illinois state licensure requirements.

- Major findings and recommendations: As noted above, the graduate programs in accounting are ranked among the nation's elite; Public Accounting Report ranked the accountancy graduate programs 23<sup>rd</sup> in the nation in 2012. NIU program costs are lower (about \$23,000) relative to competitors in the Chicago area (e.g., DePaul costs about \$44,000 and University of Illinois costs about \$36,000). By providing courses to working professionals at the NIU-Hoffman Estates location, the program provides a service to the western suburbs of Chicago. The program is currently targeting 70 student enrollments as a program goal but is also looking at courses taken for CPE credit as a way to bolster enrollments. Surveys of 2007 to 2010 MST graduates indicate that 100 percent of respondents are satisfied with their degree. The program is working on ways to more effectively market the program and attract more women.
- Actions taken since the last review: The program was found to be in good standing during its last review and was reaccredited by the AACSB during the review period. The program was encouraged to continue to strengthen its use of direct assessment methods and has since added a standing faculty assessment committee. The department was also encouraged to seek opportunities for increased fundraising and, since that time, three new endowed chairs have been created and scholarships awarded to students has increased from \$120,000 to \$400,000. The department was also encouraged to explore options for increasing tenure track faculty lines. Currently there are 17 tenure track faculty as compared to 14 at the beginning of the review period. The use of part-time faculty with professional (as opposed to academic) expertise in tax law is expected to continue as allowed by AACSB guidelines. The biggest changes since the last review have stemmed from assessment results and advice from the Alumni Executive Advisory Board leading to curricular changes designed to provide better career preparation for students.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: This review has highlighted the need for expanded program marketing efforts and some of the strategies that are being explored include: benchmarking the marketing strategies of other MST programs; targeting Chicago-land CPA firms with an emphasis on the continuing education option that is now available; using social media and revising existing materials (websites and brochures) to highlight recent curricular changes. A second area for improvement is to enhance access to cloud based computing and research tools. Finally, the program will develop on-line delivery options that will better serve the market, be consistent with the on-line strategy of the College of Business, and insure continued accreditation by the AACSB.

## Outcome

- Decision:  
☒ x ☐ Program in good standing (review in 8 years)
- Explanation: The Master of Science in Taxation is a nationally ranked program that has been judged to be in good standing by the AACSB. It has lower program costs relative to its local competitors. Direct assessment of student learning demonstrates that the program is effective in meeting its learning objectives. Alumni satisfaction and support for the program is high.

**Program:** B.S. in Finance (52.0801)

## Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The B.S. in Finance provides training that prepares graduates for employment in the investment and banking fields. The program has tracks for professional certification in one of two areas: as a Certified Treasury Professional (CTP) and as a Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA). In the wake of the recent financial crisis of 2007-2008, the field has experienced a turbulent and

uncertain employment environment. These uncertainties produced lower demand for finance graduates and reduced enrollments nation-wide. At NIU, enrollments declined from 510 in 2008 to 314 in 2012 and are consistent with trends across the state. Despite these trends, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics as published in the 2012-2013 Occupational Outlook Handbook, demand for financial analysts is expected to increase by 23 percent from 2010 to 2020. Growth is being fueled by the growing range of financial products, the need for in-depth knowledge of specific geographic regions (particularly emerging markets), and the need for greater risk management associated with recent regulatory reforms. The percentage of female students in the program has declined from 21 percent in 2008 to 17 percent in 2012. As noted below, a recommendation from the last program review was to find ways to increase minority representation in the major. Currently, minorities represent 29 percent of students enrolled (up from 23 percent in 2005) and 22 percent of degrees conferred (up from 14 percent in 2005).

- Major findings and recommendations: Faculty exhibit a high level of research productivity according to statistics compiled by Microsoft Academic Research; NIU department of finance faculty are ranked in the top seven percent of the 3,671 organizations producing research in the field of finance. The department's advisory board, the Department of Finance Board of Executive Advisors, is comprised of Chicago area financial executives and provides input to the strategic direction of the department. The board's input resulted in greater emphasis on financial risk management and a new master's program (the first in the state) in this area. Various assessments of student learning indicate that the department is effective in its teaching mission. Direct assessments of student writing indicate high levels of proficiency relative to College of Business norms. Finance students performed well on nationally normed tests such as ETS' Major Field Test in Business (test takers from 2009-2010 scored above the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile on the finance section) and Bloomberg's Assessment Test (80 percent of finance students from 2011-2012 scored above the world-wide averages for the "corporate valuation" and "investment management" sections). Nation-wide, 40 percent of all students who pass the Certified Treasury Professional (CTP) exam are from NIU. Students have the opportunity to gain practical experience managing real assets through participation in the "Student Managed Portfolio." During the worst of the national financial crisis, alumni satisfaction dipped to levels typical of the entire university (93 percent), but has improved to nearly 100 percent as employment prospects have recovered. Declines in enrollments, especially among women, are a cause of concern but the department has had success increasing ethnic diversity.
- Actions taken since the last review: Recommendations from the review in 2005 included the following: increase minority graduation rates, build a more diverse faculty, continue to improve assessments of student learning, and reduce program costs. Progress has been made to increase diversity in both the student body and among faculty. As noted above, student minority representation and graduation rates have both increased. The department is working to increase female representation in the major and plans to host a "women in finance" symposium with panels comprised of successful NIU female alumni. The department has made some strides in increasing diversity among its full-time tenure track faculty with 28.6 percent female and 28.6 percent ethnic minorities. Although based on small numbers, these percentages represent greater than average diversity among finance departments nation-wide. The department has implemented direct measures of student learning for each of their student learning outcomes and was recognized for its efforts at a recent NIU Assessment EXPO. Finally, the department has been successful at increasing alumni donations resulting in eight new endowed student scholarships and, through the generosity of one alumnus, an endowed professorship in finance.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: This review has highlighted areas for continued improvement of the program. Based on external benchmarking and input from the Department of Finance Board of Executive Advisors, the department is considering adding two new tracks to the major: one in insurance and one in real estate. Together with the approved program in financial risk management, these curricular offerings should help attract additional students. The department must assure continued access to the databases needed to produce high quality academic research and to enhance students career

prospects. The department will work to identify additional internship and practicum opportunities in order to help support student career success.

## Outcome

- Decision:

\_\_\_ x \_\_\_ Program in good standing (review in 8 years)

- Explanation: Students earning a B.S. in Finance are well prepared to take advantage of an increasingly favorable job market. Graduates express a high degree of satisfaction with the degree and remain involved with NIU through donations of time and money. Faculty in the Department of Finance are highly productive and effective teachers.

**Program:** B.S. in Business Administration (52.0201)

### Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The B.S. in Business Administration is designed to develop the competencies that will serve as a foundation for a successful business career. The program places particular emphasis on the development of strong problem-solving, communication, and relationship building skills. Students are also prepared to address ethical issues that may arise in the business environment. Based on 2012-2013 projections from the Occupational Outlook Handbook, demand for management graduates is strong and expected to increase by 17.3 percent from 2010 to 2020, outpacing increases in general employment. Consistent with the favorable employment outlook, enrollment in the major has increased 10.9 percent from 580 in 2008 to 643 in 2012. The percentages of women, minorities, and transfer students have all increased during the review period. In particular, there has been an 85 percent increase in the number of Hispanic students. In 2011 the department created the Minor in Business Innovation and Entrepreneurship which has drawn approximately 100 declared students to date. A certificate in social entrepreneurship was also created and its popularity has prompted the department to seek approval for a minor in this area.
- Major findings and recommendations: The B.S. in Business Administration is a popular major that is offered by twelve public and 28 private institutions within Illinois. Although there has been an overall 9 percent decline in enrollments at public institutions during the review period, enrollments at NIU have increased by 34 percent and the program's contribution to degree production at public institutions state-wide has increased 135 percent. While enrollments at private institutions have generally declined, a dramatic growth in the number of on-line degree majors has fueled an overall increase in majors at private institutions. Despite this large increase, NIU's contribution to degree production within the state has increased 45.7 percent. Program costs for both lower and upper division classes have generally been at or below the state-wide average during the review period. Surveys of alumni reveal that 84 percent of students are employed within a year of graduation and that 93 percent are satisfied with their degree. Alumni and employer representatives are actively involved within the department serving as guest judges on student panels, mock interviewers, resume reviewers, and e-mentors. Approximately 60-70 alumni participate as e-mentors and provide guidance to students four to five times a semester via phone or e-mail. Also, alumni support of student scholarships has resulted in a 270 percent increase in available scholarship funds since 2007. Despite a decline in the number of faculty in the department over the review period, faculty productivity has increased substantially since the last review period with a 32 percent increase in peer reviewed articles and four times the number of book chapters and grants.



- Actions taken since the last review: Since the last review, a number of program changes have been implemented with the goal of improving student learning outcomes. First, student learning objectives have been revised and an assessment plan developed and implemented. Particular attention is now being given to student career readiness. A career planning course was added (BADM 395) to address the unique needs of business administration majors. A business administration student organization was created to provide greater networking opportunities and enhance students' identification with the major. Oversight of the program was moved from the college office to the Department of Management in order to promote greater faculty ownership and accountability for the program.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: This review has highlighted the need to continue to focus on students' career readiness. Given the broad nature of the business administration degree, the faculty is working to help students identify relevant career planning strategies. For example, the curriculum of BADM 395 is being reviewed to insure that it adequately addresses the career exploration challenges faced by students with a general business administration degree. The department is also working to grow student enrollment in the course and foster increased alumni involvement. The department is providing additional occasions to socialize students to the major and encourage them to take advantage of out-of-the classroom experiential learning opportunities through student organizations and internships.

## Outcome

- Decision:  
☐ x ☒ Program in good standing (review in 8 years)
- Explanation: The B.S. in Business Administration has maintained strong demand at NIU and within the state. The program supports non-traditional students through use of NIU's off-campus locations. Alumni report high employment rates and levels of satisfaction with the degree.

**Program:** B.S. in Management (52.1301)

## Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The B.S. in Management program prepares students for a variety of entry-level and supervisory positions in profit and not-for-profit organizations. The program develops competencies in problem-solving, relationship building and communications skills, as well as content knowledge in general management. Students declare an emphasis in either human resource management or leadership and management. The major maintains minimum enrollment standards, where students must maintain at least a 2.75 GPA and a C or better in basic tools and foundations courses. According to the 2012-2013 Occupational Outlook Handbook, demand for the major is expected to increase at a higher rate (17.3 percent) than general employment. Despite the projected occupational demand, however, enrollment in the major at NIU has declined (from 334 to 226) during the 2008-2012 timeframe. Major enrollments at both public and private institutions in the state have also declined, but not as sharply. Despite the overall declines, the percentages of both women and minorities in the major have increased from 35 percent to 42 percent and from 24 percent to 37 percent, respectively.
- Major findings and recommendations: Enrollments in the B.S. in Management have seen a 32 percent decrease during the review period; this change is somewhat larger than the declines seen at other public institutions in the state. Due to retirements and resignations, the program faculty has also seen a decrease in the number of tenure track faculty (from 15 to 11) and an increase in the ratio of untenured to tenured faculty (22/7). Evidence of high program quality is found in assessments of student learning and recognition of the program by the Society for Human Resource Management as a "model curriculum" in

preparing students for the PHR Certification exam. Further, across the review period, 98 percent of alumni report satisfaction with their degree (relative to 93 percent for NIU) and 89 percent report finding employment within a year (relative to 79 percent for NIU). Program costs are in line with state-wide averages. There is a high degree of alumni engagement: each semester 60-70 alumni participate in the department's e-mentoring program; 90 percent of classes included alumni as guest speakers, panelists, or project evaluators; and 15-20 internships per year are generated through employers of alumni.

- Actions taken since the last review: Since the last review, the department has formed a practitioner advisory council to provide input into program objectives, curricular changes, and assessments of student learning. One change, based on advisory council input, was to significantly revise the previous emphasis in organizational management which resulted in the current emphasis in leadership and management. Students choosing this emphasis now have an increased focus on developing the leadership and managerial competencies required in today's employment environment. Across both emphases, the faculty has developed a competency framework to more fully specify the behaviors associated with students' achievement of the four student learning outcomes. The curriculum was updated to include new courses in career planning, change management, consulting skills, and entrepreneurship. The department also added a minor in business innovation and entrepreneurship.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: The highest priority for the program is to address declines in enrollment and attract new students. A primary focus of this effort is to clearly communicate the recent curricular changes within the Leadership and Management emphasis to new and transfer students. The department recently established the Center for Human Capital and Leadership as a vehicle for creating greater faculty and student engagement with organizations in northern Illinois. The department is developing a strategy for attracting more minority and female faculty members.

## Outcome

- Decision:  
\_\_x\_\_ Program in good standing (follow-up report on enrollment in 2017)
- Explanation: The department produces qualified graduates with who express satisfaction with the degree and experience employment success. Additional focus on marketing and outreach is needed to boost enrollments.

**Program:** B.S. in Marketing (52.1401)

## Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The B.S. in Marketing prepares graduates for a variety of careers in for-profit, not-for-profit and governmental organizations. Students choose from one of two areas of study: Interactive Marketing or Professional Selling. Technological changes related to social media, big data, and web design are having a profound effect on the Interactive Marketing area of study. According to the U.S. Occupational Outlook Handbook, growth of positions in sales, advertising, marketing, and public relations are all expected to increase at a rate comparable to the national average (15 percent) from 2010 to 2020. Projections by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) suggest that the near-term employment growth is likely to be well above this level. Over the review period, the overall number of marketing students has decreased from 617 in 2008 to 416 in 2012. Similarly, the number of marketing degrees has decreased by 20 percent over this period. Further, the percentage of minority students has remained relatively constant while the percentage of female students has decreased. Between 2008 and 2012, over 390 students were granted certificates in Professional Selling and over 197

in Interactive marketing. These certificates are not limited to marketing majors and are valued by other areas within the College of Business and well as within the university. NIU is the second largest provider of marketing degrees among public institutions in the state; its percentage of degrees awarded has declined somewhat from 25 percent to 21 percent.

- Major findings and recommendations: The Department of Marketing provides a number of engaged learning experiences, including: hands-on learning activities embedded within courses, internships with area employers, on-campus interactions with business leaders, participation in marketing competitions, involvement in student organizations (American Marketing Association, Pi Sigma Epsilon sales and marketing fraternity, Collegiate Sales Advisory and Interactive Student Advisory Boards). The department has established short-term international exchange programs in Ireland and Austria and participates in the International Business Seminars program. On average, twenty students per year gain international exposure through these programs. The Department of Marketing Internship Program gives students opportunities to gain hands-on experience outside of the classroom. Approximately 80 marketing students per year participate in internships. The department is one of a select group of marketing departments to be accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). The department has a robust assessment program using multiple methods (e.g., a portfolio, capstone course, embedded assignments, and an employer survey). Alumni surveys indicate high level of satisfaction with the degree. As noted above, overall enrollments are down and the percentage of female students in the major has decreased.
- Actions taken since the last review: As of 2013, the department has reopened the marketing minor and worked to publicize it to relevant departments across the university. Curricular changes to the Interactive Marketing area of study have increased the number of students receiving certificates in this area of study from 12 in 2007 to 56 in 2012. The department now requires more student assignments in the areas of marketing metrics, global business, and ethical decision-making. As evidenced by participation in study abroad and exchange programs, the department has placed additional emphasis on international experiences. With the assistance of the college, the department has conducted a capital campaign to fund upgrades in the Sales Training Suite and to provide increased funding for student scholarships.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: Four areas of improvement have been identified: (1) increase student enrollment and retention; (2) increase recruitment of women and minorities; (3) continue to assess and improve student skills; and (4) continue to increase students' exposure to international business.

## Outcome

- Decision:

\_\_\_ x \_\_\_ Program in good standing (follow-up report on enrollment in 2017)

- Explanation: The Department of Marketing is one of a small number of programs nation-wide with AACSB accreditation. The department has implemented a comprehensive assessment system and uses the results for curricular improvement. Reinstatement of the Marketing Minor should help boost enrollments in MKTG courses while boosting the career prospects of students in other campus degree programs.

**Program:** B.S. in Operations and Information Management (52.0205)

Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: Increasingly, the previously distinct areas of operations management and information systems are becoming more integrated. Business process improvement, supply chain management, big data, and cloud and mobile computing are all growth areas that require in-depth knowledge of both business processes and information technology. Students in the B.S. in Operations and Information Management (BS/OIM) major develop the skills needed to apply technology to business problems. Students select from one of two emphases: business process analysis or business systems analysis. Students with a BS/OIM degree are prepared for positions with a wide variety of titles, including: business/management analyst, computer and information systems analysts, and logistics and supply chain manager. According to the U.S. Occupational Outlook Handbook, demand for these types of occupations is expected to grow 20 percent to 30 percent from 2010 to 2020 (faster than the national average for all occupations). Reversing the downward trend of the previous review period, there has been a 43 percent increase in the number of BS/OIM majors from 129 in 2008 to 185 in 2012. Notably, the number of minority students has doubled (from 29 to 60) and the number of women has increased from 23 to 37. NIU BS/OIM majors account for approximately 68 percent of program majors in this area at all Illinois public institutions and account for 74 percent of all degrees awarded in this area. The student demand for the degree has clearly increased over the last five years.
- Major findings and recommendations: The B.S. in Operations and Information Management is a nationally recognized program. In 2012, Businessweek ranked NIU's information systems program 23<sup>rd</sup> in the nation. Students generally enter into the program during their junior year. The Department of Operations Management and Information Systems (OMIS) courses draw students from other disciplines within the College of Business and the university (in particular, from computer science). Students can earn credentials in three areas within the major: Systems, Applications, and Products in Data Processing (SAP) student recognition (described more below); a certificate in information systems; and a certificate in service management. Assessment results, coming from surveys of internship employers and alumni, indicate that the program is successful in meeting its program goals. During the course of the program, students have multiple opportunities to work in teams, are required to submit written assignments, and give oral presentations. The department uses standardized rubrics to assess these experiences. All students are also required to take a capstone course in their final semester where they apply both operations management and information systems concepts to real-world projects. One year out employment rates were comparable to the university average from 2008 to 2010, but have risen sharply since that point. Credit hour costs are at the state average for both lower and upper level courses. The department has an active Executive Advisory Board that is made up of 22 members from local and national firms.
- Actions taken since the last review: There have been a number of curricular revisions and pedagogical changes implemented since the last review: A freshman OMIS course that concentrates on introducing students to software packages they will encounter has been added. A junior-level course (OMIS 351) was revised to illustrate how technology enables business innovation and performance. Program requirements were added to help students integrate business processes and technologies. Finally, a business analysis capstone course was added to insure that students have an opportunity to integrate Operations Management and Information Systems in the context of a real-world project. Within courses, the department has made pedagogical changes to emphasize communication skills, use case studies and real world projects, and bring in outside speakers. The department joined the SAP University Alliances Program which allows for incorporation of SAP tools into the curriculum. Students receive SAP Student Recognition Awards when they complete 3 of 4 courses that integrate SAP tools and concepts. In addition, the department recently received approval to offer a Certificate of Undergraduate Study in Business Analytics using SAP software.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: To continue to improve student recruitment the department plans to conduct more open houses and increase scholarship support—particularly to female students.

There are plans to increase fundraising through corporate partnerships and alumni engagement. Enhancing these relationships is also expected to provide more internship opportunities for students. The department will make efforts to increase study abroad opportunities for students. In addition, the assessment program will be refined and additional external funding opportunities to support faculty research will be explored.

## Outcome

- Decision:

\_\_\_ x \_\_\_ Program in good standing (review in 8 years)

- Explanation: The B.S. in Operations and Information Management is a nationally recognized degree with increasing student demand and success in meeting its student learning outcomes and program objectives.

**Program:** Master of Science in Management Information Systems (11.0103)

## Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: Integration of business processes and technology is increasingly important in management information systems (MIS) fields. Today, managing and improving business processes and operations are largely dependent on the use of information technology. Business process improvement, supply chain management, big data, and cloud and mobile computing are all growing areas in the fields of operations management and information systems. Students with an M.S./MIS degree are prepared for employment in a variety of areas, including: database administrator, information security analyst, web developer, computer network architect, and business/management analyst. According to the 2012-2013 U.S. Occupational Outlook Handbook, the 2010 to 2020 employment outlook is very positive for these types of positions and they are expected to grow faster than the national average. Over the review period, there has been a 105.9 percent increase in the number of MIS graduate student enrollments; from 34 in 2008 to 70 in 2012. The percentage of female M.S./MIS students has ranged from 20 percent to 34 percent in the recent five-year period. Although overall female enrollment has decreased compared to the last program review, the number of female students has been trending upward since 2009. The percentage of female students in the M.S./MIS program is in line with Bureau of Labor Statistics figures showing that about 25 percent of professional information technology workers are women. The percentage of minority MIS majors has ranged from 10 percent to 16 percent which is comparable to levels reported in the last program review. The NIU M.S./MIS program has typically accounted for about 16 percent to 20 percent of the total degrees awarded in the same field by Illinois public universities. In October 2013, the NIU M.S./MIS program was approved by IBHE as a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) designated degree program and given a new program CIP code (11.0103). This change accurately reflects the program's content and is also likely to increase enrollments in the number of international students and others who are seeking a STEM field degree.
- Major findings and recommendations: There is a strong employment outlook for M.S./MIS students. The program's focus on applying technology in business processes and operations provides a career option for students who are interested in applications of computer science rather than computer coding and programming. The department offers many graduate assistantship and scholarship opportunities. Through the major core of business process improvement, systems analysis and design, database, telecommunications & networks, internet computing, project management, and information systems

strategy, students gain a broad overview of the information systems/information technology field from both a managerial and a hands-on perspective. Electives allow students to add specialty areas such as geographic information systems, business intelligence, SAP applications, simulation, or advanced networking. The department offers a technology-rich environment for teaching and learning. Faculty members are productive scholars and remain active in professional community through consulting on business projects and engaging with business community leaders. Program alumni are quite satisfied (100 percent) with their choice of degree. Program alumni stay engaged with and contribute to the department by speaking in classes and for student organizations, by hiring NIU M.S./MIS graduates, by providing internships and scholarships, and by serving as members of the Executive Advisory Council. Program assessment results suggest there is room for improvement in M.S./MIS students' communications and leadership skills. Although program enrollments have increased for the past several years, the department would like to see a higher number of M.S./MIS students and increase the percentage of degrees awarded to female students.

- Actions taken since the last review: Recommendations from the last program review suggested that the department should improve its marketing activities to current NIU students and those at other universities. M.S./MIS promotional materials have been redesigned and are regularly distributed to current OMIS majors and to the departments of other majors who might consider an M.S./MIS degree (these primarily include other business majors, computer science majors, and engineering majors). The department sends promotional materials to other universities in the State of Illinois that have an undergraduate MIS program but do not have a corresponding graduate program. The department offers MIS Informational Sessions each semester. The department expanded the admission criteria to consider an acceptable GRE score as well as an acceptable GMAT score for program admission. These efforts have helped to reverse the enrollment declines seen in the last program review. A number of pedagogical changes have been made to course instruction: the department has increased its emphasis on teamwork and oral and written communication skills; there is a greater integration of global and ethical issues; and, an increased commitment to "Where the Classroom Meets the Business World" by including more alumni and business speakers in M.S./MIS classes. The curriculum has been changed to include more content from the areas of enterprise systems applications, business intelligence, and web development. The department joined the SAP University Alliances Program which allows incorporation of SAP software tools in the M.S./MIS curriculum. Three of M.S./MIS Phase 2 courses: OMIS 643, Enterprise Process Improvement, OMIS 661, Business Intelligence Applications and Tools, and OMIS 694, Advanced Topics in Information Systems (SAP) were revised to incorporate SAP tools and concepts. M.S./MIS students can now receive an SAP Student Recognition Award when they complete these three SAP-related courses.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: The department will closely monitor assessment results to measure the impact of recent curricular changes and refine assessment activities to more accurately gauge students' learning of the skills described above. Effort will be made to improve students' communications and leadership skills by offering workshops, CIO (chief information officer) guest lectures, and more narrative case analyses within courses. Department faculty will work with the Executive Advisory Council to review the current curriculum in relationship to technology and market changes. To continue to improve student recruitment efforts, the department plans to increase program awareness by conducting more open house events. The department also plans to increase scholarship and graduate assistantship offerings to female and minority graduate students. Increasing the number of corporate partnerships and providing opportunities for greater alumni interaction should result in more scholarship contributions and more employment opportunities (including internships). The department will make efforts to increase external funding opportunities to support faculty academic research.

## Outcome

- Decision:

\_\_\_ x\_\_\_ Program in good standing (review in 8 years)

- Explanation: Rebounding enrollments throughout this review period highlight the strong student demand for this program and the positive employment outlook for MIS professionals. Program assessment processes assure student learning and emphasize curricular innovation.

**Program:** Masters in Business Administration (52.0801)

### Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The Master of Business Administration (MBA) program follows a professional degree model emphasizing application, skills, and training. Distinct from most traditional department-based master's programs, the NIU MBA is a college-based, interdisciplinary program that incorporates the functional areas of business. MBA courses are provided by the Department of Accountancy, Finance, Management, Marketing, Operations and Information Systems. The MBA is a terminal degree for business professionals and integrates a global perspective of business, leadership, ethics, social responsibility, and communications throughout the program. The NIU MBA program is structured to meet the needs of place-bound students, who are working full-time and intend part-time study, with the desire for greater leadership opportunities within their organizations. To meet this market, the MBA program offers three formats: the flexible, self-paced Evening MBA with classes at the NIU Hoffman Estates and Naperville facilities, the accelerated, cohort Executive MBA with classes on Saturdays at Naperville; and the evening One-Year MBA cohort delivered at Hoffman Estates. In Fall 2010, a full-time Fast-Trak MBA was introduced at the DeKalb campus. The NIU MBA program has had at least 20 percent of program majors at Illinois public universities and enrollments have remained steady over the five year period while other Chicago-area AACSB-accredited programs have experienced enrollment declines of 18.5 percent to 23.0 percent. The U.S. Department of Labor's *Occupational Outlook Handbook* (2011-2012) shows that an MBA degree is increasingly valued or, in some cases, required for jobs as: accountants and auditors; administrative services managers; budget analysts; computer and information systems directors; engineering managers; financial managers and analysts; general managers and top executives; health services managers; human resource managers; industrial production and logistics managers; management analysts and consultants; marketing managers; and personal finance advisors. In a 2012 survey conducted by the *MBA Career Services Council*, it was reported that companies are increasing their offers to MBA graduates, particularly in the consumer and healthcare products, financial services, consulting, and IT technology industries.
- Major findings and recommendations: The NIU MBA program strengths are found in several areas: strong faculty; The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accreditation; innovative curriculum; experienced students; and accessibility through delivery format, location, and cost. Fifty-eight percent of instructors who teach in the MBA program and 81 percent of those teaching the core required courses hold a doctorate degree. Faculty teaching in the MBA program must demonstrate scholarly achievement and the ability to relate to the business community. An innovative curriculum is imperative for competitive advantage as well as meeting AACSB accreditation standards. An international experience is required in the Executive MBA and One-Year MBA formats and it is optional for Evening MBA and Fast-Trak MBA students. The Executive MBA and One-Year MBA capstone projects; the Evening MBA colloquium requirements and certificates of study; and the Fast-Trak Insight Program and double-degree options are all examples of innovative degree requirements designed for the program-specific student career development needs. Students benefit from the professional experience of their

classmates. More than 90 percent of students enrolled in the off-campus program formats are employed full-time holding middle-to-upper level management positions in small to mid-sized companies as well as some of the largest and best-known corporations in the world. When comparing the NIU MBA program tuition and course charges to other regional MBA programs, it is clear that NIU is offering a program to meet the education needs as recommended in the *Public Agenda for College and Career Success*. NIU's MBA is the best value in the Chicago area. The program continuously evaluates student achievement of the learning outcomes overall and by each format/location combination using assessment measures created and implemented by faculty. A summary of the data collected in the 2009 NIU MBA Alumni Survey indicates that 97 percent responded that the MBA degree prepared them "adequately" to "very well" for their current jobs. Results from NIU's one-year after graduation survey also showed positive responses: 98 percent in 2010 and 100 percent in 2012 were strongly positive/positive about their degree experience; 94 percent in 2010 and 96 percent in 2012 strongly agreed/agreed the program was a worthwhile investment of time.

- Actions taken since the last review: Since the last review, the MBA program has made numerous changes. First, more explicit learning outcomes, assessment measures, and assurance of learning processes were established. Second, the College of Business Board of Executive Advisors created an MBA Committee to help guide the program. The committee consists of board members most but not all of whom are alumni that meet periodically throughout the year to discuss the program and possible improvements. Third, the Fast-Trak MBA program was launched. Fourth, double-degree partnerships have been formed with institutions in France and Spain to encourage global activities among the Fast-Trak students. Fifth, the Evening MBA, working with program department chairs, developed four certificates of graduate study to meet the need of students seeking an area of focus or study in their program. Certificates in leadership, entrepreneurship, MIS and strategic marketing are currently being offered. Sixth, responding to student desire to complete the degree in a timely manner, the Evening MBA is now offering accelerated summer intersession and winter session elective courses.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: The review has identified several areas that need to be addressed. First, the current MBA program mission and strategic objectives are focused on fully-employed professionals. The mission and strategic objectives will be revised to reflect the addition of a full-time Fast-Trak MBA format. Ongoing adjustments to the curriculum are needed to meet the challenges presented by the increase of specialized programs, growth of overseas MBA education options, and corporate in-house training programs. An MBA Faculty Council, with representatives of College of Business academic departments, has been created to review strategic initiatives and goals; assessment and curriculum; program format and delivery opportunities; and other related topics. Student and alumni focus groups will be included as needed for the continuous improvement process. Discussions are now taking place within the College of Business to expand the delivery of the MBA program to include a Chicago MBA location and the potential development of an on-line MBA program. To date, seven of nine foundation courses have been developed and delivered as "blended" (50 percent on-line and 50 percent face-to-face) delivery.

## Outcome

- Decision:  
 \_\_\_ x\_\_\_ Program in good standing (review in 8 years)
- Explanation: The NIU MBA program is an AACSB accredited program with flexible delivery options and locations that meet the needs of working professionals. Well established assessment processes and advisory board input assure that the curriculum is current and effectively meets student learning.



**Program:** Business Experiential Learning Center (90.5212)

**Major Findings and Recommendations:**

- Major changes in the program: The aim of Business Experiential Learning Center (ELC) is to create unique educational opportunities for business students by working on real projects for real organizations. The objectives of the ELC are: (1) to enhance the educational experience of NIU students; (2) to cultivate, nurture, and sustain external relationships with organizations that will add measurable value to the organizations; (3) to support continuous improvement of relevant research and teaching; and (4) to create and share knowledge through interaction with others, scholarly journals and case studies, and knowledge management systems. The center recently expanded its reach to students from other colleges including the College of Visual and Performing Arts, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the College of Engineering and Engineering Technology to reflect the cross-disciplinary culture of the business world that future graduates will enter. Demand for the ELC during the period from FY 2008 through FY 2012 was strong, with an average of seven projects per semester. The ELC director uses connections with the ELC Advisory Board, alumni, faculty, and staff to approach potential project sponsors. Traditionally, projects have not been difficult to obtain. A successful project requires a non-mission critical issue that can be completed in the 16-week semester time frame and a sponsor contact that is readily available to the student teams. On average, sixteen to thirty students apply for each project. Students strive to participate on ELC projects because they want the unique experience of applying lessons from the classroom to a real business problem. They want the exposure to business professionals who can mentor and guide them as they prepare themselves for their career. Working on a project team closely with faculty provides a unique and valued experience for students.
- Major findings and recommendations: The main strength of the ELC is the engaged learning that takes place when students work for real organizations on real business issues. The learning has been enhanced by having a facility designed to support team work and consulting, top notch organizations sponsoring projects, technology for research and final deliverables, and faculty coaches who work closely with teams. ELC staff provides support for teams as individual and unique situations arise. During the last five years, the ELC provided opportunities for 490 NIU students to work on real-world organizational issues, allowing them to apply the theories and concepts they learned in the classroom. A total of 68 projects offered by 47 unique sponsors were available for student participation. Using a knowledge management system, students and faculty coaches follow a project management methodology that includes a team charter, communication plan, and business case. The methodology clarifies expectations and project scope for the sponsor and project team, fosters critical thinking and reflection, provides accountability for team members, and creates milestones that contribute to a successful project outcome. The ELC experience is valued by students and employers. Feedback indicates prospective employers are impressed with the project work and note that: students provided valuable ideas and products; were professional and detailed; and met sponsor expectations and needs. At least 36 recent graduates have been hired by their project sponsor. Each semester there are four to six returning project sponsors, which suggests that sponsoring organizations receive value for the time and money they invest. The ELC also contributed significantly to students' educational outcomes as evidenced by the 360-degree qualitative evaluations from the sponsors, coaches, and students. Students demonstrated problem solving abilities, effective communication practices, project management/time management skills, leadership, organization skills, and research skills.
- Actions taken since the last review: Based on the findings of the last review, the ELC recruited 41 students from the College of Visual and Performing Arts, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and College of Engineering and Engineering Technology, bringing diverse backgrounds, unique ideas and technological expertise to project deliverables. Technology resources were enhanced with computer upgrades and additions to accommodate the growing number of projects and students. An audio visual

conference room made it easier to communicate with off-site sponsor. A subscription to Prezi (a presentation platform) and survey tools for conducting primary research gave additional tools to student teams. During FY 2012, the ELC director found new employment and left the university, as did the operations manager in FY 2013. A new director was hired in August 2012 and in FY 2013, student workers were hired to perform clerical tasks and assist the director in day-to-day operations.

- Actions taken as a result of this review: The ELC's short term target for annual projects is between ten and twelve. The ELC will establish procedures for selecting non-profit projects to be funded by a newly established foundation. The plan is to fund at least one non-profit project per year beginning in FY 2014. The ELC director will reach out to other units across campus to seek projects. In the spring semester of 2014, the NIU Division of Marketing and Communications asked a Business ELC team to complete a project on understanding the most effective means for the university to communicate with students. The team will present its findings to the University Marketing and Communications Council which will increase awareness of the center across campus.

## Outcome

- Decision:  
  x   Program in good standing (review in 8 years)
- Explanation: The Business Experiential Learning Center provides business and other students with practical experience solving real-world problems. Students build collaborative learning and project management skills. The center provides a means of engaging area organizations.

**Program:** B.S. in Family and Child Studies (19.0701)

## Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: Student demand for the Family and Child Studies (FCS) major is strong. NIU's FCS program accounted for between 55 to 68 percent of the majors in all the similar programs at Illinois public and private universities from 2008 to 2010. During the review period, while other universities suffered a decrease in enrollment, NIU's FCS program enrollment increased 27 percent over the last five years (56 percent since the last review). To meet the growing demand FCS has increased the number of on-line courses, increased the teaching load for faculty, and hired additional temporary faculty to teach courses. In order to further the program's collaboration with the community, an advisory board was created to provide tangible recommendations regarding program development, quality, direction, outreach, and program improvement. The occupational outlook for the major remains above average regionally and nationally. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, social assistance establishments provided 1.3 million non-governmental jobs in 2010, with approximately 53 percent of those in individual and family services. Opportunities for jobs are projected to be plentiful through the year 2020.
- Major findings and recommendations: Students in the FCS major are required to complete an internship or practicum. Students are often hired by the agencies through which they complete internships. The program provides on-site practicum experience for the Child Development students at the NIU Child Development Laboratory. The NIU Child Development Laboratory is accredited by the National Association of the Education of Young Children and was only one of a handful in the state to receive the highest rating from Illinois Quality Counts Quality Rating System. The program is unique in its support of family life education by offering Certified Family Life Educator (CFLE) certification which requires completion of coursework in ten competency areas. The CFLE program is recognized by the National

Council on Family Relations (NCFR) and employers as an indicator of preparedness to work with families and children in providing families with information, skills, and resources that strengthen the family unit. The FCS program is the only program to receive approval from the NCFR to provide the CFLE certification in the state of Illinois. Overall, the FCS program has been delivered cost effectively, with upper division semester hours having consistently maintained costs at or below the state-wide average. Upper-division semester hours represent 72 to 80 percent of the semester hours generated by the school and 55 to 68 percent of those generated by all similar programs state-wide. The same has been true for costs overall, with an average overall credit hour cost at 91 percent of the state-wide average. The Family and Child Studies program places great value on maintaining an ethnically diverse faculty and student body. Ethnic minorities represent 40 percent of the tenured/tenure track faculty serving the program. During the period under review, ethnic minority students ranged from 29 to 49 percent of total enrollment in the program, with an average of 39 percent minority enrollment. Alumni survey data from 2007-2011 indicated a majority of graduates of the program were able to find employment in appropriate professional settings or pursue advanced degrees. Over 93 percent of the respondents were satisfied with their degree and slightly over 90 percent felt the degree adequately prepared them for their jobs. In 2012, program assessment data revealed 86 percent of internship site supervisors rated students high in their abilities to apply professional expertise when working with families and children.

- Actions taken since the last review: In order to meet the increasing demand for the program, more online courses are being created and delivered. The online courses have the added benefit of accommodating the increasing number of nontraditional students who prefer this option. Additional curricular changes to meet the growing demand for the major and address shifts in expected career skills included increasing class sizes, creating two new courses, and offering additional credentialing pathways. The program increased the teaching load for regular faculty and hired more temporary faculty to offer more lower- and upper-division courses to meet increased demand.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: The program has a number of plans for the future to address current and projected growth in demand for the major. These include acting upon advisory board feedback recommending a new internship option be added and additional courses be created for the expanding number of students who are pursuing Certified Family Life Education (CFLE) training. In addition, new faculty will be hired; two searches are presently in process. The program will more fully utilize alumni involvement in recruiting and placement, using electronic social media channels to create an alumni network. FCNS will actively work to capture and highlight the success stories of alumni for the purposes of marketing, recruiting, placement of internships, and jobs for students in the program area.

## Outcome

- Decision:  
☒ Program in good standing (review in 8 years)
- Explanation: The B.S. in Family and Child Studies is a popular major with increasing demand. The program provides a blend of theory and practice that enhances graduates' employability.

**Program:** M.S. in Applied Family and Child Studies (19.0701)

## Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The M.S. in Applied Family and Child Studies (AFCS) degree program is one of two in the state and the only program that offers an accredited Specialization in Marriage and Family Therapy. Student demand for the major remained steady for the five-year review period. Applied

Family and Child Studies admits approximately 27 students per year, with 15 admitted into its regular program of study and a cohort of 12 admitted into the Specialization in Marriage and Family Therapy. Graduates with a master's degree in AFCS typically enter supervisory positions. The U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, predicts opportunities for employment in the field will grow by 53 percent between 2010 and 2020. Growth is largely due to the aging population, the increasing need for programs that serve those with drug and alcohol issues, and the continued mainstreaming of citizens with physical and mental challenges. Alumni with the Specialization in Marriage and Family Therapy have found employment in hospital settings, community therapy service agencies, and in private practice. Those whose focus is Child Development work in leadership positions in child care and preschool settings, hospitals, resource and referral agencies, and as parenting specialists. Others have secured employment with social service agencies, serving as case managers, family advocates, and domestic violence coordinators.

- Major findings and recommendations: The Applied Family and Child Studies program has notable strengths. Minority enrollment has substantially increased, ranging from 12 to 20 percent of total enrollment (average is 16 percent) for the five year review period. Degree completion by minority students has averaged 16 percent of total degrees awarded. The Specialization in Marriage and Family Therapy remains a very competitive program, with between 30-40 applicants per year for the 12 available student slots. Most applicants are from out of state, indicating the specialization has an excellent national reputation. Nearly all students who are admitted each year complete the program within two years. Costs of the program have decreased significantly during the review time. The program remains affordable to in-state residents when compared to programs at private institutions. The program will continue efforts to maintain its cost effectiveness. Over the 2007-2011 reporting period, alumni survey data indicate 75-100 percent of respondents were satisfied with the degree completion time. Approximately 78 percent were satisfied with the degree (an increase from previous years). Fifteen percent of graduates had enrolled in further graduate course work and 83 percent reported being employed. According to the 2012 program assessment data, all of the internship site supervisors rated students as outstanding or satisfactory in all areas assessed. Assessed areas included students' communication skills, technological skills, knowledge of research and theories, working cooperatively, taking initiative, and overall performance.
- Actions taken since the last review: The program now allows applicants who have completed NIU's B.S. in Family and Child Studies with an overall grade point average of 3.20 and above to petition for a waiver of the Graduate Record Exam. This has resulted in an increase in the number of minority students entering the master's degree program from 10 to 26 percent during the review period and 7 to 25 percent of graduates of the program over the same period of time. Minority students in the program are supported with graduate assistantships that are supplemented by the Graduate School's Rhoten-Smith assistantship program. Each year, the school nominates the most promising minority student for the Graduate School Minority/Jeffrey T. Lunsford Fellowship. Increased research activities were implemented by collecting data on ongoing cases. The research activities have resulted in two scholarly publications and multiple conference presentations. The research has been used in clinical training on a day-to-day basis. A Certificate of Medical Family Therapy was created jointly with the Department of Counseling, Adult, and Higher Education in the College of Education. The certificate has been designed to provide career enhancement for licensed mental health professionals to enable them to provide, within a variety of medical settings, family therapy and counseling services to patients and their families.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: The AFCS program has a number of plans for the future. Among these, faculty will be encouraged to increase research productivity at the Family Therapy Clinic to more fully utilize the clinic to its full research potential while simultaneously respecting the primacy of client care standards. Students will be encouraged to pursue research that informs advocacy efforts related to family life and the formulation of social policy. The program will continue to increase minority and male

enrollments. The program will consider joint programs with the College of Law, and with the public health and public administration graduate programs.

## Outcome

- Decision:

  x   Program in good standing (review in 8 years)

- Explanation: The M.S. in Applied Family and Child Studies is a growing program that produces graduates who help meet an important societal need. The program has a diverse student body and good record of employment placement.

**Program:** Child Development Laboratory

Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The Child Development Laboratory (CDL) is a teaching, research, and service facility housed within the School of Family, Consumer, and Nutrition Sciences (FCNS). It serves majors from FCNS, as well as undergraduate and graduate students from across the university. The CDL includes three child classrooms: two infant/toddler/two-year-old classrooms (licensed for 12 children per room), and a preschool classroom (licensed for 20 children). The center is in high demand, as each year NIU student placements are at or exceed capacity, and an increasing number of community families are waitlisted until such time as space in the class becomes available. In 2013, 107 children were waitlisted as no matching slots were available to serve them. The program has directly served an average of 69 children per year, of whom approximately 25 percent received state subsidies for their child care payments. The CDL is recognized state-wide as one of only a handful of child care centers to receive the highest rating obtainable from the Illinois Quality Counts Quality Rating System. As evidenced by education, training, and professional leadership activities, credentialed staff reflect the high standards typically found in campus center-based child care settings. The staffing ratios and mixed age classroom settings provide a unique and stimulating environment for the healthy growth of young children of families in the NIU community.
- Major findings and recommendations: The CDL upholds a strong and rigorous set of standards related to the teaching and assessment of undergraduate students. This includes the 16-week internship required of all Child Development majors, as well as documentation and quality standards for other students using the laboratory. A key strength of the 16-week practicum is the full integration of child care practices and other CDL requirements into the Child Development curriculum, and vice versa. Faculty that teach prerequisite courses meet regularly with the CDL staff to engage in the curricular planning process to ensure a smooth and strong academic planning connection between lab and department objectives. In the past five years 220 seniors in Child Development have experienced hands-on training and mentoring in the CDL which has provided them with extensive working knowledge of children, child development, and best practice for providing caregiving and leadership in early childhood settings. Hundreds more students (e.g., nursing students conducting assessments) have benefited from mentoring relationships by engaging in smaller activities within the laboratory classrooms and the observation booths. The high quality care provided at the CDL allows for research opportunities in an age-appropriate, highly organized setting. Students and staff from around the university are able to request approval to access classrooms or to make use of two fully-equipped observation booths. CDL staff and faculty associated with the CDL maintain the technical and professional skills needed to support a strong research agenda. The CDL operates within a fiscally sound business model, supporting the costs of maintaining center staff at appropriate levels, and supporting the costs associated with many student practicum experiences.

However, staff in some employment categories are paid significantly less than market rates which has a detrimental effect on staff turnover.

- Actions taken since the last review: Since the time of the last review, major changes included updating the qualifications of staff. In addition, curricular updates resulted in stronger undergraduate programming, including the special needs components referenced above. Finally, changes to the physical facility allowed for improvements to address a few concerns related to safety and staff needs (e.g., the addition of a staff conference room). In the past five years there has been the additional focus on training for children with special needs. Graduating seniors can gain practical experience working toward the Illinois early intervention credential, as well as working on skills designed to address both typically and atypically-developing children. Since fall 2004, the CDL has been serving as a training site for students interested in gaining more experience in working with children with special needs and their families.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: As a result of this review, two key areas will be addressed. First, funding revenues, efficiencies, and streams will be strengthened. FCNS will continue to strengthen the business model for the CDL. The faculty and staff seek to expand revenues received from external funding. For example, the CDL staff will increase its collaboration with the College of Health and Human Sciences and Foundation staff to identify potential donors. It will also work toward the development of new relationships with researchers at NIU who would benefit by collaborating with the CDL in funded research protocols. The faculty and staff also will continue an annual review of the fee structure, and establish fundraising efforts inclusive of community supporters and alumni. Second, continued discussions will allow for future expansion opportunities to serve the needs of students and the community. New CDL space would: allow for enhanced classroom environments and increase access to learning environments for individuals with disabilities; enable growth in the FCNS Child Development emphasis; and increase CDL's ability to service families in the NIU community and the specialized learning experiences needed for students in Child Development and other disciplines.

## Outcome

- Decision:  
  x   Program in good standing (review in 8 years)
- Explanation: The Child Development Laboratory serves as a hands-on learning and research lab for students in the early childhood development program within the Department of Family, Consumer, and Nutrition Sciences. The center provides affordable child care for area residents. The center has obtained the highest rating by the Illinois Quality Counts Rating System.

**Program:** Couple and Family Therapy Clinic of NIU (90.1907)

Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The primary objectives of the Couple and Family Therapy Clinic (CFTC) of NIU are: (1) to function as the primary setting for training graduate students undertaking a specialization in Marriage and Family Therapy from the School of Family, Consumer, and Nutrition Sciences (FCNS) in the delivery of marriage and family therapy services and the fulfillment of supervision hours required by the Marriage and Family Therapy specialization's accrediting body; (2) to provide wide range, affordable, high-quality marriage and family therapy services to the residents in the northern Illinois region; and (3) to create an environment and atmosphere that supports the faculty and students conducting scientific research.

With regard to the first objective, the CFTC provides the structure and means to train graduate students in the specialization of Marriage and Family Therapy to become competent marriage and family therapists. The CFTC is a critical component of the program, which is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE), the agency that accredits master's degree, doctoral degree, and post-graduate degree clinical training programs in marriage and family therapy throughout the United States and Canada. Each fall 12 students are admitted to the specialization and both the first and second year students, a total of 24 at any given time, train in the CFTC. Under close clinical supervision the graduate students learn to conduct individual, couple, and family therapy with various presenting issues. The students are provided with opportunities to apply clinical models they learn from academic courses to practice, and furthermore, to integrate various models to offer the best designed clinical interventions to individuals, couples, and families they serve.

- Major findings and recommendations: The CFTC is the only marriage and family therapy training/service clinic in this region. It has four unique strengths compared to other mental health clinics. First, the CFTC combines academic and clinical training and affordable service to those affiliated with NIU and persons who live in the northern Illinois surrounding communities. Second, the CFTC serves a diverse clientele, including individuals, couples, and families, from various ethnic and economic backgrounds. The training the students receive and the services they provide offer unique and effective help to NIU and the local communities. Third, the ongoing research that has been implemented at the CFTC not only serves to further validate the services that are provided at the Clinic, but also serves as an excellent source of information to the graduate students therapists, and at times informs their treatment planning and goals with their clients. And fourth, the software program that has been implemented by the CFTC has increased the effectiveness of being able to audio and video record client sessions, and increases the ease, accessibility, and opportunity for faculty and graduate students to review the client sessions on a regular basis.
- Actions taken since the last review: The primary action that was taken based on the recommendations of the last program review was the implementation in 2007 of a clinical research program at the CFTC. Beginning in 2008, the clinic has collected a wealth of annual research data from the clients who have received therapeutic services in the clinic. This data is available to faculty and the graduate students for use in their research.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: The profile of the CFTC needs to be elevated within the university community. A marketing timeline was implemented in 2013 that includes several new components. For example, CFTC staff now attend meetings in the university community with key constituents (e.g., resident assistants in the resident halls) so that university constituents are more familiar with the services provided by the CFTC. Staff have begun discussion to engage in partnerships with specific targeted groups in the community such as family court, juvenile court, and the Illinois Department of Child and Family Services. FCNS plans to increase the use of the CFTC as a site for research conducted by NIU faculty and students. One focus of research at the Clinic will be the effectiveness of therapy delivered by therapists-in-training and the implications for curriculum development, teaching and supervision approaches.

## Outcome

- Decision:

  x   Program in good standing (review in 8 years)

- Explanation: The Couple and Family Therapy Clinic provides affordable services to the northern Illinois residents. Students gain valuable applied experience and the clinic provides opportunities for faculty research.

**Program:** B.S. in Nutrition, Dietetics, and Hospitality Administration (51.3101)

Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The B.S. in Nutrition, Dietetics, and Hospitality Administration (NDHA) is a professionally oriented major preparing graduates for post-baccalaureate dietetics internships, graduate study, and for entry level positions in hospitality administration, food service management, and community nutrition. There is high demand in the hospitality industry and the foods and nutrition service area, with a predicted 20 percent growth rate from 2010 to 2020 for dietitians and nutritionists. One out of every 17 Americans works either directly or indirectly in a hospitality-related industry.
- Major findings and recommendations: Major strengths of the program are the many hands-on, real-life learning experiences woven into the curriculum that prepare students for management positions in the hospitality industry and in nutrition services. The accessibility of faculty advisors for support and mentoring augments the curriculum. Most graduates find jobs in their field of study within six months to a year of graduation. Many are employed in the northern Illinois region and often serve as guest speakers, modeling the profession and inspiring students in the program. The nutrition and dietetics program emphasis was recently re-accredited for another 10 year period. Graduates of the program have a high pass rate on the national registry exam for registered dietitian credentialing and experience a high acceptance rate into dietetic internship programs. The acceptance rate into internship programs increased from 41 percent in 2009 to 60 percent in 2010 and has remained above the national average of about 50 percent since 2010. The acceptance/matching rate for the past two years is on an upward trend at 59 percent in 2011 and 73 percent in 2012. The hospitality administration emphasis receives strong support from industry through mentoring, scholarships, internship experiences, and job opportunities after graduation. Industry demands and assessment results show a need for building hotel and lodging management offerings and separating the restaurant management emphasis. Course development and program restructuring to accommodate the proposed areas of study are under way.
- Actions taken since the last review: The last review revealed a need to develop direct assessment methods to guide curricular modifications that strengthen the program. Results led to changes in the curriculum for both the hospitality and the nutrition and dietetics programs. Changes included adding courses, enhancing prerequisite course work, and adding more hands-on experiential learning activities in upper-level courses.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: The FCNS Hospitality Advisory Board has strongly encouraged further expansion of the program to address workforce demands of global growth in the industry. Several changes were identified to meet this challenge, including the expansion of the hospitality administration curriculum to include Hotel and Meeting/Event Management, and Restaurant Management areas of study. Collaboration with community colleges in the development of a degree completion program for those completing two-year programs has been approved and will become operational in the fall of 2014. Further plans include the establishment of a separate major in the area of Hospitality Management. FCNS will actively address a gender imbalance in faculty and students by recruiting more males. The program will target the hiring of new male faculty in both the nutrition and hospitality areas. FCNS will continue the development of the Nutrition, Health and Wellness emphasis to support the increased number of students who choose not to go on to dietetic internships. This will better prepare students as entry-level nutritionists in community nutrition, health and wellness positions.



## Outcome

- Decision:

  x   Program in good standing (review in 8 years)

- Explanation: B.S. in Nutrition, Dietetics, and Hospitality Administration provides training and practical experience for students interested in careers in hospitality administration, food service management, and community nutrition. There is a strong employment outlook for graduates. The hospitality administration area provides an opportunity to further grow the program.

**Program:** M.S. in Nutrition and Dietetics (51.3101)

### Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The M.S. in Nutrition and Dietetics program prepares graduates for advanced practice and leadership positions in nutrition and dietetics and for advanced graduate study. The curriculum is structured to reflect current priorities in the dietetics profession and student needs. Research competency is a core component, along with health promotion, disease prevention, and behavior modification. The program focuses on developing leadership skills and working in cooperation with other providers in the healthcare system. The program offers an accredited dietetic internship, providing a wide range of practice settings with well-qualified clinical supervisors. The combined M.S. degree and dietetic internship program prepares graduates for registered dietitian credentialing and is the only state education program of its kind in the northern Illinois region. The demand for the graduate program is high and the number of enrolled students has remained relatively stable over the reporting period (enrollments increased three percent during the period). The U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, indicates many job openings will result from the need to replace experienced workers leaving the occupation, suggesting that there will be ample opportunities for graduates to progress into advanced practice and leadership positions. Employment for dietitians and nutritionists is expected to grow 20 percent from 2010 to 2020, faster than the average for all occupations (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2013).
- Major findings and recommendations: The program recently received accreditation for another ten years from the Accreditation Council for Education of Nutrition and Dietetics of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) for its dietetic internship program, with results of the self-study demonstrating the program met all measurable goals. Of students entering the program, 85 percent to 90 percent are in the combined M.S. and dietetic internship program, with pass rates ranging from 83 percent in 2008 to 100 percent in 2012 (compared to the national pass rate that ranged from 80 percent to 86 percent respectively). Program graduates consistently score higher than the national mean in the two areas tested (Nutrition and Food Service). The number of applications for the dietetic internship exceeds capacity. While the internship program is accredited for 18 students, the program can only accommodate 14. A goal is to gradually increase it to the accreditation limit. The demand has the effect of strengthening the quantity and quality of applicants to the M.S. program. A major strength of the program reflected in assessment results is the availability of the dietetic internship. Alumni of the program consistently attribute their ability to locate jobs in their field, their success in their job, and success in their further studies to the internship. The percent of graduates reporting to be satisfied with their degree and the time it took to earn their degree was 100 percent during the reporting time period. The Eating Disorders and Obesity Certificate (EDOC), the only such certificate in the country, attracts students from across the nation.

- Actions taken since the last review: The last review identified degree completion as a problem. The curriculum was modified to allow students to select a non-thesis option. The results were almost immediate with students who were adverse to the thesis route able to graduate on time by selecting a research project as an alternative means of degree completion. Students in the combined M.S. degree and dietetic internship program are now required to complete all M.S. degree requirements and internship requirements before they can take the certification exam for registered dietitian status. This has resulted in graduation rates increasing from 33 percent to 100 percent. In the past, students had reported they were unclear on thesis proposal writing expectations. To help in thesis progression, faculty started thesis meetings with all students pursuing the thesis option. Faculty members meet with students as a group to discuss thesis ideas and proposals. This helped students decide early on in the program their research interests and faculty supervisor. Student diversity had also been an area identified for improvement in the previous program review. To increase student diversity, efforts were made to actively participate in activities attracting and retaining minority students. The program works with the campus recruiter to nominate minority students to fellowships and scholarships. In 2012, 13.5 percent of the students in the program were minority students and eight percent were male.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: Several areas were identified for future program development. Increasing diversity continues to be an area of focus. The program will enhance communication efforts with the graduate recruitment office and with graduates' employers to identify ways to increase diversity and minority student enrollment. Additional faculty and internships will be sought to support the anticipated increased demand for the degree program. Increasing completion and publication of thesis and pass rates on the oral comprehensive exam will also be stressed.

## Outcome

- Decision:  
  x   Program in good standing (review in 8 years)
- Explanation: The M.S. in Nutrition and Dietetics offers an accredited dietetic internship and prepares graduates for certification as registered dietitians. The opportunity to earn an Eating Disorders and Obesity Certificate attracts students from around the country and prepares them to address an important societal problem.

**Program:** Ellington's and Chandelier Dining Room

## Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: Ellington's is a quantity food production and service laboratory which provides hands-on learning experiences for Nutrition, Dietetics, and Hospitality Administration (NDHA) students. The required laboratory class, FCNS 320 Quantity Foods Lab, is taught at Ellington's, which is housed in the Holmes Student Center on the NIU campus. This class fulfills foundational knowledge in the areas of food, management, and communication for Nutrition and Dietetics (ND) students and Hospitality Administration (HA) students, as required by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, the accrediting organization for the Nutrition and Dietetics (ND) program emphasis.

ND and HA students have the option of taking FCNS 427-Catering in the Chandelier Dining Room (CDR). The CDR laboratory provides students with real experiences in preparatory work through prepping, cooking, serving and clean-up within a quantity operation. The engaging and authentic practices within the required and elective courses provide students with a framework for management experiences. The primary objectives of Ellington's and the CDR facility are to support students' abilities

to apply theory and research to practice, and to serve the university and general community by providing nutritionally-balanced meals at least twice a week at very reasonable prices. The clientele of Ellington's is mainly NIU faculty and staff. However, each week family members and friends of the student managers travel, sometimes from a great distance, to dine at Ellington's. Elderly patrons from the community rely on Ellington's to provide a fresh, well prepared meal with friendly service and nutritional information at an affordable price. Over the reporting period, the number of meals served annually at Ellington's has ranged from a low of 3,066 to a high of 4,757 over 36 to 45 service dates depending on the number of FCNS 320 sections each semester. The number of sections is determined by student enrollment and determines the capacity of Ellington's. Between 16 and 22 students per section are needed to meet student learning objectives. The number of guests served per section (or per service day) remained fairly consistent with between 736-790 meals per section. The demand for the CDR catering services has remained fairly stable over the reporting period with between 57-71 catered events per year. CDR catering provides a unique location for academic units to convene affordable gatherings of 10-120 guests, while simultaneously contributing to the mission of the program. With steady marketing and new investments in the food laboratory/preparation areas in the CDR facility, it is conceivable that demand for the service will increase.

- Major findings and recommendations: Since the last reporting period, FCNS 320 has successfully transitioned from an overcrowded situation in the CDR to a fine dining restaurant called Ellington's. Students now learn not only quantity cooking, but also service in fine dining and the service of wine. The CDR continues to provide students opportunities to learn the business processes associated with catering. Both facilities have been paramount to the success of the NDHA students, providing them with opportunities to enhance team building, leadership and communication skills. Strengths of Ellington's and the CDR are the strong engaged learning opportunities these labs offer students and the outstanding service setting they provide the community. Student surveys indicated Ellington's and the CDR fostered working as a team member, determining the costs of food service operations, applying knowledge related to food preparation and presentation, modifying foods to meet individual or dietary needs, and developing ethical and professional skills in their chosen area of vocation. Ellington's guests are very appreciative of the services provided. It is a place on campus where student accomplishment can be showcased; where faculty can bring guests to show them what NIU students can accomplish.
- Actions taken since the last review: As of the last review, space in the CDR (which supported both the quantity foods lab, FCNS 320, and catering at the time) had become limited as the ND and HA emphases were growing in numbers. In 2006, a partnership with the Holmes Student Center was established, with the quantity foods lab moving into what is now Ellington's dining room. While this has alleviated a space issue, in order to improve catering experiences for students, critical infrastructure investments are needed in the CDR meeting and kitchen areas.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: Major changes to CDR catering will involve the purchase of modern equipment for use in the CDR facility. With assistance from the university and college, FCNS will actively pursue funding for these needs. Changes are occurring with regard to the fiscal management of both the CDR and Ellington's. FCNS will work with the Holmes Student Center to streamline the methods used for fiscal reporting and management. Similarly, FCNS will develop the fiscal management systems needed to operate a viable and self-sufficient catering operation. Beyond the aforementioned plans for modernization and the development of fiscal management systems, plans for the future involve continued support and enrichment for the academic support objectives for both Ellington's and the Chandelier Dining Room. FCNS will explore ways to expand the use of the Ellington's facility for special events and promote and expand the CDR catering operation as a self-sufficient and well managed unit.

## Outcome

- Decision:

  x   Program in good standing (review in 8 years)

- Explanation: Ellington's and Chandelier Dining Room provide learning laboratory for students in the Nutrition, Dietetics, and Hospitality Administration program. Ellington's gives NIU an additional means of creating greater sense of community and the Chandelier Dining Room provides meeting and catering services to the local community.

**Program:** B.S. in Textiles, Apparel, and Merchandising (19.0901)

### Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The purpose of the Textiles, Apparel and Merchandising (TAM) undergraduate program is to educate students about (1) how dress in its various forms meets physical and social-psychological needs of individuals and society, and (2) how the apparel industry functions to deliver products to consumers in order to meet these needs. The program provides students with a foundation of knowledge that will prepare them for professional employment in the apparel industry or graduate academic studies in the textiles and apparel discipline. Students are required to complete 30-37 credit hours in TAM courses and 34-35 credit hours in supportive course work outside the School of Family, Consumer and Nutrition Sciences (FCNS) including coursework in statistics, art, chemistry, economics, psychology, sociology, finance, marketing and management. For the period of this program review enrollment in the Textiles, Apparel and Merchandising major was highest in 2008 (143 students) but then declined by approximately 40 percent (86 students) by 2012. This appears to be a statewide trend as the Fashion Design and Merchandising program at Southern Illinois University also declined during this period. Enrollment in the program is predominately female; minorities composed about 33 percent of the total enrollment. In 2008, the number of native students enrolled in the program was approximately 70 percent; in 2012 this decreased to 51 percent of students enrolled. While the number of transfer students has remained fairly consistent from 2008-2012, the percentage of transfer students has increased from 30 percent in 2008 to 49 percent in 2012. Total number of degrees awarded at NIU from fiscal year 2008 through 2012 fluctuated slightly during this time with an average of 37 students per fiscal year.
- Major findings and recommendations: Major strengths of the TAM program are student-centered learning and career preparation. The program places emphasis on student-centered learning experiences. For instance, in the Kohl's Merchandising Lab students use computer applications to engage in in-depth problem solving related to merchandising mathematics and visual merchandising. In addition, students complete a required co-op or internship experience in an apparel-based position which requires the application of their professional skills and knowledge in real-world settings. Graduates of the TAM program are well prepared for employment in the apparel industry, having a wide range of regional and national employment opportunities. Required coursework provides students with the foundational knowledge and skills needed for the apparel industry, with opportunities to select electives to meet individual career goals. To further improve the program, an advisory board was formed in the spring of 2013. The board provides an opportunity to hear about employer satisfaction with graduates from the program. It also provides alumni the opportunity for input based upon their experiences in the program and the realities of employment. The success of the program's graduates is reflected in the desire of large retailers to engage students in pre-graduation internships as well as hiring them upon graduation. Currently the student to faculty ratio (30:1) is comparable to other programs within FCNS.

- Actions taken since the last review: The creation of the Kohl's Merchandising Lab has created opportunities for students to access computer applications used within the apparel industry, including merchandising mathematics, visual merchandising, and computer-aided fashion design. Faculty used the International Textile and Apparel Association baccalaureate program meta-goals as a guide to reexamine the TAM program goals. As result, new program goals were developed in 2009-2010. The program assessment plan was reviewed and revised accordingly. Developing valid and reliable assessment methods remains a priority of the program.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: Planned program changes include increased enrollment in the TAM program. Faculty will focus on increasing the yield for the program using the Hobson CMS tool to contact prospective students. Two Chicago-land community colleges offer two year degrees in apparel merchandising. The program will attempt to develop partnerships with these community colleges to develop a 2+2 or 3+1 degree completion program. The program will also expand the apparel product development focus through funding opportunities and the development of a proposal for the creation of a product development lab. The program will work with the Office of Assessment Services to review assessment processes and develop valid and reliable assessment methods. The newly created TAM advisory board will provide input on program development and review data generated through assessment activities. The faculty advisor will work more closely with the Fashion Industries Organization student group and provide additional mentoring to develop student leadership skills. And the program will seek new prospects and strengthen existing relationships with fashion industry-based businesses to increase students' opportunities for employment.

## Outcome

- Decision:  
  x   Program in good standing (follow-up report on enrollment in 2017)
- Explanation: The B.S. in Textiles, Apparel and Merchandising provides students with training that prepares them for a variety of careers within the apparel industry. Students benefit from having hand-on learning experiences in the program's laboratories.

**Program:** M.S. in Family and Consumer Science (19.0201)

## Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The M.S. in Family and Consumer Sciences is divided into two specialization areas (1) Apparel Studies, and (2) Family and Consumer Sciences Education. The specialization in Apparel Studies is intended for apparel industry professionals who seek to augment their educational background regarding consumers of apparel related products; the specialization in Family and Consumer Sciences Education is intended for middle and high school educators in family and consumer sciences who wish to maintain their teaching certification while advancing professionally. Occupational demand for people who hold the M.S. degree in the specializations in Apparel Studies and Family and Consumer Sciences Education is steady. Enrollment, however, has been limited. Since 2008 (the start of the degree program) six students were admitted; five students matriculated. One student completed the program in FY 2012. While enrollment in the graduate program has been low, enrollment in courses within the program have included both students-at-large and graduate students.
- Major findings and recommendations: The major strength at this time is the establishment of the M.S. in Family and Consumer Sciences. Even though the number of students enrolled in the program has been low, the program continues to establish policies and procedures in order to implement the program.

- Actions taken since the last review: This is a new program which was started in fall 2008. As such, this is the program's first full review.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: The most significant area which needs to be addressed is student enrollment. The program continues to develop strategies for program marketing and student recruitment, (including the development of brochures and marketing to other institutions throughout Illinois) and the continued development of an advisory group. The program needs to continue to seek ways to meet the needs of professionals in both specializations through relevant curriculum and alternative course delivery methods. The program will strengthen relationships with industry and education professionals and increase relationships with alumni. An advisory board was started in spring 2013 to serve both the undergraduate program in Textiles, Apparel, and Merchandising and the graduate specialization in Apparel Studies. The program will continue development of curriculum and on-line courses that best serve the needs of practicing professionals.

## Outcome

- Decision:

x Program in good standing (follow-up report on enrollment and program viability due in 2017)

- Explanation: The M.S. in Family and Consumer Sciences was established at the beginning of this review period (2008). To date, the program has attracted few students and FCNS faculty are considering the future viability of the program.

**Program:** B.A./B.S. in Anthropology (45.0201)

## Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: Students choose anthropology as a major for a variety of reasons, including preparation for graduate or professional studies within and outside the discipline. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the demand for anthropologists is expected to grow by 21 percent from 2010 to 2020, much faster than the 14 percent average for the social sciences, as well as 14 percent for all other occupations combined. Enrollment in the B.A./B.S. program averaged 92 students during the review period compared to 76 in the previous review period. Consistent with the last two review periods, the majority of undergraduate anthropology majors at NIU are women. During the review period, 63 percent of anthropology majors were women while 15 percent were minorities. The department confers more undergraduate degrees per faculty member than any of peer state institutions. NIU consistently accounts for 12-17 percent of anthropology majors and a similar percentage of the undergraduate degrees in this field among all public universities in the state. The program typically accounts for about 10-24 percent of the total program major credit hours taken by students at Illinois public universities, while the program cost per credit hour has been at or below the state-wide average. Credit hour production for the program declined from 2011 to 2013 by 18-24 percent which is consistent with the total decline in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.
- Major findings and recommendations: The greatest strength of the anthropology B.A./B.S. program is the high quality of the faculty. All are active scholars in their areas of the discipline, and many are internationally recognized experts. Anthropology faculty are highly productive in publishing peer-reviewed books and journal articles at a rate that matches or exceeds that of other departments across the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. During the review period, the 14 anthropology faculty produced 50 books and book chapters, 79 referred journal articles, and secured nearly \$4 million in external funding.

Faculty incorporate their scholarly work into their engaged teaching activities. Undergraduate students also benefit from close interaction with faculty and have numerous opportunities to work with professors to gain practical experience both in the laboratory, in the museum, and in the field. In addition, graduates of the program have an excellent record for being accepted into leading graduate programs and for securing employment in a wide variety of settings. Alumni survey results show that 100 percent of graduates had secured jobs within six months of degree completion compared to 73 percent for the University as a whole. Over two-thirds of Anthropology graduates go on to earn an additional degree while 100 percent of students are positively disposed about attaining their degree in Anthropology.

- Actions taken since the last review: The main challenges from the previous review are inadequate faculty staffing and the dire situation with the Stevens Building where the department has been housed. Both of these issue areas have been or are currently being addressed. Three tenure track faculty have been added since the last review, bringing the total number to fourteen. Two of these additions have occurred as the result of the department's integral involvement in NIU's strategic planning process. Two faculty are joint hires including one with the Institute for the Study of Environment, Sustainability, and Energy; and the other with the Center for NGO Leadership and Development. The third hire is in Biological Anthropology and attends to teaching needs for the large Human Origins course which draws up to 300 students. Blueprints are in place and the state of Illinois has approved support for the complete renovation of the Stevens Building. The Department of Anthropology vacated the building in May of 2013 for a two year period while it undergoes renovation. Upon completion, the department's facilities will include new classrooms, state-of-the-art teaching labs, compact storage for artifacts, up-dated conference rooms and offices, better and expanded space for graduate students, and an up-dated department office.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: Moving forward, the department needs to continue working on recruitment efforts, particularly for minority students, via handouts, videos, high school visits, and participation in college and University programs. Similarly, more effort needs to be targeted to recruiting minority faculty. This may well serve the additional purpose of helping to recruit minority students. Additional recruiting efforts through the American Anthropological Association's Association for Black Anthropologists and Society for Latin American Anthropologists should be intensified.

## Outcome

- Decision:

\_\_\_ x \_\_\_ Program in good standing (review in 8 years)

- Explanation: The B.A./B.S. in Anthropology is one of the largest programs in the state. Through its field schools and museum, students are provided with ample opportunities for engaged learning. The program is also highly successful in placing its graduates.

**Program:** M.A. in Anthropology (45.0201)

## Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The M.A. in Anthropology program is an advanced comprehensive four-field education that provides students with the theoretical, methodological, and practical background needed to function as professional anthropologists, including the ability to apply this background to other disciplines. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Handbook, "Employment of anthropologists and archeologists is expected to grow 21 percent from 2010 to 2020, faster than the average for all occupations." In terms of employment demand sectors, the BLS point out that "More

anthropologists will be needed to research human life, history, and culture, and apply that knowledge to current issues. In addition to traditional research areas, a growing number of corporations are increasingly relying on anthropological research. Specifically, corporations are expected to use anthropologists' analyses to understand increasingly diverse workforces and markets, allowing businesses to better serve their clients or to target new customers." The program at NIU confers more Master's degrees per year than all of our peer institutions. In addition, credit hour production for the Master's program increased by 32 percent during the review period. The NIU graduate anthropology program typically accounts for about 35-48 percent of total program credit hours generated at anthropology Master's programs at Illinois public universities. In addition, the program costs per credit hour are consistently at or below the state average. The program consistently accounts for nearly half of all Master's students, and between a third and one half of all anthropology Master's degrees conferred, among all Illinois public institutions.

- Major findings and recommendations: The societal need for anthropology stems from the fact that the discipline is at the heart of the study of human diversity and multiculturalism. Students in the M.A. program are required to take courses in all four subfields to provide a broad understanding of human diversity from a number of perspectives. Such training promotes the development of individuals who can effectively communicate an understanding of cultural differences and biological diversity to the general public which, in turn, has the potential for building tolerance. Enrollments in the M.A. program averaged 46 students per year during the review period, consistent with previous review period average of 48. Also consistent with the previous review, the majority of students (60 percent) enrolled in the M.A. program in anthropology at NIU are women. Women also earned 61 percent of the degrees conferred during the current review period. The number of minority students doubled from nine percent in the previous review period to 18 percent in the current review period. Minority students earned 19 percent of all degrees conferred during this period, indicating they are completing in a timely manner. All respondents (100 percent) in the university's alumni survey were satisfied with their graduate degree and with the amount of time it takes to earn the degree. Eighty three percent indicated their degree prepared them for their current job and their degree was closely related to their occupation. Of the 45 graduate students sampled in a departmental survey, about one-third entered Ph.D. programs. The remainder of graduates teach, work for non-profits, museums, government, and the private sector. The NIU alumni survey indicates that two-thirds of the program's graduates had a job within three months of graduating, while the remaining one-third entered Ph.D. programs.
- Actions taken since the last review: Additional faculty hires, including two interdisciplinary hires, as well as the renovation of the Stevens Building address the primary challenges articulated in the previous program review.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: The department is working to increase the number and breadth of engaged learning opportunities for graduate students, including field schools in Sicily, Cambodia, Thailand, Madagascar and Haiti. The faculty identified the need for an additional linguistic anthropologist going forward. The next review period needs to focus attention on developing mechanisms to better identify and track alumni. The department needs to continue working on recruitment efforts, particularly for minority students, via handouts, videos, high school visits, and participation in college and university programs. Similarly, more effort needs to be targeted to recruiting minority faculty. This may well serve the additional purpose of helping to recruit minority students. Additional recruiting efforts through the American Anthropological Association's Association for Black Anthropologists and Society for Latin American Anthropologists should be intensified.



## Outcome

- Decision:

\_\_\_ x \_\_\_ Program in good standing (review in 8 years)

- Explanation: The M.A. in Anthropology is highly respected and provides students with rigorous training. The program is one of the largest in the state of Illinois.

**Program:** B.A./B.S. in Sociology (45.1101)

### Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The sociology program at NIU is one of the largest among those in public universities in the state of Illinois and is among the leading programs in the state in graduating students with Bachelor's degrees in sociology. While enrollments in the program are healthy, the number of student majors decreased from 165 to 129 between 2008 and 2012. In contrast, the number of pre-sociology majors waiting admission to the program grew by 12 percent, up to 306 during the same time. Among declared majors, the percentage of women has remained relatively steady at about 50 percent; the percentage of racial/ethnic minority major students has increased from about 31 percent in 2008 to 54 percent in 2012. The major also attracts a good mix of native and transfer students, with 60 percent native and 40 percent transfer in fall 2012. In FY2012, a total of 134 majors completed the full 38 credit hours required by the sociology program for the baccalaureate degree. The introduction of a Criminology Certificate in 2013 has already proven attractive to current and prospective students. Career opportunities for graduates of the baccalaureate program are extensive and diverse. The curriculum prepares students for careers in social and human services, criminal and juvenile justice, research, and many types of private industry careers in addition to post-graduate education. According to the Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2012-2013 Edition, overall employment for social services work is expected to grow more than 35 percent through 2020. Overall employment for public law enforcement (local police departments and sheriff's offices) is expected to grow about seven percent through 2020. Growth for private investigators and security is expected to average approximately 11-12 percent over the next decade. Overall employment for market researchers is expected to grow 41 percent through 2020. Overall employment for human resource specialists is expected to grow 41 percent, faster than average through 2020. These forecasts suggest that the job market will continue to demand sociology baccalaureate degree holders.
- Major findings and recommendations: The review identified four areas of program strength: (1) Strong student demand. Counting both pre-sociology and declared majors, the number of undergraduate sociology students as well as undergraduate degree production has remained strong during the review period. The department graduates more than 100 students each academic year. In addition, the department plays a major role in providing service instruction for the university. (2) Training in sociological inquiry is at the top of the class in comparison to sociology degree program requirements at peer institutions across the country. NIU Sociology has among the most comprehensive undergraduate research methods and theory sequences of any of the universities in the Illinois state system and the nation. The Sociology Quantitative Research Lab (SOCQRL) offers students the opportunity to learn the logic and techniques of research methods and analysis with advanced analytical software technology appropriate to the social sciences. (3) Hands-on research opportunities are provided in the research methodology sequence as well as the senior capstone courses requiring a culminating learning experience. Further, many students complete an internship option for additional engaged learning opportunities. Feedback from alumni and employers indicates the internship to be one of the most important features of the curriculum. (4) The department has a highly efficient and effective system of advising. Program

majors meet with either the Undergraduate Advisor or the Director of Undergraduate Studies prior to or in their first semester in the major to plan their program of courses and to identify career objectives consistent with their program of study. Advising support continues throughout their academic career in the program. Across the review period, 92 percent of alumni surveyed one year beyond graduation reported they were satisfied with their degree. Eighty-one percent of survey respondents who were one year beyond graduation indicated that the degree prepared them for their job.

- Actions taken since the last review: Since the last program review, the college supported the creation of a permanent position to provide advising services to students in the program. This investment in advising has benefitted the program and students in terms of graduation success and planning for careers beyond the degree. The department decided to eliminate its emphasis requirement in the major, which limited student choice of courses and slowed their progress toward graduation. Although the emphasis requirement was eliminated, few course deletions were made, allowing students to develop breadth and depth in their major coursework. Partly in response to concern about the elimination of the criminology emphasis in the major, the department recently implemented a Criminology Certificate program. The certificate program is open to students without regard to major and prepares students for career success in criminal justice, the legal system and other cognate career paths. In an effort to provide all students (native and transfer) with consistent baseline preparation for the undergraduate program, the department has required an advanced core course that focuses on basic principles of sociological theory and methods, writing in the discipline, and critical thinking skills. This course was cited by external reviewers as program strength. The department has implemented a culminating learning experience expectation for all 400-level (senior) classes, which ensures all graduates have hands-on experience in integrating theory, methods and writing in two capstone courses.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: With the introduction of the Criminology Certificate, additional growth in student enrollments in specialized courses and in the program as a whole are expected and as student demand in this area grows, additional staff may be needed to cover more courses. The program also intends to develop more scholarship opportunities and provide additional engaged and experiential learning opportunities for students. Engaging alumni and highlighting the benefits of the internship program are other resources in place that can be used to attract highly qualified students. Based upon the results of assessment activities and the difficulty faculty have reported in providing students with an authentic culminating learning experience – integrating theory, method and scholarly writing - in a substantive senior course, the department is about to embark upon an analysis of alternative models, including a more traditional capstone or senior thesis.

## Outcome

- Decision:  
 \_\_\_ x \_\_\_ Program in good standing (review in 8 years)
- Explanation: B.A./B.S. in Sociology is a popular major that provides rigorous training in sociological methods. The program has been successful in attracting women and minority students. The Criminology Certificate attracts students from across the university.

**Program:** M.A. in Sociology (45.1101)

Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: Enrollment in the M.A. in Sociology has remained relatively stable throughout the five-year review period, with an average of about 28 students per year. In a typical year,

the program enrolls about a third of all students in Illinois public universities pursuing a master's degree in sociology. Women constitute about two-thirds of total enrollments in the M.A. program. Minority student enrollment has hovered at 5-15 percent during the review period. The program has averaged about eight master's degrees awarded per year - highest in the state among public universities. The master's degree in sociology is appropriate preparation for further study at the doctoral level, for university teaching at liberal arts or community colleges, and for advanced positions in research, government, social service, criminal justice, and other organizations. According to the Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2012-2013 Edition, demand for sociologists with master's degrees is expected to grow 18 percent by 2020. The American Sociological Association's 2008-2011 study of master's degree programs, students and alumni in the field found that graduates are likely to find employment that requires engaging in research within their occupation, management responsibilities, and/or work in educational settings, often as teachers.

- Major findings and recommendations: The review identified three areas that represent the major strengths of the sociology graduate program: (1) The program's core curricular requirements of three research methodology courses, two theory courses and a comprehensive exam along with a required culminating thesis project separate the department as a leader in program rigor among M.A.- terminal degree granting programs across the country. (2) The department has been highly successful in obtaining funding for virtually all full-time students who apply for graduate assistantships. Funding support for graduate students allows for the program to recruit competitive students. (3) Graduates of the program indicate that they have been well-prepared for future employment and advanced graduate study, noting the strengths of research methods, computer technology, and theory, in particular, regardless of career orientation. The department assesses student achievement of program learning goals through direct assessment of a comprehensive exam administered to each student in the program. Students' successful mastery of learning outcomes is certified by passing the comprehensive exam. Since the introduction of the standardized comprehensive exam, 97 percent of students completing the exam have been judged to have successfully mastered the program's learning outcomes. All students responding to the alumni survey in the review period (n=11) reported successful employment following graduation from the program. Levels of satisfaction with the program were very high; 89 percent reported being at least satisfied with the program and 100 percent reported time to degree completion was satisfactory. The department has identified at least two areas of the graduate program that warrant improvement: Increasing the range of topical course offerings for students in the program and improving time to degree completion.
- Actions taken since the last review: Since the last program review, the department has engaged in ongoing self-assessment of the graduate program. These efforts have resulted in the following developments aimed at program enhancement: (1) elimination of the internship as a capstone option to complete the program; (2) curricular development in providing added methodological training to students. Concerns about the academic authenticity of capstone experiences among students completing the internship to satisfy M.A. program requirements were evident through faculty supervision of internship capstones. Faculty in the department expressed concerns about the equivalency of the two capstone routes - thesis and internship. Beginning in 2010-2011, all students in the M.A. program were required to complete a thesis project as a graduate capstone. The internship course continues to be offered for students interested in earning graduate credit for sociologically-relevant experience in occupational settings in government, non-profit, and for-profit organizational settings, but it no longer fulfills the program capstone requirement. In concert with the implementation of the thesis only requirement of the program, the department has developed two new required courses in graduate research methods in recent years: Qualitative Research Methods and Research Design in Sociology. The new courses provide students with a complete set of research tools and equip them with the ability to choose methodologies that are appropriate for the research questions they are asking as they complete the program thesis requirement and move on to engage in answering questions using research skills in their careers after they complete the program.

- Actions taken as a result of this review: The biggest challenge facing the program is providing graduate course availability while meeting the scheduling demands of the undergraduate program. No more than seven graduate seminar courses per academic year have been offered in recent years; of these, 5 courses each year are part of the core curriculum. Graduate students express interest in additional specialized courses being offered. Many students combine independent study and cross-listed 400/500-level courses in their programs of study; however, reliance on these alternatives places additional burden on teaching faculty. Moreover, these alternatives lack the benefit of more traditional graduate-level seminars.

## Outcome

- Decision:

\_\_\_ x \_\_\_ Program in good standing (review in 8 years)

- Explanation: The M.A. in Sociology program provides rigorous training and maintains high standards for student success. Enrollments remain steady and the program produces more graduates than any other public university in the state.

**Program:** Center for Southeast Asian Studies (90.0501)

## Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: NIU's Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS) is one of seven currently funded Southeast Asian Studies programs nationally that are designated by the U.S. Department of Education as a Title VI National Resource Center. The center is responsible for coordinating undergraduate and graduate courses dealing with Southeast Asia, administering the undergraduate minor and the graduate concentration in Southeast Asian Studies, and developing and administering other instructional, research, outreach, and public service activities concerned with that region of the world. Graduates are well positioned for employment in diplomatic, intelligence, business, and academic positions as the U.S. "pivots" to a direct focus on Asia and particularly Southeast Asia. The center, celebrating its 50th anniversary, is uniquely situated to prepare students for employment in an area where U.S. strategic and economic interests are increasing.
- Major findings and recommendations: The CSEAS continues to be an exemplary program of interdisciplinary studies at NIU, effectively combining teaching, research and service in this important region of the world. In an era of declining federal funding for education, CSEAS dramatically increased overall grant funding from all sources, successfully replacing some of the funding cuts from the U.S. Department of Education Title VI program. A summary of the top five baseline indicators of progress that are key to the center's activities include: (1) acquisition of external funding by the unit and affiliated faculty over a five-year period; (2) career outcomes of graduate students; (3) number of students enrolled in undergraduate classes with 25 percent to 100 percent Southeast Asian content; (4) number of undergraduate minors; and (5) number of language courses taught and enrollment figures for these courses. The center has shown improvements on all five of these indicators since the last review. While the average enrollment across the review period was 1,825, up only slightly from 1,718 in 2004, at the peak year of 2011, the total number enrolled was 2,694. One of the best examples of the center's fulfillment of NIU's vision and mission can be seen in the center's increased emphasis on engaged teaching and learning, particularly through study abroad programs to the region. Since the last program review, center faculty have run 13 study abroad programs to seven different Southeast Asian countries studying anthropology, history, culture, politics, and public health. These programs are for both undergraduates and graduates and have directly involved students in hands-on research with NIU faculty.

- Actions taken since the last review: The total amount of external grant funding obtained from FY05 through FY12 was \$7,111,952, a dramatic increase over the previous review period total of \$2,850,940. This includes \$3,903,565 in funding awarded directly to the CSEAS and \$3,208,387 awarded to center associates for projects on Southeast Asia. Granting agencies from which the center and faculty associates have secured funds include the U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of State, the Fulbright-Hays Foundation, and the National Science Foundation. The teaching of Southeast Asian languages is at the core of CSEAS objectives and, throughout the review period, the program was able to expand its language offerings. The center also was able to increase the number of area studies courses, including strengthening offerings on Islam, which was a prominent goal of both the previous review and Title VI funding priorities. In a time of declining enrollments across the university, the center has increased the number of undergraduate minors and graduate concentrators. It has demonstrated solid results in the job placements of graduate students with 100 percent of students employed or enrolled in Ph.D. programs one year after graduation. The center continues to draw strong numbers of graduate students from Southeast Asia, as well as from across Illinois and the United States. New programs funded by governments in Southeast Asia include a strengthening of Thai Studies at NIU with the establishment of the Thai Research and Teaching Fund. This endowment provides funding for American students to study Thai language and conduct research in Thailand, for Thai students to conduct graduate-level research, and for faculty researchers to conduct research.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: The goals for CSEAS in the coming years are to preserve the current language and area studies classes, which are the highest priority under Title VI Department of Education (DOE) funding, to continue to expand creative and dynamic forms of interdisciplinary and engaged forms of learning, and to grow interactions with higher education institutions in the region. Plans for accomplishing these goals include changing the graduate concentration to a graduate certificate program, negotiating new programs for students and faculty from Southeast Asia with funding from the region, expanding programming with Asian American communities, and beginning to offer some classes on-line. In collaboration with the Asian American Center, the CSEAS will work to improve advertising and recruitment activities with area high schools.

## Outcome

- Decision:  
  x   Program in good standing (review in 8 years)
- Explanation: The Center for Southeast Asian Studies continues to be an exemplary program of interdisciplinary studies at NIU, effectively combining teaching, research, and service in this important region of the world.